



UPEACE GRADUATION EVENT SPEECHES

December 2nd, 2022



University for Peace



ANITA KIKI GBEHO, UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S DEPUTY SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR SOMALIA

Your Excellency President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, Ministers, deputy ministers, distinguished senior government officials, His Excellency rector of Upeace, Prof. Samuel the director, distinguished faculty members, Upeace Somalia graduation students, Ladies and gentlemen good afternoon.

I am pleased to join you this afternoon to celebrate the achievements of the 166 graduates, the University's 2nd graduates in Somalia. I thank the UN University for Peace for holding this event here in Mogadishu, thereby ensuring the positive stories of countries like Somalia are also talked.



Of the 166 certificates that will be conferred of which 148 are masters degrees and 80 PHD's, I'm pleased to know his Excellency the president Hassan sheikh Mohamud will receive a PHD in peace government and development. I am also pleased to know some of today's graduates are from my own organization, the United Nations, congratulations to all of you.

Graduates, this is an important milestone in your personal lives but also a positive milestone for Somalia. Education transforms lives and such is the foundation pillar of the United Nation's mission to build peace, eradicate poverty and drive sustainable development. Education whether formal or informal empowers and enables. It drives upwards social economic mobility, it is the most efficient leveler and perhaps most important of all education provides opportunities for its recipients to contribute towards Nation building. I can think of few places where the fruits of education are more relevant no more impactful than in Somalia.

Mr President, Somalia has been clear about its strategic priorities and the United Nations has been equally sure and equally clear about its support. These priorities include; compacting drought and Climate change, security, reconciliation, state building, and peace building, these are all challenges that require both innovators, creative thinkers and courageous leadership.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, a new cohort stand in front of whom stand before you. Today, graduates, the knowledge you have gained over the past few years can make a tangible difference in realizing these goals. You are part of a diverse and privileged cohort of students following the footsteps of several accomplished alumni. What will your mark on Somalia society be? How will you ensure Somalia's continued journey towards a sustainable peace and development, these are questions you must ask yourselves as you leave the confines of the UN university for peace. I also urge you to live by the values of amber martyr; that's to live no one behind, like your leadership be characterized by how you empower others to lead with you like your leadership encourage you share your knowledge on platforms and influence others not only the elites but also young people, women, minorities and persons with disabilities, like your leadership be defined by compassion and regard for those who are less privileged.

I wish you the very best on this next face of your journey as leaders in your various walks of life, I congratulate all of you and I look forward to witnessing the impact of your contributions towards a peaceful and stable Somalia where no one is left behind. I thank you.



H.E TIINA INTELMAAN -EUROPEAN UNION AMBASSAS- DOR TO SOMALIA

His Excellency President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, Your Excellency the minister of Education, Honorable Rector, and government ministers, first, thank you for inviting me to witness this graduation ceremony. We are all for peace, and the United Nations was created to promote peace around the globe.

The European Union was also created around the idea of peace, but despite all the talks about peace and all our support for peace, war and conflicts are raging worldwide, including in Europe. Thus, peace education, Education and peace are more relevant than ever. I am humbled to learn what the University of Peace is doing worldwide, especially in Somalia.



All congratulations to the graduates, especially to you, Honorable president. Education is a tool but also a weapon. We hear that international partners have come to Somalia with open hearts to assist you to be in peace, but the heavy lifting has to be done by the Somalis themselves, and we are witnessing how this beautiful country is rising through its future better future under the leadership of you Mr. president.

On behalf of the European Union, my best congratulations for the future around this fantastic academic achievement.

Thank you.

DR. LALA BEN BARKA- UPEACE COUNCIL MEMBER

His Excellency Dr Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, president of the federal republic of Somalia; her Excellency Mrs Anita, acting special representative of the Secretary general of Somalia, his Excellency Ambassador Soeuf Mohamed Ameen, special representative of the chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and head of ATMIS, her Excellency Mrs Tina

INTELMAN EU AMBASSADOR to Somalia, his Excellency Mr Larry US Ambassador to Somalia, my brother-in-law, federal and state ministers present, heads of diplomatic mission accredited to Somalia, members of the international community to Somalia, Dr Francisco Rector of Upeace, director generals, rectors, vice-chancellors and presidents of universities in Somalia, graduates and now upeace alumni, ladies and gentlemen, Today is an important day for Somalia. Today is an important day for Upeace, Today is an important day for Africa, and Today is an important day for the World.



