

**SPEECH BY HIS MAJESTY AND CHANCELLOR KING LETSIE III
AT THE 43RD CONVOCAION FOR THE AWARD OF
CERTIFICATES AND CONFERMENT OF CERTIFICATES
AT NUL, ROMA**

22ND SEPTEMBER 2018

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER,
HONOURABLE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE,
HONOURABLE SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,
YOUR LADYSHIP THE CHIEF JUSTICE,
YOUR LORDSHIP PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF APPEAL,
HONOURABLE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER,
HONOURABLE CABINET MINISTERS,
HONOURABLE JUDGES OF THE HIGH COURT,
YOUR EXCELLENCIES, MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND
HEADS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS,
CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL,
VICE-CHANCELLOR,
MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE,
PRESIDENT OF THE SRC AND THE STUDENT UNION,
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS AND GRADUANDS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be back the National University of Lesotho to be part of this momentous occasion in the calendar of the University. It is with a sense of joy that I welcome each and every one of you to the first of the two graduation ceremonies of 2018 at the National University of Lesotho.

Graduation ceremonies remain a major highlight in our University's events calendar. They afford us a special opportunity to recognise, honour and celebrate the academic success and achievements of our graduands. Graduation marks one of the most memorable experiences in the life of a young person. It is a moment of joy and pride; a time for celebration, reflection and thanksgiving.

Our warm congratulations go to each one of you, our graduands, on your great accomplishments. You and your families are justifiably proud of your remarkable achievements. We take great pride too in your fine accomplishments!

I wish to extend special congratulations to those graduands who are the first in their families to earn a university degree. I know too well what a proud and special moment this is for all of you. A number of years from now you will look back on this day with great fondness and deep sense of fulfilment.

For most of you, the journey to this day has been a long and arduous one. It has been marked by twists and turns, failures, disappointments and losses that threatened to derail your dreams, hopes and aspirations. The fact that you are here this morning is testament to your incredible resilience, fortitude and resolve to rise above all hurdles that lay in your way. Your steadfast determination, perseverance and commitment to succeed have carried you through. For having reached this epoch moment in your lives, we offer you our hearty congratulations!

To the parents, guardians, siblings, friends and loved ones, I wish to extend our deep appreciation for the unstinting support, encouragement and constant reassurance you have provided to this cohort of young people over the years. You were always there to cheer them on, you were there to lift them when they lost hope and, above all, you were there to love them when they needed you most. This graduation is a fitting tribute to all

that you have done for them. Today should fill you with gratitude, pride and accomplishment as you witness your tireless efforts coming to fruition.

I also wish to extend our profound gratitude to the lecturers, tutors, laboratory technicians, computer assistants, and their administrative staff for their guidance, mentoring, support and encouragement during the demanding times of the studies of the graduands. I also acknowledge with great gratitude the important role played by the support staff, student leaders, sport clubs and other groupings in creating a supportive intellectual and social environment for our students that enabled them to grow, develop, and succeed in their academic endeavours. The achievements of the graduands before us today should serve as a reward for you.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Human resources remain a critical element for a teaching and learning institution; we are grateful for the loyal, dedicated and committed academic and support staff of NUL. It is their contribution that has led to the growth and development of NUL that we all take pride in.

Being the first of the two graduation ceremonies of 2018, let me pay special attention to the faculties whose products are graduating today being the Faculties of Education, Humanities and Law. Today's graduands are distinguished individuals whose profound and exceptional contributions to our nation and humankind should be meaningful and significant. These are women and men whose significant achievements have set them apart from others; and those achievements are consonant with the institutional mission and values of NUL. We are indeed grateful for your efforts.

As we honour and celebrate your successes, we need to remind you that our country is in desperate need of quality leadership that is honest, caring and courageous and that exudes moral and ethical values. We need leadership that inspires others to have confidence in themselves and hope for a brighter future amidst all the challenges that may be confronting us. The kind of leadership that is not measured in terms of material possessions rather by conduct that is beyond reproach and matched with impeccable integrity and great vision. We remain hopeful that, as you develop your character, you

will aspire to possess those noble attributes that will put you in good stead to selflessly serve your nation with dedication and commitment.

