



REMARKS OF HER EXCELLENCY
FIRST LADY
MRS JEANNETTE KAGAME

Green Hills Academy Graduation



8TH JUNE 2024

Right Honorable Prime Minister,

Senior Officials Here Present,

Dear Friends,

Chairman and Members of the Board,

**Green Hills Academy Head of School, Principals and
Deans,**

Members of the Faculty and Staff,

Dear Parents & Alumni,

Dear Graduates, Indatwabigwi class of 2024,

- It's always a pleasure to be back! The GHA graduation ceremonies are so rewarding, and so joyful to attend.
- As you all know, for me, to be here is to be home. I'm grateful that while we get to celebrate these graduations every year, there is a distinct, a unique sense of pride each time. It's always wonderful, yet never quite the same.
- To the graduating class, the class **INDATWABIGWI**, congratulations!

- You did it! Enjoy this moment. You crossed this finish line, and completed one of the most comprehensive and demanding curriculum available to young students here and internationally.
- To the Educators that led our children to this moment, thank you. You have been a pillar of their future success, which I faithfully believe, is certain.
- Thank you to the parents who invested in stellar education for their bright young ones, thank you for accompanying our leaders of tomorrow into this crucial next chapter of their lives.
- Thank you for believing in the GHA mission.

Dear INDATWABIGWI,

- As they say ***“It’s only uphill from here”!***

- But as Rwandans are best placed to know, walking uphill does take stamina and determination to reach the top!
- Despite your talent, your brilliance, your exposure, which have allowed you all to shine as bright as you do today, never undermine the importance of consistency, discipline and hard work in your future education and endeavours.
- Remember that tertiary education is a level playing field; a place where brightness will only get you so far, while hard work will make all the difference.
- A place where discipline and systematic, organized work will make you excel, while procrastination and overreliance on your wits, will make you fall short of expectations.
- For those of you that have felt, throughout your secondary education, that you had to push a little more than others to cross the finish line, your efforts are all the more commendable!

- Do not stop now. Instead push harder, for I know, and so should you, that you absolutely can.
- Trust the parents whose hard work earned you a prestigious education, trust me: you will **never** regret giving your all to succeed!

Dear Graduates,

- We are overjoyed for you. See, we were once your age...believe it or not.
- We remember the excitement, the ambition, the desire for growth and adventure of your dynamic years.
- Your bright faces should confuse no one as to your capabilities. Many of you are wise beyond your years, I hear.

- So, come to us. Come to us with your innovative ideas, mobilize yourselves to contribute to the development of the country that has nurtured you, and that remains ever proud of you.
- Remember to always be accountable to yourselves. Your capacity for good judgment is certain; **you need only** make the right choices. And that is now exclusively, **your own** responsibility.
- Protect your mental health with healthy practices. Communicate as soon as you sense that you may need help, or simply love. Remember that some of the temptations you will encounter, will not be worth their unforgiving aftermaths.
- As you go off into a world that can be exploitative of your youth, be careful of your associations.
- Surround yourselves with people that elevate you, rather than pull you down.

- Use social media, do not let social media use you.
- Live in the moment, but do not let this moment compromise the more rewarding ones, that life can offer you.
- Choose friends that you would want your own children, to one day call family.
- Listen to your inner voice of wisdom, listen to your own family, listen to the community that has your best interests at heart. It is one of the best investments you will ever make....and never was a fruitful investment ever regretted!
- Decide now how you in turn plan on bettering the global community, for we are soon passing the mantle on to you. It is no secret that quality education is a privilege, but there's no shame to privilege per se, so long as it's used for good, to better the lives of those around us.

To Our Valedictorians,

- Amazing work indeed! I hope that your future successes will outdo this one. Excellence is your calling; never let it ring unanswered.

Now, please allow me to speak on behalf of the GHA Board.

To the teachers, to the faculty who have brought you here,

- Yours is an incredible responsibility!
- You shape the minds on which our future depends. What a noble mission to gracefully embrace.
- You have guided our children's intellectual blossoming, through pivotal developmental stages; you have watched as, from Kindergarten years to their Baccalaureate, they have grown more autonomous, more curious, more settled in their identities. You have observed protectively, as they discovered lifelong interests and chosen their career paths.

- No, it is certainly not the easiest of jobs, but it must be one of the most rewarding. We thank and applaud you.

Dear Principal Anna,

- There's little I could add to Director Daniel's wonderful words about you, your love for GHA, and what you've given our children. You have poured 18 whole years of diligent service into GHA.
- For perspective, 18 years amounts to the whole entire lives of the graduates we celebrate today, or perhaps a little more!
- So therefore, it makes perfect sense that today, Principal Anna, GHA celebrates you too. Thank you for these 18 years!

To you, Director Daniel Hollinger,

- Every year, your devotion to GHA's mission makes us all the more hopeful that Rwanda can stand at the forefront of Academic Excellence on the continent and beyond. May the success that will sprout from these young boys and girls always remind you of the exceptional value of your commitment.

Dear INDATWABIGWI,

- The name of your promotion in itself signifies “outstanding”, for this is what your performance has been.
- **“Out-standing” indeed!** This word is one you must honour for the rest of your adulthood.
- So dare to **stand out**. Stand out through the quality of your work. Stand out through your courage. Stand out through the sturdiness of your integrity. Stand out through your kindness.

- And when the time comes for you to take the reins in guiding our country to success, help us stand out through our shared greatness! Yes, you must now begin to exercise your power of choice, for adulthood will consistently require that you stand in your own.
- To those of you that have come to us from outside of Rwanda, I hope that you have found a worthy and loving home here.
- Should you return to your native one, may you stand out, even there, from your light, and from the learning and life experience that you have gathered here.
- Now, for I must not keep you too long....do not party **too** hard tonight, but do enjoy yourselves!
- You are loved, you are depended upon, and today, you are celebrated beyond what my words could ever capture.

- I wish you all success, and all the blessings your hearts desire. May you be protected in all your future endeavours.
- I thank you for the opportunity to be part of your special day.

Once again, **Congratulations INDATWABIGWI!**