

Summary: Investiture Address of Prof. Samuel Kwasi Dartey-Baah as Vice-Chancellor of Central University

Introduction and Acknowledgements

Prof. Samuel Kwasi Dartey-Baah began his investiture address with extensive acknowledgments, recognizing key figures across academia, government, traditional leadership, clergy, diplomatic corps, and the Central University community. He expressed deep gratitude to God, his family, academic mentors, and institutional stakeholders, including the University Council, for their confidence in appointing him Vice-Chancellor.

He particularly acknowledged the immediate past Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Bill Buenar Puplampu, for his leadership and achievements, highlighting the continuity of legacy that has brought Central University to its current position.

Theme: “Building on Legacy, Leading with Vision”

Central to Prof. Dartey-Baah’s speech is the theme “Building on Legacy, Leading with Vision.” This reflects a dual commitment: preserving the achievements of past leadership while strategically positioning the university to meet 21st-century challenges. He recognized the university’s journey of resilience and transformation, driven by its mission of raising virtuous and transformational leaders.

The Call to Leadership

Accepting the Vice-Chancellorship with humility and determination, Prof. Dartey-Baah acknowledged the enormous responsibilities that come with the role, especially in an era demanding deliberate, visionary, and ethical leadership. He noted that the university, like others globally, must adapt to rising expectations from students, parents, government, and industry for relevance, accountability, innovation, and impact.

Strategic Vision for Central University

Prof. Dartey-Baah laid out a bold and structured vision aimed at transforming Central University into a model 21st-century African university. His vision is built on **five strategic pillars**:

1. Promoting Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Research

He emphasized aligning academic programmes with evolving market demands and international standards. A key initiative will be the establishment of three research clusters:

- Engineering & the Built Environment
- Health & Applied Sciences
- Education & the Humanities

A Research Management Office will be created to support faculty in securing grants, forming partnerships, and contributing to national and international academic discourse.

2. Fostering a Student-Centred Environment

Students remain the heartbeat of the university. Prof. Dartey-Baah committed to a holistic educational experience that includes:

- Mentorship
- Internships
- Mental health services
- Entrepreneurship hubs

He announced a Call for Expressions of Interest for private sector partnerships in infrastructure development, published in the *Daily Graphic* on October 1, 2025. This marks the start of a process to improve facilities and expand student accommodation.

Efforts are also underway to operationalise the **University Hospital**, with a dedicated committee expected to present its framework by the end of October 2025.

Other student-focused priorities include:

- Strengthening career and counselling services
- Enhancing academic support
- Expanding internship networks, especially leveraging ICGC affiliations
- Introducing a Corporate Executives in Residence programme for mentorship

3. Ensuring Financial Sustainability

Prof. Dartey-Baah emphasized the need for diversified income streams through:

- Executive education
- Consulting services
- Alumni engagement
- Fundraising
- Developing a university endowment culture

The Advancement Office will play a central role in driving these initiatives to ensure long-term sustainability.

4. Enhancing Brand, Compliance, and Community Engagement

He committed to raising Central University's public profile through:

- A revitalized Public Affairs Unit
- A strategic media campaign
- Stronger regional and international partnerships

The university will actively participate in the Education Collaborative, a continental initiative led by Ashesi University, to foster innovation and collaboration among African higher education institutions.

5. Cultivating a High-Performance Work Environment

Prof. Dartey-Baah highlighted the importance of faculty and staff, promising:

- Professional development
- Equitable work culture
- Clear career progression
- Leadership development for early-career academics

He aims to foster a workplace grounded in respect, accountability, and shared purpose.

Faith, Innovation, and Purpose

As a faith-based institution, Central University's identity is rooted in Kingdom values. However, Prof. Dartey-Baah underscored the need to be responsive to modern challenges, balancing faith with innovation. This includes:

- Advancing biblically grounded research through the Daniel Institute
- Engaging in transformative education where theology, science, and social impact intersect

National Challenges and Higher Education's Role

Prof. Dartey-Baah addressed a critical national issue: youth unemployment and the misalignment between education and job market needs. He warned that Ghana cannot continue educating youth for a future that does not exist, calling for a major overhaul of higher education.

“We cannot build a 21st-century Ghana on a 20th-century higher education model.”

He positioned Central University as an agile, innovative institution ready to lead in bridging this gap, emphasizing the need for education to be a launchpad for innovation, productivity, and purpose, not merely a paper chase.

A Call to Government: Policy Support for Private Universities

Prof. Dartey-Baah made a strong appeal to the Government of Ghana to recognize and support private universities as equal partners in national development. He stressed that:

- Private universities educate a significant share of tertiary students
- They are not competitors but co-builders of the national future

He called for policy parity, research funding, faculty development programmes, and infrastructure support, urging inclusion in national education planning.

“We are not asking for favours. We are asking for fairness.”

A Vision Beyond Graduation

Looking forward, Prof. Dartey-Baah envisages a Central University that goes beyond academics to transform lives. He emphasized the nurturing of:

- Ethical character
- National responsibility
- Entrepreneurial mindset
- Compassionate leadership

He invited stakeholders: aculty, alumni, students, government, and civil society to partner in building this future.

Closing Remarks: A Call to Stewardship

In concluding, Prof. Dartey-Baah cast the future of Central University as a shared responsibility. He appealed for collective stewardship to fulfill the university's divine mandate of raising transformational leaders. His message was one of boldness, humility, and hope, rooted in service, national relevance, and global ambition.

Conclusion

Prof. Dartey-Baah's address outlined a clear and ambitious roadmap for Central University, defined by continuity, innovation, and collaboration. He positioned the university as a strategic driver of national development, calling on all stakeholders to join in shaping a more relevant, inclusive, and impactful higher education ecosystem.

"We are not just educating minds; we are shaping destinies... Let us rise to the moment with bold ideas, firm resolve, and unwavering hope."