I want to begin by congratulating the soon to be masters and DR graduates for successfully completing their studies, I know how I felt 37 years ago when I graduated from the University of southern California in Los Angeles for my PHD, looking at you Today, brings fresh memories of that feeling of achievement, however Today is not about me, it is all about you, Today marks a milestone events in the lives of our graduating students, graduation is an occasion for celebration, representing the combination of your loads of hard work, commitment and focus, you and your families have made sacrifices to achieve this goal and we salute you all, we recognize that despite the attainment of a master or Doctorate degree in a prestigious global higher education such as Upeace is an event to be celebrated especially with in Somalia context, as it is often in victims of obstacles such as conflict, terrorism and the numerous of the challenges, Today we are here to acknowledge your efforts to thank those who have made sacrifices on your behalf to congratulate you on staying the course despite obstacles that may have come your way. We celebrate your achievements and wish you well on the next chapter of your intellectual and career journey.

Achieving your master's degree or PhD is a product of collective effort; parents, guardians, families, sometimes an entire community, sponsors and funders at the University academia and support staff have all walked this journey with you. So we should come together as a community to share our Pride and the achievements of more than 140 masters and more than 20 PHDs. I am addressing my remarks to those who sit before us as the graduating class; whether you are continuing further studies or entering the World of work; graduation is an occasion where you may ask yourself where to go next. You may be considering the next stage in your life's purpose and how you will use the qualifications, you just achieved.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, as a speaker, I'm called upon to either praise or advice students graduating to face the World; looking at the calibre of students graduating and looking at his Excellency, the president, what am I expected to say? Am I expected to advise the president facing some of the toughest challenges any president in Africa has ever met? No, I will not do that. I will instead praise you all for the courage with which you all faced the challenges, so my first question for you to think about is, as you obtain your master's or PHD certificate, which is a reflection of your knowledge, what are you going to do with it? Some of you are experts in disaster resilience leadership, some of you are experts in human rights and international law, some are experts in environment and development, some of you have patience, some have kindness, some have love whatever it is, whatever your gift is what are you going to do with what you have? I want you to reflect deeply on that; for some, today is the beginning, and it can be very challenging. You are graduating from a World different from when you were born and when you started your various study programs. It is a new world out there, so do what you feel passionate about, feel passionate about your country, feel passionate about your family, feel passionate about your friends, be thankful, and be grateful. You will ensure that you make the World a better place, make the lives of those you meet better, and make your country better than you found it.

It is a responsibility to make Somalia better. Somalia was beautiful, and Somalia is becoming attractive again, be the architect of that beautiful Somalia. That's your calling. Ladies and gentlemen, Today the UN commemorate the international day for the abolition of slavery; Today, the worst thing about slavery is the slavery of the man; Education should emancipate us from slavery, as Sang by Bob Marley, for the learned ones in the group as you deploy and employ the knowledge from your program you must take in consideration a few tips in your daily life, ensure that you have to plan every day, you have to be organized, you have Heard the saying that we don't intend to fail we failed to plan, complex work works, working hard is what successful people do, the graduates we are celebrating your achievement in Somalia from a very unique and prestigious university, as a member of Upeace council I have seen. I see the importance of Upeace in the World, especially in Africa and Somalia.



Somalia faces enormous challenges now, and as I watch the courage of his Excellency President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who has not given up hope and has demonstrated the importance of knowledge by acquiring it himself, it was president Nelson Mandela who once said, Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the World, to my mind, this refers not only to Education as a tool but it treats people with esteem and the ability to do thing thus doing the thing, making thing, ways to do them better and earning an income all those do change our World, but on a more philosophical level education as a weapon to change the World challenges the notion of colonial and traditional approaches to Education which work as weapons of indoctrination and trenching inequality and operation not only with the selection of what people were taught but also in how they were taught to think about themselves. Changing the World through the weapon of Education is about the power of Education to bring light rather than destruction, to change how people feel about themselves and the World.

