

Barbro Johansson Model Girls' Secondary School (Barbro School)
The Speech By Ms. Halima Barugahare Kamote, The Headmistress of Barbro School in Marking the Celebration of the 19th School Anniversary and 17th Graduation Ceremony of Form Four, Saturday 28th September, 2019, Luguruni Estate, Kwembe Ward, Ubungo District, Dar es Salaam

The Guest of Honour, Ms. Gladness Deogratias, Head, Global Market, NMB and Chairperson NMB Women Arise,

Your Excellency Anders Sjoberg, Ambassador of Sweden in Tanzania,

Mr. Raymond Mapunda, Vice Chairperson, Barbro School Board, Members of Board of Trustees, founders and the School board,

Hon. Dweza H. Kolimba, Councilman Kwembe Ward and the whole Local Government Leadership from Kwembe Ward,

Representative of Municipal Education Officer, Madam Shima Banele, Education Officer - Statistics, Ubungo Municipal,

Parents and Teachers' Association (PTA) Chairman Dr. John Kyaruzi, and the PTA committee members,

Invited Heads of Secondary and Primary Schools, teachers and students from neighboring Schools - our friends,

Madam Katarina Heide, Deputy Headmistress, Teacher Nina Ejlertsson and students from Procivitas Privata Gymnasium, Sweden

Graduating students of Form 4, all other students and Barbro School community members,

Religious leaders,

Parents and Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Protocol observed.

Honourable Guest of Honour,

It is a great pleasure and honor for me to welcome you all our distinguished guests; government officials, our friends from Sweden, Heads of neighboring Secondary and Primary Schools, parents & family members, teachers, students and mostly our Form four graduates.

In a special way I wish to convey my special thanks to you Madam Gladness, our guest of honour, for sparing a chance in your tight schedule in order join us in celebrating the 19th anniversary of Barbro School and 17th Form Four Graduation. I trust that your visit here will inspire our girls and facilitate efficient and effective response in serving others in their communities.

I thank you Ambassador Anders Sjoberg for setting aside time to be with us as well as our friends from Procivitas Privata Gymnasium from Sweden for participating in this event.

May I also use this opportunity to sincerely thank all those who prepared this ceremony especially students and staff of Barbro School. I thank each and every one of you for sparing your time to be with us today.

Honourable Guest of Honour, ladies and gentlemen

A lot has happened and there is a lot to be said for the 19 years period of which the School has been in existence. However, due to the time limitation I will focus on a short history, some achievements, recognizing our partners in development, challenges and a word of wisdom to the graduates.

Each year these celebrations are commemorated on 25th September, the birthday of Dr (Mama) Barbro Johansson. These functions are done in order to appreciate and honour Mama Barbro, a missionary, an esteemed teacher, an activist and a diplomat. Mama Barbro will always be remembered for her tireless contribution in the struggle for enhancing not only girls' education in Tanzania but also boys' education.

Last year we decided that these ceremonies will be held on Saturdays that will fall on Mama Barbro's Birthday week so that the ceremonies do not interfere with working days and hence enabling many parents to participate freely in graduations of their daughters on weekends. This explains why we are celebrating this event today even though Mama Barbro's birthday was 3 days back.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Barbro Johansson Secondary School started operating in the year 2000 at Ada estate, Kinondoni district, Dar es Salaam, having 40 needy girls of form one pioneer class from various parts of Tanzania. All those students were recruited from poor families; hence they had 100% sponsorship from JOHA TRUST fund.

In the year 2001 JOHA TRUST and the Government of Sweden through the Swedish Embassy in Dar es Salaam, the lead donor then, reached a decision to also accommodate in the School, students who are capable and diligent and whose parents can afford paying school fees. This decision was crucial for the sustainability of the school especially when the donor's scholarship grants cease.

In the year 2002 Barbro school shifted from the rented premises in Ada estate to the current premises after completion of construction of the first phase here at 50 - acres Luguruni estate, provided by the Government of Tanzania.

Invited guest, ladies and gentlemen,

In 19 years the school has grown and currently the school has 530 students ranging from form one up to form six. There are 59 staff including 31 qualified teachers and 28 non-teaching staff. O-level subjects offered are 16 and there are 10 Advanced level subject combinations in Science, Business and Arts, hence giving the students a wide range of choice of subjects and combinations.

Honourable Guest of Honour;

There is a saying that "those who always go to the sea for fishing will never be obliged to eat their food without fish". Barbro School has witnessed some achievements in the past 19 years.

So far the school has produced 1231 form four graduates, and 1203 form six graduates. In addition to this year's 87 form four graduating class we get a grand total of 2,521 graduates from this school. 99.9% of students who graduated over 19 years of existence passed in their National exams enabling them to continue to the next levels of education.

Recent results of Form Six National Examinations were encouraging as out of 146 students who sat for the examinations, 47 got division one, 77 got division two, 22 got division three and there was neither division four nor division zero. Also 37 students, equivalent to 26% upgraded their results of Form Six National Examinations when compared to performances of their previous Form Four National Examinations. This

proves practically our policy and efforts to ensure that each Barbro students is helped and encouraged to reach out her maximum academic potential.

Honourable Guest of Honour, ladies and gentlemen,

Our school is not left behind in various school competitions including essay competitions, quiz and other academic matters. In many occasions this school has managed to become winners. I believe you have witnessed yourselves several winning certificates which have been displayed on the notice board outside the Administration Block. The school has also facilitated various talents among students such as leadership, creative arts, drama, singing, traditional and modern dance and various sports and games that have inculcated the spirit of cooperation and courtesy with other schools at national and international levels.

