

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY DR. K. K. SARPONG, GUEST SPEAKER, AT
THE 22ND CONGREGATION CEREMONY OF THE GHANA
TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (GTUC) ON SATURDAY, 27TH
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Theme: *Ghana's Energy Policy and National Development: The Role of Tertiary
Institutions*

Chairman of Council of GTUC, Prof. Kwame Osei Boateng

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Student Representative Council

Staff and Students

Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. I would like to express my profound gratitude to the Council and Management of Ghana Technology University College (GTUC) for the invitation to be the Guest Speaker at its 22nd Congregation. My address will be on the theme “Ghana’s Energy Policy and National Development: The Role of Tertiary Institutions”. I will also share some of my life experiences with graduands for their benefit as they leave these walls. Taking cognizance of the fact that the joy of today does not lie in long speeches, I will try to keep my address short.
2. Distinguished Guests, energy plays an important role in the socio-economic advancement of mankind. Energy is a catalyst for industrialization and technological development which in turn provide employment to the citizenry, generate tax revenue and foreign exchange to government, foster improved standard of living of the populace and ultimately promote sustainable development of countries. Implementation of a sound energy policy and good governance in energy institutions, particularly state-owned, are fundamental for the achievement of the outlined benefits.
3. Ghana’s energy sector is supported by a comprehensive state regulatory framework through five agencies. These agencies are the Energy Commission (EC); the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC); the Petroleum Commission (PC); the National Petroleum Authority (NPA) and the Nuclear Regulatory Authority (NRA).
4. Key policy goals of the energy sector as enshrined in the draft Ghana Energy Policy, 2019 include:

- a) Ensuring that the production and utilization of energy is done in a manner that protects the health and safety of all persons in the country;
 - b) Fostering local energy-related research, development, and innovation opportunities that address national priorities and integrate research findings into the economy;
 - c) Strengthening local content and local participation in the energy industry, and
 - d) Regulating and mitigating the environmental hazards of energy related activities.
5. Chairman of Council, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the energy sector has many challenges. However, I will touch on only a few of these. In the power sector, inefficiencies in generation and distribution have created debt for the State and undermined the drive towards affordable electricity. High capital requirements, absence of relevant technology and lack of capacity also constrain the ability of Ghanaians to be active players in the petroleum sector.
6. These challenges and others I have not listed here, demand that universities in Ghana, review and revise their programmes and research to speak to the development needs of the energy sector. Ghanaian universities must partner with their counterparts worldwide that have developed programmes in energy and tap into their rich curriculum. I am happy to note that GTUC is partnering with many universities, including those from Europe. It is my belief that GTUC is benefitting from research and curriculum development through these partnerships.

7. It is the focus of the present government to invest in energy-related research, development, and innovative activities that are of national relevance. Government is facilitating the leveraging of relevant local, regional and international expertise in support of energy-related research, development, and innovation with relevant entities.
8. Ladies and Gentlemen it is in line with Government's aspirations and efforts that GNPC has established research chairs in four public universities. The Chairs are for Geoscience at the University of Ghana; Petroleum Engineering at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology; Petroleum Commerce at the University of Cape Coast and Mining Engineering at the University for Mines and Technology. GNPC is providing facilities for the establishment of an Institute for Petroleum Studies at UMAT to engage in cutting edge research. Also, in November 2017, the Government launched the Accelerated Capacity Development Program under the coordination of the Petroleum Commission. The Program recently received an initial support of US\$4.5 million from Aker Energy of Norway. The onus now lies on tertiary institutions in Ghana to take advantage of these interventions and develop innovative curricula and research that will feed the energy sector for sustainable development for Ghana.
9. In thinking about innovative programmes, we should not lose sight of the place of entrepreneurship in contemporary global tertiary education. Traditionally, universities have been training graduates for employment. That needs to change. Emphasis should be on strengthening entrepreneurial programmes so that graduates can establish their own businesses and become employers.