At Upeace, Education is a weapon that eliminates ignorance and fear, spotlights prejudice and bias, enhances equality through the development of all skills and intellectual capacity and empowers people in their choice of how to think, act and be. In conclusion, I will refer to the importance of Education in the context of Somalia by quoting Former human secretary general Kofi Annan who said, Education is peacebuilding by another name; as Somalia confront the challenges of insecurity, Education is and will always be the primary weapon for long term peace building.

His Excellency Dr Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, president of the federal republic of Somalia, you make us all proud. Your example should be known and appreciated by all your close shares, leaders of the people of Africa and the World; thank you. Congratulations to the graduating class of Upeace Africa 2022. Long live the University for peace, long live the United Nations, long live the federal republic of Somalia and all this blessed day of Frida, Jumaa. May Allah bless this nation.

Thank you.

Prof. Samuel Kale Ewusi- Regional Director, UPEACE Africa.

Your Excellency President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, president of the federal republic of Somalia, her Excellency Mrs Kiki Gbeho, deputy special representative of the secretary general to Somalia and UIC, his Excellency Ambassador Soeuf Mohamed Ameen, special representative of the chairperson of the African Union commission for Somalia and head of ATMIS, her Excellency Mrs Tina INTELMAN EU AMBASSADOR to Somalia, his Excellency Ambassador Larry Andre Jr, US Ambassador, her Excellency Dr Lala, Member of Upeace council and former



deputy executive secretary of the united nations, federal and state ministers present, heads of diplomatic mission accredited to Somalia, members of the international community, director generals, directors and presidents of Universities in Somalia, fellow graduates, ladies and gentlemen, I stand on all other protocols, my job Today is very simple, it is to speak a little bit about the Africa program, the University for peace commonly called Upeace is Today in Somalia thanks to a lot of People some of who you didn't see Today.

A couple of years ago, a young handsome Somali came to my office and said, you know Somalia needs peace, and I said, do you mean the Somalia where Mogadishu is? He said yes, and Today the rest is history. He said I would invite you to come to Somalia. At that point, from Ethiopia, there was no direct Ethiopian airways flight to Somalia, so we had to fly to Kenya and then to Mogadishu; flying into Mogadishu, you could see these beautiful sandy beaches.

I wondered what I was reading on international media, I asked whether it was the same place, but then everyone in Upeace seemed to talk about Professor Samuel, which is my first name. However, I have no power to decide to bring Upeace to Somalia or anywhere, so I will invite you today to give a hand of applause to the person who took that decision, and when he said go, I asked how? So I invite you to provide a writing of applause to my rector Dr Francisco. We are here today because you made that decision mine was simply a recommendation, and the recommendation could be accepted or not. Today we are doing the 2nd graduation but the first graduation of PhD not only in Somalia but in Africa. The Africa program has been in Africa for 20 years. Still, we have the first doctorate graduation in Somalia, and I need to take you back to the discussions I had when writing the recommendation to establish Upeace in Somalia.

I had this conversation with my boss and he said, Samuel are you sure, I said yes I have been there and hugely when you talk about Somalia and Mogadishu everybody goes online and what they see is not what you are seeing here Today, they don't see graduation, they don't see the beautiful beaches like Lido Beach which I have been to several times, they don't see ordinary people going about their businesses, they don't see children going to school, they don't see people selling, they simply see insecurity, just one thing and that's what the Nigerian writer Ngozi Mwela said, the dangers of a single story, what's out there is a single story, now in this conversation which took place over a period of time, the question was how possible was it to establish Upeace here, then I in making argument said of course Upeace is the University of Peace, I always say it is a single subject university, if Upeace has to be in one place in Africa it has to be in Somalia because the mission of the University is to lesson the obstacles to peace and therefore I said, a doctor works in a hospital and we have to bring peace to anywhere it has to be Somalia because it was ground zero of conflict in Africa remember Dr Mohamed Osman talked about State collapse and thankfully the director accepted and we started making plans to establish the campus, now we decided deliberately to establish the campus out of the effort to make sure that there was access of somalis into the campus, we faced a few challenges and I am thankful and grateful that some of the people who stood by us including the number one citizen Today in this country who stood by us is graduating Today, congratulations. Somalia is an excellent sight for Upeace Africa, and Mr rector Upeace started in Somalia; as you well know, with no money, we are seeing today humans' ability to achieve things and make things out of nothing. We realized that many students, as I can see, just about 10 per cent of the applicants who applied to Upeace can be admitted. We need arguments for the tuition, and tuition to Upeace in Somalia can cover the cost, as you will notice. Today, out of the 18 PhD graduates, only two are women. We need deliberate support for women in Somalia. We require that positive marginalization, whereby we make conscious decisions to sponsor women to ensure they can attain the Master and PHD's qualifications. If you look at the tuition we charge in Somalia and the tuition we charge at other campuses, this is, In fact, free Education we are offering in Somalia. However, the high demand requires expanding our programs in Somalia, and I am happy that we successfully invited the rector. He agreed to come and see the work we are doing in Africa. I can't end this welcoming without requesting all of you to give a hand of applause to this handsome young man who came to persuade us, Dr Mohamed Osman. I'm also thankful to the staff of Upeace Somalia and Africa program; it is a journey which I don't mind taking again. Somalia is the best place for Upeace, and Upeace is here to stay in Somalia. Thank you very much, and Congratulations to all the graduates. Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, a new cohort stand in front of whom stand before you. Today, graduates, the knowledge you have gained over the past few years can make a tangible difference in realizing these goals. You are part of a diverse and privileged cohort of students following the footsteps of several accomplished alumni. What will your mark on Somalia society be?

