***SPEECH OF INES’ VICE CHANCELLOR***

***14th GRADUATION CEREMONY***

***15th December 2022***

1. **Salutations**

* Your Excellency Rt Reverend Vincent HAROLIMANA, Bishop of Ruhengeri Diocese and The Chancellor of INES Ruhengeri,
* Madam, the Representative of the Minister of Education
* Governor of the Northern Province; Guest Speaker, Honorable KANYARUKIGA Ephrem,
* Founders of INES Ruhengeri,
* Chairperson Dr. Jean Baptiste MAZARATI, and INES Ruhengeri Council Members,
* Deputy Vice Chancellors,
* Members of INES Management Committee and Senate,
* Distinguished Guests,
* INES Ruhengeri Staff,
* Parents and Guardians,
* Graduands and Students,
* Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocol observed.

1. ***Welcome and Congratulatory Remarks***

I am delighted to welcome you all in this congregation of our 14th Graduation Ceremony of INES Ruhengeri. And I firstly take this opportunity to congratulate all our graduands for completing their studies successfully. I thank all other stakeholders of INES Ruhengeri, namely: Parents, Guardians, Staff, INES Management, INES Council, INES General Assembly, among others, for their collective efforts whose culmination is the graduands we present to you today. On this, allow to invite some guest to stand up for the recognition.

***The List of guests by Protocol: …..***

1. ***14th Graduation Ceremony***

Your Lordship Chancellor, Representative of the Minister of Education, Governor of the Northern Province, Ladies and Gentlemen, the happiest moment for a teacher is when a student he/she has been nurturing comes of age and fulfils the requirements to move to the next stage of life. I therefore extend my heartfelt congratulations to the 2022 class. I also extend congratulations to all the staff of INES-Ruhengeri for this second ceremony this same year; this required efforts at all levels. During our last graduation in March this year INES presented **874** graduates. Today, we are presenting to you, Chancellor, **889** graduands including 18 Master’s candidates as follows:

From *the Faculty of Applied Fundamental Sciences:*

* *Civil Engineering*: 215
* *Biotechnology:63*
* *Biomedical Laboratory sciences*:157
* *Computer Science:36*
* *Land Survey:122*
* *Land Administration and management:83*
* *Statistics Applied to Economy:25*

From the Faculty of Economics, Social Sciences and Management:

* Applied Economics:44
* Enterprises Management:59
* Master in Microfinance: 7
* Master in Taxation: 11

From the Faculty of Education:

* Education in French and English: 24

*From the Faculty of Law: 43*

Out of the total number of 889 of the today graduands, 483 are females representing 54.3 % while 406 are males 45.6 %. This is good sign of breaking away from the believes saying that ladies fear sciences. Congratulations to our ladies, congratulations to our Nation which promotes girls education in all disciplines.

The biggest numbers of the today graduands are in Civil Engineering, Biomedical Laboratory Sciences and Land Survey.

Your Lordship Chancellor,

By the graduation ceremony, we are celebrating many achievements of INES-Ruhengeri.

First of all, we are celebrating the resilience of INES community. Indeed, this is the second graduation ceremony after the covid-19 pandemic. As we are aware, the consequences of the pandemic were aggravated by the Russia-Ukraine war. But, INES-RUHENGERI is keeping growing.

1. ***Student Matters*** 
   1. ***Student Enrolment***

Your Lordship Chancellor, Government Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen, during this academic year 2022/2023, we admitted and registered **988** fresh students and **2786** continuing students; and we are waiting for February-March intake. So far, we have a total number of **3774** students. This has been possible through the tireless efforts of various directorates not to mention the fact that INES has strengthened its name not only in Rwanda, but also in different African countries. Actually we have at INES more than 321 students from **17** nations.

* 1. ***Student Co-Curricular activities and students’ welfare***

All these Students are following both academic and extra-curricular activities in normal conditions. Through different students’ associations and clubs, especially through INES-Students Union, sports, cultural and religious events are regularly organized and supported by the Management of INES-RUHENGERI.

Students are also participating in the community outreach activities. And all these are contributing to the smooth running of courses.

