



REMARKS

BY

**THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI, PROFESSOR
SAMSON SAJIDU**

DURING

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
GRADUATION CEREMONY**

HELD ON

WEDNESDAY, 30TH APRIL, 2025

IN

THE GREAT HALL, ZOMBA

Salutations

1. Your Excellency Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, the President of the Republic of Malawi and Chancellor of the University of Malawi
 2. Madam Monica Chakwera, First Lady of the Republic of Malawi
 3. Honourable Dr Jessie Kabwira, Minister of Higher Education
 4. The SPC, Madam Collen Zamba
 5. Dr Levis Eneya, Secretary for Higher Education
 6. Dr Christopher Guta, Chairman of Council, and all Council member
 7. Chairpersons of all other University Councils here present
 8. All senior government officials here present
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9. Dr. Sunduzwayo Madise, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Malawi
 10. Mr. Martin Matululu, Registrar, University of Malawi
 11. Professors, Deans, Directors and Heads of Departments here present
 12. All members of staff of the University of Malawi
 13. Dr Grant Nthala, the officiating Clergy
 14. Honourable Bester Awali, Member of Parliament for Zomba Central Constituency
 15. His Worship Councilor Jana, Mayor for Zomba City
 16. Mr. Archangel Bikoko, Chief Executive Officer for Zomba City Council
 17. Mr. Reinghard Chavula, District Commissioner for Zomba
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18. Chief Mwambo, Chief Chikowi and GVH Chikanda and all other chiefs present;
 19. Mr. Mendenge Chisi, President of the University of Malawi Students Representative Council
 20. Distinguished Invited Guests
 21. Parents and Guardians
 22. Graduands and students
 23. Members of the media
 24. Ladies and Gentlemen
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As the Vice Chancellor of this esteemed institution, I stand before you with immense pride and a sense of responsibility, for I believe that graduation is not just about receiving a certificate but also about imparting wisdom and addressing the challenges that lie ahead. Today marks the culmination of years of hard work, discipline, and resilience.

This ceremony, is one of the four ceremonies that we will hold today and tomorrow.

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen

For the Graduation ceremony today and tomorrow, we have **2643** graduands who will receive their certificates. Out of these, **8** graduands will graduate with PhDs, **218** with Masters degrees, **12** with Postgraduate diplomas, **329** with Bachelors degrees (Honours), **1998** with Bachelors degrees **53** with Diplomas and **25** with certificates. **1260** of the graduands are female and **1383** are male (approximately **48%** female). We are making steady progress in closing the gender disparity. This graduation has recorded **26** distinctions (**14** females and **12** males). This morning your

Excellency, we have a total of 435 graduands.

Your Excellency

Today is a momentous day—a day of immense pride, reflection, and celebration. We gather not only to confer degrees upon our diligent and deserving students, but also to witness remarkable milestone.

For the first time Malawi is graduating her own home-grown Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) graduates—professionals trained right here on our soil, through a programme whose impact has already been felt.

I therefore, give my special congratulations to the Bachelor of Dental Surgery graduands upon reaching this milestone.

Your Excellency, we would like to applaud the former College of

Medicine of the the Federal University of Malawi through the KUHES Vice Chancellor, Prof Mac Mallewa for this grand achievement.

Let me begin by acknowledging with deep appreciation the support that this University continues to receive from Your Excellency and the Government you lead. Under your Excellency's leadership, the University has witnessed remarkable developments and we are pleased to report on the following:

1. The newly constructed office block for administration and academic staff with funds from Government through the Public Sector Investment Program (PSIP). It will ease the office space problem that the University has struggled with for the past years. This is at 97% completion.

2. Works for the construction of prefabricated classrooms within PSIP are at 79%. This will increase teaching space by 2000 seats.
3. Construction for the teaching and learning complex funded by your Government through the World Bank under the Skills for a Vibrant Economy (SAVE) has commenced this month. It will increase teaching space by 1,900 spaces seated at once.
4. Processes for commencement of the construction of Postgraduate Centre funded by your Government through the World Bank under the Center for Resilient Agri Food Systems are under way. The center will, among other facilities include a 50-seater lecture theatre, 60 seater classrooms, four specialized laboratories, 22 seater students'

workspace, space for incubatees and a computer laboratory.

5. The construction of students' halls of residence (hostels) under PSIP will commence after the identification of the contractor through advertising exercise. However, drawings and bills of quantities have been completed.
6. Your Excellency, your Government has approved a Functional Review of the University in order to improve the efficiency in the delivery of our services including a positive revision of Staff Establishment which we will be implementing through a phased-out approach within the next 3 years.

To us your Excellency, these projects are not just buildings—they are foundations for innovation, learning, and research excellence.