THANK YOU!



LARRY ANDRÉ, US AMBASSADOR TO SOMALIA

Good Afternoon, Your excellency President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, the president of the federal republic of Somalia, Honorable minister of education Farah Sh Mohamed, Honorable ministers both federal government of Somalia and federal States, rector of the University for peace Dr Francisco, director of the Africa program, all the other distinguished guests and friends of Somalia and most of all esteemed graduates "Hambalyo".



This week saw the launch of Somalia's international investment conference, the first annual international Investment conference and the unavailing of a national Stabilization strategy for newly liberated communities of which there are now many, thanks to the brave courageous work of Somalia security forces at the national, local and the community levels. It is feeding that we bring this week to a close with new graduates in governance, development, Human rights and other disciplines that directly contribute to Somalia's revival. The new graduates are the builders of Somalia's bright future.

- A new welcome to a historic and hopeful time.

I am eager to read one of the graduates research thesis and that is the president's work on the challenges of the clan politics and State building, I think of that topic and I apply to myself.

I'm from Texas, Texas is very strong character and it is one of the 50 States but it has it's own unique history which Texas tend to be very proud to be Texas, but we are Americans First, and as I said, to me the president's thesis I suspect that is the dynamic he is talking about, State building is where we emphasize, what we fellow members of country, fellow citizens share in common but we can still cherish the particular the distinctive aspects of where we come from, the 2 can go together but to give primacy of what we share together as a nation.

So, to sum up, graduates your Skills, your energy, your unity are what will move this country forward, keep that positive trajectory, I first came to your country in 2001 for a few weeks visit, I am a witness to your huge progress that you have made and I'm very confident that there are positive trajectory which will result in Somalia's full revival and the net contributor to the prosperity and the peace of the entire region and beyond. So remember a story in your heart, the good energy in this room today, use that energy that surround you today to propel your nation forward and sustain in the next months and you pass your education and you continue to build this great country.

Thank you.

DR FRANCISCO ROJAS ARAVENA- RECTOR OF UPEACE

His Excellency Dr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud – President of The Federal Republic of Somalia

His Excellency Mr. Hamza Abdibare – Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia

His Excellency the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General to Somalia

Her Excellency Dr. Lalla Ben Barka – Member of the UPEACE Council

Federal and State Ministers Present

Heads of Diplomatic Missions accredited in Somalia

Members of the International Community in Somalia

Director-Generals

Rectors, Vice Chancellors, and Presidents of Universities in Somalia

Graduates and now UPEACE Alumni

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations – Honorary President of UPEACE Council, the Chancellor of UPEACE, and the UPEACE Council, I am a bearer of warm greetings from the entire UPEACE Community and the United Nations Education Family to the people of Somalia on the second graduation ceremony and the first doctoral graduation ceremony of UPEACE outside the main campus.

Let's me express same ideas with regards to the global situation.

We live in an era of conflict and uncertainties.

The world is witnessing a rise in various conflicts, deep crises, and situations in which the use of force is present. War is part of the scenario.