Concerning the students’ welfare, we are making efforts for meeting and keeping standards in terms of accommodation, food, health, entertainment and security. It is in this line a new hostel block is under construction. The new staff members have been recruited and the recruitment of others is in process for ensuring the students welfare and quality. We have the students of quality; we also have the staff of quality.

1. ***Academic Matters***

Concerning the academic matters, teaching and learning, INES wants to continue challenging students to think big and critically. Dear students this is your task. In this line, the journey towards INES Smart Campus is ongoing, INES is committed to teach in blended mode.

In the same line, today we are celebrating the Accreditation of New programs and Revision of existing programs.

To ensure that INES Ruhengeri meets the market needs, the Management has continuously improved the existing curricula and new programs were designed and approved: Three new Master’s programs were accredited by HEC: Master of Laws in Applied Criminal Law, Master of Science in Biomedical Laboratory Science, Master of Science in Software Engineering.

A Bachelor of Science in Information Sciences and Library Management has been accredited.

The Program of Land Administration and Management was revised and approved as Land Administration, Valuation and Real Estate Management with two options: Option of Land Administration and Management, and the Option of Valuation and Property Management.

* 1. ***Teacher Professional Development***

Your Lordship Chancellor, Ladies and gentlemen, having good programs, requires to have competent teaching staff. That is why, through Partnership, especially through Erasmus mundi programs some Faculty members were involved in staff mobility for a short term staff development. Others are under study leave with financial support from INES to upgrade their degrees and competences. To achieve these we have a strong partnership with Old Universities in Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Switzerland, Great Britain, USA, Italy, Spain, China, etc.

* 1. ***Establishment of Centres, Research, Innovation, International conferences, linkage with industry.***

However, having good programs, competent staff and infrastructure are not enough.

In the line with the orientation of Applied Sciences, the success requires to go beyond the routine; to go an extra mile. That is why in addition to the Centre of Innovation and Incubation Centre (INNOVIC), and STEM Power Centre, INES-Ruhengeri is going to implement a project on Career Advisory Center in partnership with MasterCard Foundation. This project is aiming at advising and guiding students on their career and dreams from Secondary schools. I take this opportunity to thank the Minister of Education and MasterCard Foundation who supported this project.

It is also a great opportunity for us to celebrate the achievements of INES through the 13th AARSE International Conference. It is in partnership with the African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE) that INES-RUHENGERI organized and hosted that international conference under the theme "Space and geospatial technologies for the Africa we want" in October 2022. It was an excellent success for INES and its partners.

1. ***Quality Assurance***

Your Lordship, Chancellor, Government Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen,

All these efforts are part of quality education assurance. Indeed, teaching without taking into account the quality assurance could sound synonymy of spoiling one’s time and money. INES-Ruhengeri is making all efforts to keep the quality of education. On this, I am thanking very much the HEC for the partnership that it shows us. I am also thanking all partners of INES-RUHENGERI, especially the ones who offer internship to our students, the ones who pay scholarship for students and the ones who intervene in research and teaching activities in different manners.

***Conclusion***

Your Lordship Chancellor, Government Authorities, Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no doubt that INES has grown to maturity thanks to the founders, INES Council, Senior Management Committee and Senate for providing great leadership and support. This is also due to a good partnership with the Government Authorities at different levels, Ministerial, Provincial and District level, and especially the security we enjoy thanks to our men and women in uniform. We appreciate very much your sacrifice for the good of our Nation. Next year we are celebration 20 years of existence thanks to the efforts of all of you.

I thank all our guests for having accepted our invitation to come to celebrate these achievements. We do appreciate your love and commitment.

To all graduands, Parents, guardians and INES Staff, thank you once again for embarking INES brand and together we shall unlock infinite possibilities.

Dear graduands, today after this ceremony, you are turning to the grand family of Alumni. Please wherever you may be keep in touch and be involved. With you, INES has made history. I am confident that INES has given you the opportunity to attain all the necessary competences needed in your area of specialization. Confidently, go out there and with industriousness and integrity, change the world to be a better place to live. Forget the mistakes of the past if you have made them here, think positive because attitude and mindset are everything. What you think is what you become, what you feel is what you will attract, what you imagine is what you will create. Always keep the time and keep you well. Think that you are the best; hope for the best; work for the best; expect the best.

Thank you very much. May God bless you all!