Our dear graduands,

We hope that your education has equipped you with relevant knowledge and has inculcated in you a value system that will allow you to create a different and a better future for our society. Equally important, your education has given you the skills and abilities to be able to contribute to a tomorrow that is more just, more fair, more honest and more respectful of every citizen. Whatever path you choose to pursue, you are challenged and called upon to make a positive contribution in your environment. As you cross the stage on this auspicious occasion, your challenge is to hold fast to the belief that you can and will contribute to our nation-building efforts.

Your graduation this morning fills us with hope that the future of our nation will be different to the one we experience today because of all that you can bring to the task of making it a better place. As you cross the stage on this auspicious occasion, your challenge is to hold fast to the belief that you can and will contribute to our joint future as a democracy in which so much is at stake. You are more than equal to the challenges that face our society and humankind.

With your graduation this morning, you join a small and privileged segment of our society – a knowledge elite. In the globalised world, membership of this knowledge elite has the potential to bring enormous financial and social rewards. However, it carries with it special obligations and responsibilities that you cannot escape; it is the responsibility to strive to act in a manner that illustrious and admirable for others to emulate.

We send you out into the world as men and women who are liberated, educated, compassionate and caring people so that your presence can make a difference to others around you. We are sending you out as a force for good. We are sending you out to serve our society and humanity with honour, integrity and humility. Above all, as a member of the knowledge elite, we are sending you out as a voice of the voiceless; as a voice of reason, truth, justice and hope.

We are cognisant of the fact that you may not have had the opportunity to learn everything you need to know to navigate the challenges and pitfalls of life. But reason and experience tell us that you could not have learned everything in such a short period of time. However, what your education at this University has given you is the ability to learn new things that will increase your skills and knowledge on how to better navigate the challenges and pitfalls of life.

As you move on with the next phase of your lives, never cease to appreciate the value of learning, the significance of knowledge, the strength of ideas, the merit of asking questions, the usefulness of theory, the need for reason and evidence, the power of logic, the benefits that come from clear thinking and thoughtful argument. Above all, never forget that one of the most important things you have been taught here is the value of keeping a mind open to views and perspectives that are different to those you may hold.

Your graduation, this morning, entitles you to join a special family of NUL alumni – this a distinguished group of women and men who are making remarkable contributions in many and diverse fields of human endeavours. They are found in our classrooms as teachers and educators; in our courts as lawyers, magistrates and judges; in our newsrooms as journalists; they are leaders in different spheres of life and entrepreneurs of note. They are all playing their part to create a better society and a better world. Inspired by our motto “*Nete ke Thebe*” and guided by our values of professionalism, innovativeness, diligence, ethical conduct and social empathy, they are committed to bequeathing future generations a better society and a better world than the one they inherited from the generation before theirs. We will expect no less from you!

With a qualification from the National University of Lesotho, you have been prepared to negotiate successfully and overcome any challenge that comes your way. The quality education you have received has provided you with a solid foundation to launch a successful career.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Let me conclude by paying a special tribute to the wonderful women and men who have worked tirelessly to make our graduation ceremonies possible. They normally work

behind the scenes to ensure that our graduation ceremony proceeds without a hitch. These are the people who have put in extra hours to ensure that the names of our graduands appeared on the graduation programme, in the right place, in the right order and for the right qualification. They wanted to be sure that the moment of glory of each one of our graduands was a truly memorable experience.

To you Mr. Vice-Chancellor and your Management Team, I would like to say it is through your foresight and strategic leadership that the ship that you are steering is still afloat despite the turbulence brought about by the challenges that face institutions of higher learning in this country and elsewhere.

Once again, congratulations to you graduands and to your proud families; I hope you will enjoy and savour this precious moment of glory.

I thank you all for your kind attention.

KHOTSO! PULA!

NALA!