Even nuclear danger is part of the agenda; - like in the decade of 60s with the missile crisis in Cuba - the slightest miscalculation or accident can produce an atomic disaster. As United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres noted: "We are one miscalculation away from nuclear annihilation".



The Covid-19 pandemic continues to create devastation and damages. It aggravated hereditary problems and created frictions of various kinds. It accentuated nationalist policies and protectionism. It highlighted the lack of solidarity in inter-state relations. Humanity is facing a global environmental crisis. This planetary crisis puts us before the greatest threat to humanity: the Anthropocene. The war expresses the use of force in different regions. In addition to the financial and economic crisis, there is currently a global recession. Inflation is affecting the planet. Hunger is increasing. All these situations generate instability and create high uncertainty.

Inequality is increasing in the world and within countries. The international order is in turmoil, even more so in the digital sphere. There is a lack of effective global regulation. Multilateralism and the democratic political systems are also in crisis. We have a responsibility, as humankind, for these crises. These are global phenomena. The atomic threat is global. The climate emergency is global, the issue of hunger is global. The same is true of democratic governance. The bottom line is that to confront these challenges and threats requires cooperation. Without cooperation, we have no peace. Without peace, there is no development. Without cooperation, we have no global security.

In situations of war, no rights can be exercised. Human rights are violated. It is necessary to establish peaceful relations, within the rule of law. Through dialogue, negotiation, and mediation, it is possible to exchange bombs for words. The power of dialogue must prevail over the violence of force.

This is ensured through the promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-violence. This is part of the task of the University for Peace.

Mr. President,

On an occasion like this, it is perhaps important to start from the beginning:

The founding of the University for Peace can be traced to the thirty-third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1978, where the President of Costa Rica, Rodrigo Carazo, proposed that a new University be created as a centre of higher learning and as a World Centre of Education for Peace. The President offered Costa Rica to host the University, which he considered should be established within the United Nations system. In its resolution 33/109, of 18 December 1978, titled "Proposal for the Establishment of the University for Peace," the Assembly took note of the proposal submitted by the President of Costa Rica and requested the Secretary-General to circulate the proposal for comment to all Member States, UNESCO, the Rector and Council of United Nations University and all other agencies as the Secretary-General estimated appropriate, and report to the General Assembly at its 34th Session.

The subsequent report of the Secretary General (A/34/496) also contained in the decision of the Executive Board of UNESCO and the opinion of the Council of United Nations University, which led the General Assembly to adopt Resolution 34/111 entitled "Establishment of a University for Peace."

Furthermore, on 5 December 1980, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted Resolution 35/55 which sets out in its annex the International Agreement for the Establishment of the University for Peace. The Charter of the University is an integral part of that agreement. Forty-one (41) countries have become Signatory States to the UPEACE Charter. We are proud to say that at the recent 77th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Somalia became the 42nd Signatory State of the UPEACE Charter. With this accession, Somali students automatically benefit from a 30 percent discount in tuition towards their studies. Thank you, Mr. President, for this decision.

On 21 September 2021 – the International Day of Peace – during its first graduation ceremony in Somalia, 76 graduates received their UPEACE master's degree. This year, we are celebrating this important day on 2 December, which marks the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others through Resolution 317. The focus of this day is to eradicate contemporary forms of slavery such as trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, and the worst forms of child labour, forced marriage and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.

The above resolution is significant for the work of UPEACE in three ways:

First, UPEACE just completed and launched its White Paper of Illicit Economies and Organized Crime in Africa, where the Africa Programme headed by Samuel Ewusi played an important role. A better knowledge of the roots of conflicts is essential to their transformation.

Second, the UPEACE Charter focuses the University's work on reducing obstacles to peace, through education for peace, in conformity with the United Nations Charter. The peacebuilding process that follows any conflict requires the re-establishment of the rule of law, pacific coexistence, and civil friendships. Women are victims of several crimes. They must be a central part of the solution. To restore the rule of law, it is essential to create trust and a safe environment for peaceful understanding.



Third, some of these challenges affect Somalia's post-conflict agenda, and the recruitment of young people for terrorist acts is one of the challenges facing Somalia. Children actively participate in hostilities, which makes them perpetrators and victims of the conflict; therefore, special programmes must be developed for them. To stop the violence, it is essential to stop hate speech. It is crucial to improve trust and mutual confidence.