10. Tertiary institutions should run short executive courses to train Ghanaians in organizational governance and management in the energy sector for successful delivery of the energy agenda laid out in the policy. The sector is so vibrant and complex that it must be managed by professionally trained and experienced executives and board of directors. I am happy to learn that GTUC has a Centre for Professional Development that runs short courses for professional capacity building. I recommend that the Centre designs programmes to equip, especially, board members of energy sector institutions, for smooth governance and management.
11. Distinguished audience, there is a lot to be said about the energy policy that time will not permit us to do today. I encourage all graduands, students and faculty to apprise themselves of the draft policy and contribute to its realisation. At this point, I would like to shift my focus to our graduands.
12. Graduands, it is indeed rewarding to earn a degree, having toiled and burnt the proverbial midnight oil to be successful. Success does not come on a silver platter and I am able to say this because I have lived it. I have worked my way, through hard work, determination and focus to be where I am today. I saw every challenge in life as an opportunity to achieve a goal and I never relented on my efforts. Very early in my career, I was thrust into positions of trust and responsibility. I took on the challenge and worked hard to achieve the expectations of my mentors and for my own personal goal. From Ghana Food Distribution Corporation, through Ghana Cocoa Board, the International Cocoa Organisation in the UK, to Tema Oil Refinery Limited, and now at GNPC and having served on the board of directors of twenty–six organisations, I have left footprints that are cherished

and emulated. Today, I challenge you to chart a focused and rewarding path for your career.

13. The Greeks say that whatever is good to know is difficult to learn. Knowledge is good to acquire because it is the catalyst for human development and it is not easily acquired. You are graduating today because you have studied hard to be awarded degrees. I join your parents, families, friends, well-wishers and GTUC to congratulate you on your achievement.
14. But, I also admonish you not to be deceived into thinking that the degrees you are being awarded today, mark the end of your education. Frederick William Robertson, a theologian, once said that, “Instruction ends in the schoolroom, but education ends only with life”. Continue to learn positive and progressive things as long as you are alive. Challenge yourself to learn something new at every turn of your life and never stop upgrading your skills and expertise.
15. Ladies and Gentlemen, a degree is not an end in itself but a means to an end. I believe that knowledge ought to be used to foster human development and not to be used selfishly to deprive society of advancement. I advise you, graduands, not to use the knowledge acquired, which gives you the passport to hold positions of trust, as a means to defraud your employer, the state or cheat fellow citizens. As Shakespeare said, 'There is no great treasure to inherit like honesty', therefore be honest.
16. I have always wondered why many universities in Ghana do not have courses on ethical behavior and volunteerism. These are two traits that are needed to drive the moral and ethical development of the nation. In the midst of the rush for money, we are losing what makes us truly Ghanaian. I have

always been reminded by the training I got from my secondary education at the Seventh- Day Adventist Secondary School at Bekwai. There, I was taught to develop and embrace the ethics of stewardship. I was taught to volunteer my time for good causes. I encourage you to be ethical and principled even when you seem to be the lone voice.

17. Graduands, remember to give a part of your time, space and resources to help others in need. Cultivate the spirit and habit of volunteerism. Voluntarily give to humanity and you will be handsomely rewarded in life. The world beckons you to make a positive impact on the lives of the less privileged. I have been where you are now. I believe in working hard for the good of humanity. Your generosity should not be shown to only those you know or those who come from the same background as you. I encourage you to weave selflessness into your personality and you will be successful and enjoy your God-given life.
18. Again, in my life, I have learnt to recognise the efforts and worth of others as important. This trait has taught me many of life's lessons and opened doors for me. Do not let your degree deceive you into thinking that certain types of jobs are below your status and that you are more important than others. Respect every individual and learn from others. You need to value every employee as being equally important. The labourer, the watchman, the cleaner, the accountant, the marketing manager, and the chief executive altogether make an organization work. The value of the experience of the worker who does not have a degree, like you do, could be priceless.
19. Finally, Graduands, as Paul says in Philippians 4:8-9 (NIV), “whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—

think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you”. In summary, I charge our graduands to be always guided by the following words, which I call my 5 Hs: Honesty, Humility, Hardwork, Human relations and Humanity.

20. Chairman of Council, Distinguished Guests, once again I thank GTUC for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts on Ghana’s energy policy and aspects of my personal experiences with you. As I congratulate the graduands for their achievements, I salute parents, guardians and spouses for sacrificing for the good of these graduands. I also congratulate management and staff of GTUC for training the younger generation for the good of Ghana.
21. Thank you all for your attention.