

MADINA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

LAUNCHING CEREMONY

GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

YOUR EXCELLENCY, THE VICE PRESIDENT

OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

THE MINISTER FOR INFORMATION

MINISTERS OF STATE

MEMBERS OF THE DEPLOMAIC CORPS

THE VICE CHANCELLORS OF THE KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES**

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT PRESENT HERE

THE NATIONAL CHIEF IMAM

THE CHANCELLOR OF .M.I.S.T

M.I.S.T COUNCIL MEMBERS

THE CHIEF OF MADINA AND ELDERS

REPRESENTATIVES OF MUSLIM NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

MEMBERS OF FOMWAG AND OTHER MUSLIM WOMEN ORGANIZATIONS

MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY SERVICES

**THE MIST COMMUNITY, COMPRISING THE MIST MAIN CAMPUS, ALDIAA
SOCIETY AND QUR'AN COLLEGE**

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

INVITED GUESTS

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS

LADY AND GENTLEMEN

Assalaam Aleikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh.

It is, indeed, a pleasure and an honour for me to welcome you to the campus of the Madina Institute of Science and Technology (M.I.S.T). I have for some time now been looking forward to this day. For me, therefore, as indeed it is for all my colleagues who have been involved in the establishment of this Institute, today's event is a dream-come true.

Your Excellency, in 2008, Sheikh Nasser Mansour, the Chief Executive of Al Diaa Society, a Muslim non-Governmental Organization with several years of philanthropic activities in the country, floated the idea of a secular tertiary educational institution, based on Islamic principles and tenants to some members of the Lebanese and Egyptian communities resident in Ghana.

The idea was immediately embraced and steps were taken immediately to plan and execute it. As a result of the sheer magnitude of the project, there was the need to seek support from outside the country. Sheikh Nasser again, sold the idea to some philanthropists in Qatar, who, without the least hesitation, also accepted the idea. With a solid funding base established, the acquisition of the parcel of land and the construction of the buildings followed immediately

By the end of 2012 Your Excellency, almost all the physical infrastructure required to establish a university institution had been constructed and the group, now registered with the Registrar General's Department of the Republic of Ghana as the Madina Foundation for Science and Technology (MFST), tasked some consultants to start the paper work for the affiliation and subsequent accreditation of the Institute. The process was long and tedious, but at the end of the day, it has enabled us come out with programmes of enhanced quality and standards. The same applies to the physical structures which were put to safety standards tests to ensure that we provide safe classroom, office and residential facilities for the students and workers of M.I.S.T alike.

While the process of acquisition of accreditation was in progress, the MFST put the Governing Council of the Institute in place to draw policy guidelines for and to direct the development of the Institute, based on the vision of the sponsors. Members of the Council are drawn from Academia, Industry and Commerce to lend their knowledge, experience and expertise to charter the course of development of the Institute. They have since then, played their role very well and the result is what we are witnessing today.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is important to be informed on why Sheikh Nasser Mansour felt it was important to establish a university college like the Madina Institute of Science and Technology in Ghana. Sheikh Nasser during his stay in the country has been engaged in a lot of philanthropic work all over the country, this included the education sector. He easily recognized the country's shortcoming in the technical education sector, especially at the higher levels. He found this highly unacceptable, considering our efforts to develop and change our world classification. He particularly found it highly untenable that with our level of development, we still have to look outside for engineers for most of our heavy construction works and to run our factories. He vowed that anytime the opportunity came his way, he would contribute his widow's mite towards reversing this trend of affairs. That is how come he chose to establish a technological institute, the cost of doing so notwithstanding, especially as most private tertiary educational institutions simply veer away from that sector.

In trying to address this issue, Sheikh Nasser did not lose sight of the fact that training an engineer is a costly venture, which is one of the reasons why most private universities keep clear off it. He and members of the MFST decided that cost should not be a barrier to access. We have accordingly, directed that the fees should be pegged at such a low level so as to enable as many qualified candidates as possible to be admitted and trained here. This is being done without compromising the quality and standards of academic work. In addition to the low fees, the Foundation is still sourcing funding to provide scholarships to needy students.

The other main concern of Sheikh Nasser is that academic qualification not backed by moral rectitude and integrity is of no value to the country. He has always maintained that a dishonest academic or professional cannot be better than the armed robber. The objective,

therefore, of the Institute is to produce excellent graduates who will not only eschew impropriety, but also be willing to serve in their communities with a view to helping raise the standards of living of their people. The Islamic principles and tenets of morality and integrity are fundamental and underpin the training being offered at M.I.S.T. and infractions upon them will not be countenanced. The faculty and administrative staff are parentis in loco and also serve as role models for the students.

Your Excellency, the MFST plans that in their quest for academic and moral excellence, students of M.I.S.T should not lack anything in the form of physical infrastructure or teaching and learning materials. In addition to the buildings which have been completed, other buildings for more hostels, a permanent library and computer laboratory as well as a state of the art modern auditorium will soon be started. Currently, the construction of the building for the workshops for the School of Engineering, which is right before us, is in an advance stage of completion. It is our hope that we will get support from the government when we start to equip it by way of tax waivers, remissions, etc.

Ladies and gentlemen, from the foregoing it is obvious that M.I.S.T is not a business venture and has not been established for profit. With the fees as low as they are, one cannot even talk of cost recovery. It is, however, important that by the time it would be turning out its first graduates, M.I.S.T should be self sustaining and ready to be weaned off the support of the sponsors. In this regard, Your Excellency, members of the MFST in Ghana and, indeed, those abroad would very much appreciate your government's direct support to the students through the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) by way of the provision of reprographic equipment and most importantly, a bus. This way, the sponsors will have enough funds to continue the planned expansion works while maintaining the low fees without which many qualified students would be denied access to the Institute.

Your Excellency and Ladies and Gentlemen, many individuals and groups played vital roles in the establishment of this Institute and I cannot end my speech without acknowledging their invaluable contribution. Sheik Nasser Mansour, the visionary who conceived the idea of the institute, deserves special commendation for his foresight. Our deepest gratitude goes to Dr. Ahmad Ibrahim Alemadi and Ahmad Hammadi, both of Qatar. The National Accreditation Board went beyond its normal monitoring and

supervisory role when its Executive Secretary himself, excited over the idea of a technical institute, visited the Institute personally at the very onset and offered us very useful suggestions. The Vice Chancellors of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and the University of Development Studies and their faculties are worth mentioning for helping to bring our facilities and programmes up to the standard we have them today. The Al Dyanat Foundation of Turkey came to our aid to ensure water security on campus. For this, we are immensely grateful. We also owe our father, the National Chief Imam, tons of gratitude for his personal interest and encouragement, moral support and prayers. Last but not the least, we are highly indebted to the former and current Presidents of the Institute and the entire M.I.S.T community for the courage, commitment and resilience they exhibited throughout the process. May Allah (SWT) bless and richly reward everyone who contributed, no matter the level, towards the establishment of M.I.S.T

Thank you for your patience.