In turn, as the mother University, after the last Graduation in August last year we wish to report that:

1. The Centre for World University Rankings 2025 has given us a national rank of position 1 and we are within the top 6.7% of the top 20,000 universities in the world. This is based on our research output and citations rather than subjective surveys or university-provided data. It is the academic prowess and scholarly works that distinguish us from the rest.
2. Out of the 9392 students selected into public universities on face to face mode of teaching we admitted 2989, translating to 30.9% of the total selected students. Last year we selected 2557. We are yet to select more on ODEL mode. Our

current total enrollment including those in PG programmes is around 15, 000.

3. We have a new project on *Resilient climate smart agriculture, indigenous knowledge and tradition for sustainable food production* aimed at integrating indigenous knowledge with climate-smart agricultural technologies through co-creation with rural smallholder farmers across various agroecological zones in Malawi. It is funded by Research Ireland.
4. We have a new Incubation Centre, named the *Food Innovation and Technology Hub (FIT-Hub supported by the World Bank* which will contribute to the development and innovation in agri-food systems, supporting sustainable

food production and related technologies.

5. Since last August we have published about 120 articles in internationally peer reviewed Journals as part of our research output. These papers have the potential to inform development of national and international policies in different areas.
6. We have won a project on Endangered Knowledge Material Programme funded by the British Museum.
7. We have also expanded our international partnerships. During the year, we signed new memoranda of understanding with institutions in Asia, Europe, and within Africa—focusing on joint research, student and staff

exchanges, and co-teaching initiatives.

8. On this momentous occasion, I stand with great pride and humility to declare, on behalf of the University, that we are today releasing into society a strong dividend—a dividend not of currency, but of empowered human capital. This is our return to Government and society for the investment made in this institution. Today, we graduate **2643** trained individuals—men and women equipped with knowledge, skills, and character—ready to serve and transform our nation across various sectors.

Your Excellency Our Chancellor Sir

May I also take this opportunity to raise a humble but urgent plea. The

recent drastic reduction in the University's 2025/26 budget allocation has placed us in an extremely precarious position. The current provision is not only inadequate to support our operational needs, but, most critically, it falls short of covering even our personal emoluments. This situation risks severely demoralizing our hard-working staff and disrupting the core functions of the University.

Our Distinguished Parents and Guardians

As we celebrate the remarkable achievements of our graduating students today, I would like to take this moment to sincerely thank all those who have walked with them on this journey.

Thank you for your unwavering sacrifices, encouragement, and

patience. Your belief in these graduates has carried them through the most challenging of times.

To the Government, we are deeply grateful for your continued support to the University and to the education sector at large. Your commitment to higher education remains a cornerstone of national development.

To the boyfriends and girlfriends — yes, we acknowledge you too! Thank you for the emotional support, the long chats during study breaks, and for being there in ways that often go unnoticed.

To our dedicated lecturers and staff — your hard work, mentorship, and guidance have helped shape these graduates into the professionals they are becoming. We do not take your commitment for granted.

And to everyone who has played a part — whether big or small — thank you. Today's success is not just that of the graduates, but of a whole community that believed, supported, and invested in them.

To our graduating students—this is your day. You are the heartbeat of the future. You represent hope and the promise of progress. We know many of you belong to Generation Z—curious, connected, creative, and deeply conscious of your values. As you step out into the world, I urge you to carry with you not only your degrees but also the values of service, excellence, and integrity.

Be bold, but be ethical. Be confident, but stay grounded. And remember, success is not only about what you gain, but what you give back.

The degrees you receive today are not just certificates — they are launchpads for global impact.

You studied through disruptions such as Covid 19, Cyclone Freddy (Feb to March 2023), Cyclone Chido (Dec 2024), Cyclone Jude (last month, March 2025) and you are graduating in uncertainty — that makes you not just qualified, but unstoppable. You are a proof that resilience is not just a buzzword — it's a way of life. Carry that forward as you go into the world.

As a reminder, this University does not offer a Module on how to perfect Corruption. There is no courses in our curriculum that teaches bribery, dishonesty, or abuse of office or resources. On the contrary, we strive to nurture ethical, responsible, and accountable graduates — individuals who will contribute positively to society

and uphold the highest standards of integrity.

You are ambassadors of this institution. Carry yourselves with honour. Resist the temptation to take shortcuts or compromise your values for temporary gain. Be part of the generation that says no to corruption — not just in words, but most importantly, in action. Please, please, please, I am essentially on my knees, *musakakhale mbava, akasaja kuwa igananga ya wiyi, mungakawanga vinkhungu yayi wana wakwithu, kuchija akuba cha (Tonga), Muhikelhe okhala anamwiiya (Lomwe)*. Parents, guardians and employers have witnessed this advice given to you graduands.

Congratulations, once again, on becoming alumni of this exceptional

institution. May your journey ahead be filled with purpose, passion, and boundless opportunities. And may you continue to make your alma mater proud.

At this juncture, I am duty-bound with distinguished honour to request You, Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Malawi and the Chancellor of the University of Malawi to address the congregation, Mr. Chancellor, Sir.