

20th September, 2024



**PRESS STATEMENT BY CONCERNED MEMBERS OF UNIVERSITY
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF GHANA (UTAG) UCC BRANCH
IN RESPONSE TO PRESS STATEMENT FROM LOCAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE OF UTAG UCC**

For immediate release

We feel compelled to address a press statement issued by the Local Executive Committee of the University of Cape Coast Branch of the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG UCC) on **16th September, 2024**. We wish to express our utmost disappointment with the statement and dissociate ourselves from same. We believe that the UTAG UCC Executive of our Association seem not to be acting in good faith. It is our candid view that the unnecessary tension on campus is being contributed to by misleading statements on various UTAG UCC platforms in pursuance of a hidden agenda contrary to the core mandate of the local executive of the Association - protecting the interests of the Association and the University.

We wish to place on record that the said press statement was not a decision of the approximately eight hundred (800) strong UTAG UCC membership; it was rather a unilateral decision taken by a few individuals who constitute the UTAG UCC Executive. In our view, a press statement on such matters at such a challenging time for our University should be a carefully considered position taken at a meeting by the majority of members of the Association. Unfortunately, and strangely, no meeting was called to seek the views of members on the issue.

Indeed, at an emergency meeting held on **Friday, 2nd August, 2024** some members expressed strong reservations about a press statement issued on **1st August, 2024** by UTAG UCC Executive without consultation with the membership of the Association. It was agreed at the said meeting that a meeting would be called subsequently to discuss the happenings on campus. Unfortunately, no such meeting was called before the most recent press release dated **16th September 2024**.

The press statement of **1st August, 2024** which, *inter alia*, called for the withdrawal of the appointment of the Council Chairman which was without recourse to members of the Association, sought to create the wrong impression that the entire Association was in support of such a call. We consistently find the posture of the UTAG UCC leadership undemocratic, dishonest and grossly disrespectful of its own membership.

In the said statement of 1st August, 2024, the UTAG Executive cautioned the Chairman of Council, his agents and assigns against any action on the Vice-Chancellor's extension due to an impending injunction application. However, in that same press statement, they made a judgment on the matter before the court; they stated emphatically, **"The claims that the renewal breaches the University's Statutes and the Constitution are unfounded."** This statement is not only prejudicial but contemptuous, and should be of concern to all well-meaning members of UTAG. Furthermore, even in the face of an injunction order from the Cape Coast High Court restraining the Vice-Chancellor from holding office, the UTAG UCC Executive see nothing wrong with supporting a decision to allow the Vice-Chancellor to stay in office despite the injunction order and subsequent directive from GTEC.

Most impartial observers would conclude that these actions on the part of the local executive prevent or make it extremely difficult for the respected Chairman, recently honoured with an honorary doctorate from our esteemed university, to implement the principles of good governance, management accountability and rule of law. This is all happening amidst concerns about the potential reversal of the extension of the Vice-Chancellor's term beyond his 60th birthday, which many have argued violates the laws of Ghana.

It is noteworthy that all too often, UTAG UCC Executive are quick to side with the Vice-Chancellor and overreaching whenever an opportunity arises to criticise the Chairman of Council for example, while ignoring issues related to their own members welfare. Indeed, some issues had already created a tense atmosphere on campus long before the current Council was constituted. Some of these issues include:

- unilateral and illegal withholding of staff salaries
- unlawful dismissal of a Senior Lecturer of the University
- perceived favouritism
- perceived vindictiveness
- objections to the potentially illegal extension of the Vice-Chancellor's time in office.

We also consider UTAG UCC Executive's most recent press release, dated 16th September 2024 an attempt to obstruct the intervention of the regulator, Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC), to advise the appointment of an Acting Vice-Chancellor in accordance with the Statutes of the University in light of the court order restraining the Vice-Chancellor from continuing to hold himself out as such. In

the meantime, the risk of instability on campus continues to emanate from wrong management decisions while he continues in office unperturbed. These include:

1. court injunction on student elections;
2. controversy over Convocation elections;
3. contempt suit against the Vice-Chancellor by a Senior Member who obtained favourable court judgment against the University for unlawful retention of his salary for months;
4. injunction application on the promotion of a Senior Member of School of Medical Sciences;
5. injunction application restraining the Vice-Chancellor from holding office;
6. application for stay of execution of court order to the University to pay the pension of a former Professor who retired in 2012; and
7. unprecedented attempt by the Vice-Chancellor to restrain the University Council from discussing his extension.

When the Director-General of the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission ordered the University Council to reverse a three-month appointment legally offered to the immediate-past Registrar, who retired on 31st July, 2024 due to an unforeseen situation, UTAG UCC Executive remained quiet. They were and have been mute on the huge budget overruns incurred under the current Vice-Chancellor without approval by the University Governing Council. This has reportedly contributed to major financial challenges in the University, negatively impacting the smooth running of the University's academic programmes. They were and have also been mute on the blatant breach of University Statutes as regards the appointment of some Provosts and Directors and the unfair treatment of their own members in relation to promotions. This inaction of the UTAG UCC leadership on matters of concern to their own members while championing causes beneficial to others is a clear case of double standards.

Based on the foregoing:

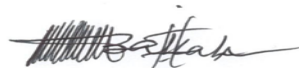
1. any continued action of the UTAG UCC leadership to destabilise the systems and structures of the University is condemned;
2. law-abiding citizens and members of the University should support legitimate efforts to ensure that the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana and the 2016 Statutes of the University are upheld.
3. any effort to go on the rampage or trigger an illegal strike as threatened by the UTAG UCC Executive should not be tolerated;
4. any legitimate intervention by higher authorities to direct the appointment of an Acting Vice-Chancellor to fill the vacuum created following the injunction order by the Cape Coast High Court should be supported by all parties;
5. all orders of the Law Courts should be respected;

6. no interested party should drag our revered traditional leaders into these matters which are before a court of competent jurisdiction.
7. we lend our support to the current court proceedings (including the injunction of the Vice-Chancellor) and wish to encourage all and sundry to do same and respect its outcomes; and
8. any conduct by UTAG UCC leadership which could be considered as contemptuous to the decisions of the Court should be denounced and addressed through appropriate legal channels.

We assure the University community that attempts to subvert the laws of Ghana and the policies of the University will be resisted. Therefore, the press statement signed by the President and Secretary of UTAG UCC, which wrongly gives the impression that the entire membership of UTAG UCC shares the view as stated in the press statement, should be disregarded and treated with utter contempt by all stakeholders.

Thank you.

Prof. Edem Kwasi Bakah (Rep.)



Prof. Sebastian Eliason (Rep.)



Prof. Benjamin Kofi Nyarku (Rep.)



Prof. Justus Precious Deikumah (Rep.)



cc: His Excellency, President of Ghana
His Excellency, Vice President of Ghana
Hon. Minister of Education

Chancellor, UCC
Council Chairman, UCC
Vice-Chancellor, UCC
Pro Vice-Chancellor, UCC
Ag. Registrar, UCC
Director-General, GTEC
National President, UTAG
All Media Houses