

**INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY PROF. LABAN P. AYIRO ON THE
OCCASION OF HIS INSTALLATION AS THE FOURTH VICE
CHANCELLOR OF DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY HELD AT THE ATHI
RIVER CAMPUS ON MARCH 29, 2019**

Salutations:

The Guest of Honour, Hon. Prof. Kivutha Kibwana, Governor,
Makueni County;

Your Excellencies Ambassadors, High Commissioners and
Diplomats;

The CEO of the Commission on University Education, Prof.
Mwenda Ntaragwi;

The Chairman Daystar Company- Rev. Dr. Macmillan Kiiru;
The Chair of the University Council, Prof. Henry Thairu;

Founders of Daystar University, Prof. Donald Smith & Mrs. Faye
Smith;

Members of the DU Company and Council;

Former Chancellor of Daystar University, Dr. Florence Muli-
Musiime;

Former Ag. Vice Chancellor, Prof. James Kombo;

Former Vice Chancellors of Daystar University;

Vice Chancellors of other Universities;

Church Leaders and Distinguished Members of the Clergy;

Representatives of various Universities and Organizations;

Members of Daystar University Alumni Association (DUAA);

Special invited guests;

Parents & Guardians;

Faculty, Staff and Students of the Daystar University Community;

Good morning,

Today is so significant to me and my family that I have a section of my family, friends, and colleagues who have accompanied me to witness the commencement of my new journey in my life as the 4th Vice Chancellor of this distinguished Institution-Daystar University.

Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me therefore at this moment to introduce these very significant persons who have accompanied me to this installation ceremony;

My wife; Agnes

My Children

My Grandchildren

Our Family Friends,

I am deeply grateful to Daystar's Company and Council for giving me the privilege of serving as Daystar's 4th Vice Chancellor. I thank you for the confidence you have placed in me. I commit to the Company, Council, faculty, staff, students and alumni to give my heart, my soul, and all my energy in the service of Daystar. I assume Daystar's Vice Chancellor position with boundless hope and unbridled optimism.

I am humbled in recognizing that only 3 other distinguished individuals have had the honour and the privilege of serving as Daystar's Vice Chancellors over its 46 years of existence. But I am also reassured in knowing that I'll be standing on the

shoulders of the founders of this university- Donald and Faye Smith who had the vision, tenacity and courage to start this institution. To Don and Faye, ***asante sana na mungu awabariki!*** I also offer thanks to the talented and dedicated faculty, staff and students – as well as committed alumni, parents and friends – who have made Daystar such a great institution.

To my colleagues, friends and mentors who have shaped my past and my present (Prof. Richard Mibei, Prof. Justus Mbae, Prof. Miriam Were, the late Prof. George Godia, the late Prof. George Saitoti); and to all of you who bring your warm wishes, I seek your goodwill and your blessings as I embark on this important journey in my life.

I have been told that my appointment symbolizes hope and possibility for future generations, regardless of their socio-economic, ethnic or cultural backgrounds. Who would have thought that a boy from the slums of Kibera, facing challenges poverty, would stand here before you, as the 4th Vice Chancellor of the 1st faith-based institution of higher learning in Kenya? Neither I nor my parents would have ever dreamt of this happening. I dedicate this installation to my late mother who encouraged me to take up teaching after failing to make it for medicine... she intoned *“Laban, you wanted to be a doctor, but God has destined you to become a teacher and you will become a Great teacher my son”*.

To the many gathered here today; Company, Council, Faculty, Staff, Parents, Students and all other stakeholders of Daystar University, allow me to take this opportunity to promise my total and unreserved dedication in offering my service to Daystar University in the best way possible.

I call upon the academy (both students and faculty) to come together and elevate our level of aspiration so that Daystar can join the ranks of the great Christian universities in the world. It will be a challenge and it will not be easy but it can be done. Our challenge is no greater than the challenges faced by those who put humans on the moon. It will take our sheer determination, hard work and relentless pursuit of excellence as a collective. I have seen how the students participate in the life of the University and community at Daystar. The integration of student life and learning will not simply be a concept here. It will be a reality. Classroom learning still plays a very important role in education; you will not pick up ‘principals of psychology’ just walking down the street. But there is also so much learning that occurs outside the classroom and outside the campus. The University is reinventing itself for the 21st century. The challenges we face, the opportunities we explore, and the contributions we make—all of these extend well beyond our own campus and country.

Some may ask, are we aiming too high? Will we have the resources to get the job done? Let us remind ourselves of a quote from Michelangelo: “The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim

too low and achieving our mark." At Daystar, let us set our aim high and have the courage to fall short.

We want our University to be a place of choice for the brightest talents, be they students, faculty or staff. We want a teaching and research environment that is dynamic and innovative. We want an educational experience that resonates a lifetime, and a University that responds to the needs of its neighbourhood, its country, its world.

I recently received a book from one of the Management professors from Indiana University. In the book, he wrote something that really resonates with me: "What could be more natural," he asks, "than to treat our organizations, not as mystical hierarchies of authority, but as communities of engagement, where every member is respected and so returns that respect?"

In appointing me Vice Chancellor, you have given me the privilege and responsibility of working with the entire Daystar community, as a community of scholar believers, to build on the strong foundation created through the hard work and dedication of so many people before us. At this juncture, daystar's existence will be incomplete without mentioning the contributions of the first Vice-Chancellor Prof. Stephen Talitwala. I am here today to draw upon the strengths and aspirations of this community—and to crystallize their energies and ambitions into a vision and a future for our University that we can commit to, because it comes from us. I am committed to serve this University with all my heart and

energy. My hopes are high because of your own commitment and your pride in your institution.

As a Christian, I am a firm believer in the view that whatever we achieve on this earth that is good and positive, is only but by the Grace of God. In this regard, please join with me in thanking our Heavenly Father for the achievements attained by this university so far and for further blessings in the days, months and years ahead.... On a personal level I pray too for continued strength and direction in this mission, along with all of us who love this university, in making Daystar University the most enviable Christian university in Africa and beyond....I am also reminded of those timeless words from the Bible in the book of Proverbs Chapter 3 Verses 5-6 which I extend to the Daystar community... “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight”

Thank you for the confidence and trust you have placed in me.

Prof. Laban Peter Ayiro
Vice-Chancellor - Daystar University

29th March, 2019