To encourage peace, it is necessary to expand democracy, trust, and the Rule of Law.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On 5 December 2020, UPEACE commemorated its 40th Anniversary.

The mission of the University, as stipulated in Article 2 of its Charter, is "to provide humanity with an international institution of higher education for peace and with the aim of promoting among all human beings the spirit of understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence, to stimulate cooperation among peoples and to help lessen obstacles and threats to world peace and progress, in keeping with the noble aspirations proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations." Pursuant to its mission to help lessen obstacles and threats to peace, UPEACE established the Africa Programme in Africa's diplomatic capital of Addis Ababa in 2002, to assist African countries, regional organizations, and regional economic communities in their recurrent struggle to build peace in an otherwise conflict-ridden continent. After building capacity at the doctoral level through funded projects, UPEACE Africa has designed country and regional specific programmes aimed at addressing the key challenges to peace in the continent.

With capacity-building programmes spread across the continent in the form of short certificate and diploma courses, UPEACE Africa has implemented a specific master's Programme in Peace and Security designed to build capacity for members of the Uganda police. This programme was designed to strengthen the security sector in African countries will be extended to other countries in the continent.

In late 2018-early 2019, UPEACE took the extraordinary step to extend its programmes to Somalia, a country which for over two decades was involved in a fratricidal war and currently facing security challenges. Considering the monumental challenges facing Somalia, it was necessary to implement more programmes.

However, UPEACE opted to focus on 4 key areas at the master's level and one programme at the doctoral level, which we believe will contribute to Somalia's post conflict agenda. The programmes include:

- Master of Arts in Peace, Governance and Development
- Master of Arts in Environment Development and Peace
- Master of Arts in International Law and Human Rights
- Master of Arts in Disaster Resilience Leadership and Humanitarian Action
- Doctor of Philosophy in Peace, Governance and Development

Through these specific programmes, UPEACE has made a conscious and historical decision to assist Africa's most security-challenged nation in building sustainable peace and security.

The master's and doctoral programmes from which these students are graduating are the most multi-disciplinary, trans-disciplinary, multi-cultural and multi-national programmes ever designed by UPEACE. It is our view that Somalia needs much more than we offer, and we shall further discuss these needs with the government and see how UPEACE can be of further assistance.

We are confident that our work in Somalia will be specifically highlighted in future reports by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly of the United Nations as a critical Programme to enhance peace and security in Africa.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you may have noticed and the students will confirm, this is a programme where students were taught and supervised by professors from different countries including South Africa, Cameroon, Botswana, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and the United Kingdom. This speaks volumes to the international, intercultural, and multidimensional nature of the programme, required in a fast-globalizing world.

To illustrate the unique nature of the programmes, the multidisciplinary and multinational complexion of the courses and teaching staff enabled the students to be taken out of their comfort zone as they were made to discuss issues affecting other African countries.

This had the effect of taking most of students away from their comfort zone and allowed both their imagination and perception to wander into the sacred coliseum of academic discourse, which is required for an increasingly complex world.

Against this backdrop, I can say with full assurance that you are building a more knowledgeable society that will contribute to preserving peace and security in the country, the sub-region, and Africa as a whole.

Finally, the importance of UPEACE programmes in Somalia cannot be overstated. This is further emphasized by UNESCO's charter, which states that "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the construction of peace must begin." At UPEACE, we live by the motto: If we want peace, we must prepare peace.

Today, as we graduate the master's and doctoral students in Somalia, I want to emphasize UPEACE's commitment to accompany the International Community and the people of Somalia in its pursuit of peace for all the people of this beautiful country. As UPEACE settles down in Somalia, it will require the support of the Somali government in terms of providing permanent structures to facilitate its work.

As the late Professor Ali Mazrui said, "Superiority between individuals depends on who owns what. But Superiority between nations depends on who knows what." Let us join to build a knowledge-based society in Somalia and Africa, which will in turn minimize the obstacles to peace in Somalia.

Congratulations to the newest UPEACE Alumni, congratulations to your families and relatives for the support that allowed you to achieve this great milestone. Be generous and share your knowledge to build a better future for Somalia, Africa, and the world.

If we want peace, prepare peace.