Honourable Guest of Honour and invited guests;

The School continues to implement the Resources constrained Girls' Outreach Programme. Via this programme, girls from humble families, some of them from far regions, have been reached. Currently 10% of the Students are provided with scholarships. Thanks to Joha Trust Sweden (JOHAFONDEN), a sister organization under the Chairperson Madam Gun Britt Anderson who have consistently continued to sponsor students in need of financial support.

Honourable Guest of Honour, Invited guests, ladies and gentlemen;

When we talk about development we should remember that there are people who have participated fully to cultivate that development. We sincerely thank the pioneers and founder members of this school. These distinguished founder members include the late Ambassador Wilson Tibaijuka (may the Almighty God rest his soul in peace), Honourable Prof. Anna Tibaijuka who is currently in USA participating in United Nations (UN) General Assembly but has sent her greetings, Mr. Salmon Odunga, Ambassador Paul Rupia, and all members of the Board of Trustees who have voluntarily and tirelessly continued to support this school by ensuring that the Barbro school dream become reality.

I would also like to use this opportunity on behalf of the school community to thank all those whose opinions, financial and material contributions have made us reach where we are.

First and foremost, we highly appreciate the support of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for providing us a 50 acres plot of which we are proud of, providing us with infrastructure such as roads, water and electricity, School registration,

School inspection, National Examinations and cooperation in providing secondary education.

Honourable Guest of Honour,

This school could have not have reached this far without the big financial assistance from the Government of Sweden, through the Embassy of Sweden in the Dar es Salaam for 12 years from 2000 to 2012. This financial assistance was utilized for construction of school buildings and infrastructure as well as sponsorship of Barbro needy girls. Let me assure you our Swedish friends that the tree that you have planted will continue to bear fruits that will feed many for a long time to come.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

To the parents of our graduating students, words cannot express our deepest appreciation and gratitude for your continued support and involvement in our school. I believe that one of the aspects that set Barbro School apart from many schools is the active involvement and intense care that you invest in our young people, the school and staff. Thank you for sharing your most precious possession, your children, for entrusting us with their education and personal development.

As a matter of fact, it is not easy to give my gratitude to all those who have volunteered to support the development of this school, because the list of these stakeholders is long. May I just say to all of you, thank you very much for your wonderful support.

Honourable Guest of Honour, ladies and gentlemen;

There is a common saying which states that “there is no straight road without a curve”. Despite all these achievements we still have challenges.

First, the infrastructure which is in the school’s master plan has not been accomplished. The projects which have not been accomplished are: conference and examination hall, library and multimedia block, staff quarters, internal roads and other infrastructure. All these infrastructures need funds, which have been difficult to obtain.

Secondly, mobilizing adequate resources and scholarship funds for girls from resource constrained families is yet another challenge. Lack of enough scholarship funds has directly affected enrollment of intellectually talented needy girls. Already Joha Trust has been forced to face reality and reduce scholarships offered from 100% in 2000 when we started to 10% this year 2019.

The biggest challenge now is maintaining the education standards offered with restricted resources available.

Honourable Guest of Honour,

Of the duties you will have to perform today, is to award various groups. There are long serving staffs that have been in the School for 10 and 15 years. Also, we have the best worker for the year 2019. We humbly request you to award them with certificates, as a gesture of gratitude, for performing better and been assets to our School. Also, there are students that will receive awards for better performance in their subjects, leadership, discipline, sports etc. Finally you will award the graduates with Form Four completion certificates.

Honourable Guest of Honour;

At this juncture, with your permission Hon Guest of Honour, may I now turn to the graduating students:

These young women seated before us, all 87 of them, have accomplished a significant milestone in their lives. We have come here today to honor them, to recognize their achievements, to celebrate their journey so far, and to remind them (once again) about how much we believe in them. The real goal of education, as we see it here, is not just to help students understand the world; but to advance in them a desire to improve the world, all the while cultivating the skills that will enable them do just that. And while we pause to reflect on all that has brought us to this moment, we also look ahead with confidence, hoping to position them well for the next part of that journey.

My Daughters,

I believe that after four years of being with us we have shaped you into unique and precious treasures. Here, your teachers have challenged you to think critically and creatively, to solve problems through innovation and to engage in the exchange of ideas that carve out new ways of thinking and new perspectives. As you take your next steps, do not let fear hold you back.

Hold on to the wonder and curiosity of childhood. Learning is searching...searching for knowledge, searching for understanding, posing questions and searching for answers. Explore everything that is within your reach and find something that fuels your imagination.

Remember always that your Parents have painted the colors of your rainbow through love and sacrifice. Please love them back by studying hard and change the world for the better.

Dear Students,

You are individuals, no two the same. You have your own ideas that will inspire others – your own voice that will move others to change. Your insights are yours alone and will empower others to reconsider. Your talents will inspire others to create. Your resilience will allow others to endure. As individuals, you have power that no one else has.

Embrace change and the opportunities that unfold before you. Take a risk and allow yourself to be vulnerable. It is in these moments that you grow. Remember that life is precious and see the beauty all around you. Love without apology, weep without fear of judgment and let your laughter fill the room. Make no apologies for feeling deeply. It separates you from those who lack compassion and allows you to see the dignity in all people.

Our waves have shaped you and nurtured you and will lift you now, carrying you forward, in all directions, for the journey to your future academic life.

Class of Form Four 2019 – we love and admire you, proud of all you do. Be well and be warriors, now and always. Thank you for being such a wonderful class and congratulations to all of you I wish you the best in your coming national examinations and your academic journey ahead!

Honourable Guest of Honour,

Let me conclude by insisting that we need joint effort in cultivating sustainable development not only at Babro, but also at our Nation at large. You are warmly welcome. Let us celebrate this historical and wonderful day together.

I thank you for your attention.