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The Pan African University Institute of Life and Earth Sciences (PAULESI) has awarded certificates to its fifth Promotion of Masters Students and second batch of Ph. D students



Ibadan, Nigeria: On Thursday, 15 November and Saturday 17 November 2018, the Pan African University Institute of Life and Earth Sciences (PAULESI) held the graduation ceremony for its fifth cohort of Masters Students and second batch of Ph.D students who successfully completed years of intensive training in the areas of Plant Breeding, Environmental Management, Petroleum Geology, Petroleum Geoscience, Petroleum Engineering, Forestry, Mineral Exploration and Reproductive Health.

The Masters Graduation ceremony was held at the University of Ibadan, within the framework of the celebration of the Seventieth Foundation Day Anniversary of the University of Ibadan established in 1948 before Nigeria became independent in 1960, and Convocation ceremonies on 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17 November 2018.

The Masters graduating class consisted of 41 students of which 11 female students, all coming from 17 African countries (Kenya, Sudan, Ghana, Uganda, Rwanda, Somalia, Nigeria, Chad, Zimbabwe, Togo, Liberia, Cameroon, Tanzania, Benin, Ethiopia, Guinea and Botswana).

The ceremony was attended by high ranking officials including the Chancellor of the University of Ibadan, The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan, the President of PAU Council and PAU acting Vice-Rector, Directors of PAUSTI and PAUGHSS and PAU Rectorate staff.

The master of ceremony was the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan who delivered a welcome address in which he congratulated students on their efforts deployed during the past two years.

Taking the floor after the Vice Chancellor, the President of PAU Council expressed appreciation to the Government and people of Nigeria for hospitality. Quoting Kwame Nkrumah, he further demonstrated how PAU was a concrete realization of the aspirations of AU founding fathers and expresses joy to see the University moving forward. After enumerating the core functions of the Pan African University, he advised graduands to use the knowledge and wisdom received at PAULESI in their future endeavours. He also urged PAU stakeholders to meet their initial commitment and concluded by reaffirming Pan Africanism quoting once more Kwame Nkrumah in these terms: *“Africa is one continent, one people and one nation”*.

The second highlight of this ceremony was the award of diplomas and prizes to students.

This graduation ceremony marked the fourth day of celebrations at the University of Ibadan.



The Graduation Ceremony of Ph.D scheduled Saturday, 17 November 2018 was graced by the presence of eminent personalities from within and outside Nigeria converged at the University of Ibadan to attend this ceremony. They included the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria represented by the Vice-President of the Republic, H.E. Prof Yemi Osinbajo, former Head of State of Nigeria, General Yakubu Gowon, Nigerian Ministers and other Government authorities, religious

leaders, visiting Vice-Chancellors, PAU Acting Vice Rector, Directors of PAU institutes (PAUGHSS and PAUSTI) H.E. Amb. Stanislas Kamanzi, the Rwandan High Commissioner in Abuja representing the President of the Permanent Representative Committee (PRC), and PAU Rectorate staff.

The graduating class consisted of 11 students of which 9 male and 2 female students, from four African countries (Nigeria, Ethiopia, Benin and Cameroon).

The major highlights of the ceremony included:

- Addresses by the Chancellor, Pro- Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan as well as address by the President of PAU Council.
- Presentation of Prizes and
- Conferment of Honorary Degrees.

Taking the floor first, the Chancellor of the University of Ibadan, Prof. Idowu Olayinka, laid emphasis on the importance of education asserting that “Human capital development is the fastest way of economic development and transformation”. He

added that the job of universities is not only to impart knowledge and skills but also to mold the character of its students until it becomes worthy. He thus expressed pride to see his students graduating. Hailing the University of Ibadan as the Mother University offering universal training, he said the University of Ibadan should be a model to young universities and was glad to see the University of Ibadan hosting the Pan African University Institute of Life and Earth Sciences (PAULESI). Prof. Idowu however decried the scarcity of lecturers and poor funding of universities. So he urged the Government and other well-meaning Nigerians to increase funding of university education.

Taking the floor after the Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the University of Ibadan congratulated the graduands and wished them success in their endeavours. He also encourages them to play a greater role in Nigeria and Africa.

In his address, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan presented the history and progress of the University of Ibadan that he described as a centre of excellence by importance of Education. He also described Ibadan as the Intellectual capital of Nigeria and its first and best university. To the graduands, he said that "Tomorrow belongs to those who prepared it today". The Vice-Chancellor also lamented the poor state of education in Nigeria.

Professor Kassa Belay, PAU acting Vice-Rector, representing H.E Prof. Sarah Anyang Agbor, the AU Commissioner in charge of Human Resources, Science and Technology, started his address by congratulating the University of Ibadan on the 70th year of its creation. Stating that graduations are special moments, he added "that graduation is the beginning of a new chapter in life, characterized by possibilities and challenges" and urged the graduands to contribute to transforming their individual countries and the African continent. He continued by explaining that PAU was creating to fill the existing vacuum in knowledge generation and dissemination in Africa and expressed appreciation on behalf of the African Union to the Government and people of Nigeria for hosting PAULESI and plead the Government to fulfil his commitment concerning its promise in 2013 to grant PAULESI with N250m as per of the financial, material and human contribution for the operationalization of PAULESI. He concluded his address reminding the graduands that "You are to be part of the driving force which is expected to network to change Africa's fortunes in the global arena".

H.E. Ambassador Stanislas Kamazi, Rwandan Ambassador to Abuja and representative of the Chair of the Permanent Representative Committee, also addressed the audience. After thanking the Government and people of Nigeria for the warm welcome granted to him, he expressed joy to take part in the graduation ceremony and witness the graduation of PAULESI PhD. students. Referring to PAU as a successful university he said: "the Pan African University is undoubtedly an important instrument for speeding up African integration; it is one of the best mechanisms for fast tracking African integration and tackling the structural problem of brain drain". He also hailed the spirit of Pan-Africanism and living-together exemplified by the young students in Ibadan.

Moreover, he laid special emphasis on the dual training perspective at PAU that is training both job seekers and job creators and expressed appreciation to all the stakeholders involved in the PAU project. He concluded by urging graduands to be the bright ambassadors of the Pan African University.

The second highlight of this event was the conferring of PhDs to students and the award of 6 Honorary Degrees to distinguished Nigerians and eminent citizens of the world who have unarguably distinguished themselves in their fields of endeavour.

This ceremony was also highlighted by the cutting of the anniversary cake and was closed by a dinner offered in the evening.

For further information please contact:
Chancelle Bilampassi Moutsatsi. E-mail: BilampassiC@africa-union.org

Further media inquiries should be directed to:
Mrs Wynne Musabayana | Deputy Head of Communication and Information Division | Information and Communication Directorate | African Union Commission | Tel: (251) 11 551 77 00 | Fax: (251) 11 551 78 44 | E-mail: MusabayanaW@africa-union.org | Web: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

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