

**Remarks of Her Excellency Mrs Jeannette Kagame,
Green Hills Academy Graduation,
Kigali, 11 June 2022**

Chairman of the Board of Green Hills Academy,

Head of School,

Principal of High School,

Members of the faculty and staff,

Esteemed parents,

Green Hills Academy Alumni,

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Class of 2022 'Inkomezamihigo',

Good Morning/Afternoon!

What a wonderful day!

I am grateful to see that what started as a kindergarten and primary project has grown into an institution that has created a life on its own.

You never cease to awe me! I speak for many when I say that we all look forward to coming to this annual celebration that always looks different.

Before I get into congratulations, because trust me, you are highly deserving of some commending, I must applaud the **Green Hills Academy Staff and Board**, for taking us thus far.

It has been 24 years since the establishment of this school, 24 years since the birth of a vision, and the realisation of a dream. Since then, **GHA** students have excelled the world over, and I am thankful that with your guidance, **Dear Staff, Board and Friends of the School,** we now have one more cohort, of gifted young students, to celebrate.

I believe that the contributions to our country, and to our world, of every graduate in front of me, will be impactful. I am certain that with more focus and drive, your presence in your community and beyond, will not just be felt – I believe that your presence will be highly favorable to us all.

Dear Inkomezamihigo,

The world is your oyster, and I hope that as you go about discovering it, you gather the diverse knowledge, the innovative thinking, and the cultural exposure that will help you to enrich your home.

I would tell you now to never stop reading, for reading, is the gift of travelling all over, within the serenity of your individual space.

You have proven through your academic performance thus far, that you are appreciative, of the powers of learning. For this, I congratulate you, and I trust that the families present here today, are happy to join me in celebrating you.

From the time our Rwanda was liberated two and a half-decade ago, we were tasked with rebuilding this land, into one that could offer you what you deserve. We believed that you deserved quality education, through competent institutions and general safety.

We believed that you deserved to mingle with avid young minds from the world over, and to feed your awareness of the world organically.

This was a challenging mission at the time, but one must never fear challenges, when their outcome is worth the efforts.

Your success in reaching this crucial stage in your education and life, Class of 2022, attests to one thing: The fight of your parents, to offer you a path of quality education, was worth every effort.

As much as can I stand here and praise you for your tenacity because there is plenty to be said, I would also like to shed light on your selflessness.

Just to name a few, you initiated the GHA Mutuelle Challenge 2022, you raised funds and donated sanitary materials to the CHUK hospital, you taught English at the Ihumure children's home as well as donating Christmas gifts.

In times that had discouraged some, you took it upon yourselves to become the light that your communities needed and for that I commend you!

You reminded each one of us that in what seems like dark times we, as Rwandans, will always rise to the occasion of helping our country in whatever way possible. You are truly **Inkomezamihigo!**

Congratulations Class of 2022!

If we are to consider the future in terms of the future leaders I see today, I am inclined to optimism, and even faith.

Nevertheless, if we are to gaze, with clarity and courage, at the fights present and possibly future, that are threatening the wellness of people around the world, it is evident, that hard work will be required, to overcome.

From Global Warming, to our regained familiarity with Global Pandemics, the future can feel daunting.

As I mentioned to your peers last year - but feel must be repeated entirely, there are still a variety of injustices that people across the world face based on their race, religion, gender, physical ability, and a variety of other demographic indicators.

What I have noted observing your work, and art, and confident self-expression, **Dear Graduates**, is that many of you have developed a sense of militancy, that disrupts and threatens, some of the norms, that are harmful to oppressed communities. You are a generation that refuses to be silenced, and I urge you to capitalise on this strength.

I will ask that you allow me one more advice, for as many of the people my age, I feel a protective urge over you.

As you go forth into the world, and discover good things that you perhaps did not before, by virtue of your newly-experienced adulthood,

- I urge you to remember one thing. The “good things” are typically cousins to the “bad, and the ugly”.

Your good judgement which you display as you reach, important milestones such as this one, is your shield against the occasional harshness of life. When the time comes, to celebrate one more of your wins, such as a great performance at university, or the obtaining of a good job, we will be there to root for you, and give you whatever support is within our means to offer you.

Dear Guests,

As we rebuild our country, we must remain aware of what a formidable asset we have in our youth. We are surrounded by heartfull, committed, daring and cultured youth. To the top performing students, you have once more excelled beyond the standards that we expect from you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We might be here today because we wish to celebrate them, but I believe that we are also here, because of the silent pledge we are making. It remains our responsibility, to offer these young people a helping hand.

Children are a blessing, and I am thankful that the ones in front of me are blessing us further, by earning their academic credentials, and making us proud.

Dear Inkomezamihigo,

It has been my pleasure to attend your graduation, and it is my belief, that we will see many more from you all.

Have a lovely afternoon!

Murakoze!