Long Live the University for Peace,

Long Live the United Nations,

Long Live the Federal Republic of Somalia.



PRESIDENT DR HASSAN SHEIKH MOHAMUD SPEECH

First and foremost, I congratulate my friends and fellow students who are graduating today- both the Master's and PhD classes- and those who graduated in previous years. I want to tell you that you are all part of Somalia's new dawn.

Let me briefly speak about our country's Education history, which is a huge historical and exciting journey. This, however, doesn't include the last 30 years.

It is a rare occurrence in the World for a Country to build its Education system from scratch until it reaches its highest level, then it collapses entirely and reaches its lowest level.

Then the education system is rebuilt again to the level it is today.

Somalia today has twice the number of students it had during the central Government's downfall in the early 90s. It could be argued that if the Government did not collapse, we would have thrice or four times more students today.



My Education Journey that brought me here today to receive my PhD from Upeace University can be traced back to my efforts in improving Education in our country and particularly to the historical incident at the Manabolyo intersection, where in the early 90s, I established the first school in a time when different factions ruled the capital. That day I witnessed how our education system was destroyed.

However, today I stand here to bear witness once again to how we have risen to the highest level as we celebrate in Mogadishu for the first time an event where PhD degrees are being awarded in our own country. This is the first time this happening in our 62 years of independence.

This is an excellent example that we are chasing to recover what we missed during the period when we lost everything. Once again, let me congratulate my friends- the men and women students who got time to study despite their busy schedules with work and family issues.

From the look of things, it is evident in this room I'm the oldest among my friends who are receiving their PhD. Most of them are Youth, which is clear evidence that no single Somali person today can have an excuse for not getting an Education because of a busy schedule and lack of time. Those excuses have ended today.

I registered for the PhD In 2018 when I was one of the leading opposition figures in our country. You all remember the struggle we have gone through to ensure the elections are held. I never gave up on my studies despite the political pressure. I continued with my studies even after I was elected the President. On the other hand, you can also see the gap between my PhD and my master's degree, which I got in 1988.

I was supposed to finish the Course before becoming President, but I'm glad to see some of my lectures sitting here today. I didn't face many challenges in pursuing this PHD, maybe because of my experience in the field I chose, which is Peace, Development and Governance.

The Course has also widened my perspective on peace, and I now understand many issues that I did not know before I started the Course.

My main message is that peace can exist and nothing can prosper without peace, so peace is the central pillar of humanity. In terms of development, it is only when you have the opportunity to think, research, and decide that you can make progress.

There are 17 districts in Mogadishu, and I remember during the difficult times, as a family, we were forced to move from one section to another in search of illusive peace. We would sometimes stay in one district for a few days or weeks and then get uprooted and forced to move again.

In later years, when I worked as a researcher, research coordinator, and deputy director of the research Centre, I travelled extensively throughout Somalia. I visited every district of Somalia. I have even seen tiny communities in those ten years I have moved around. People all over the country kept asking me one question, and this was the question: From your perspective, how do you see that Somalia can come back to a functioning state? And instead of getting answers to that question from people living in very remote areas, they immediately shared with me grievances and problems, such as displacements, and violence, that were done to them by state actors.

These are the challenges we must deal with as we continue to improve our efforts towards state-building. On the other hand, it is a fact that every Somali belongs to a clan, but that does not mean that the clan should be a factor that causes division among us. We need to embrace diversity if we want to achieve a strong state.

Somalia, at the moment, has skilled people. And thanks to Upeace, we now have graduates from different fields such as environmental science, peace and development etc. We must ensure we tap into this resource and encourage our Youth to take leadership positions.

I may not be here in a few years to come, and if I am around, I may not be helpful. Some of you sitting here today may be in my current position in future.

I would like you to think differently, and if we want to achieve progress, we need to act and do differently from what we have been doing in the last thirty years.

Finally, I am pleased that the University named the Mogadishu campus after me. That is a tremendous honour and even more responsibility. In that regard, I will establish a scholarship fund for a hundred PhD students studying at the Upeace campus in Mogadishu. The fund will be offered to the best minds and students in Somalia. I promise you that the fund will be handled fairly, and there will be no political or clan considerations.

Address

Somalia Campus: Dr Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, Airport Road, Wadajir District, Mogadishu, Somalia.

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