PROTESTANT UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL AFRICA
(PUCA)

OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR
Friday, November 7, 2025

ADDRESS BY THE RECTOR

Rev. Pr Samuel FROUISOU

Yaoundé, Djoungolo

Mr Secretary General,

Personal Representative of the Minister of State, Minister of Higher Education;

His Excellency, the Ambassador of Israel to Cameroon

Ladies and Gentlemen, Representatives of Members of Government;

Ladies and Gentlemen, Representatives of the Rectors of the Universities of Yaounde I and II;

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Mr Divisional Officer of the Mfoundi Division;

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff;

Distinguished Guests, in your various capacities;

Dear Students;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Protestant University of Central Africa (UPAC) is pleased not only to welcome you here today, but also to extend to you its warmest greetings on the occasion of this grand and solemn opening ceremony of the 2025–2026 academic year.

This year, our reflection is centered on a theme filled with hope and commitment: "Living Together through Scientific Research and the Protection of Creation."

From a spiritual and confessional standpoint, our meditation draws its inspiration from the Word of God in Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, chapter 4, verse 8:

"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

This biblical passage invites our Protestant academic community to refocus its thoughts on what is positive, just, and virtuous. It calls us to cultivate an inner attitude of resilience amid the many difficulties and concerns that so often besiege our minds.

By adopting this mindset, we can nurture our inner strength and live an authentic Christian faith. A sound and confident mental attitude is essential for every believer: it enables one, through prayer and rigorous intellectual effort, to attain academic excellence and professional success.

Let us therefore make Paul's exhortation to the Philippians our own, so that it may enlighten our thoughts, guide our actions, and inspire our entire academic year.

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 2025–2026 academic year also begins under the banner of the ongoing reforms initiated by Law No. 2023/007 of July 25, 2023, laying down the orientation of Higher Education in Cameroon. The UPAC has warmly welcomed this new organic framework, which aims to qualitatively improve the environment for research and higher learning.

In this regard, our institution has launched several innovative programs, notably the UPAC Training and Re-Armament Program in Entrepreneurship, known by its acronym PROFERE-UPAC.

Initiated during the previous academic year, this program has equipped our students with the necessary tools to fully embrace their status as student-entrepreneurs, in line with the provisions of the new Higher Education Orientation Law.

Several promising projects developed by these enterprising young students have been selected and are currently being funded by the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education.

Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear students, you have understood it well: through its numerous partnerships, UPAC offers its dynamic students the opportunity to bring their projects to life, to become self-employed, and even to create jobs for other Cameroonian men and women.

For this new academic year, we are delighted to announce the launch of the second edition of the PROFERE-UPAC program.

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Indeed, through its multiple partnerships, UPAC enables its learners to realize their dreams, to achieve self-reliance, and to generate added value in the service of our nation.

For this second edition of PROFERE-UPAC, I call upon our students to engage fully, to demonstrate creativity, rigor, and perseverance, and to seize the many opportunities this program offers to transform their ideas into concrete and viable projects.

Alongside this initiative, our University has entered into a strategic partnership with Afriland First Bank. This agreement opens new horizons for our students, allowing them to undertake academic and professional internships within this leading financial institution. Even more, the most outstanding among them will benefit from pre-employment internships—true springboards to their integration into the job market.

This partnership perfectly illustrates UPAC's constant commitment to bridging the gap between university training and economic realities, and to preparing its students to become competent, independent, and responsible actors at the heart of national development.

UPAC is resolutely pursuing modernization and excellence. In terms of infrastructure, our University is gradually acquiring modern and efficient equipment to enhance the quality of teaching, learning, and research.

In the area of communication, after completing the design phase of the Peace Journalism programs, our institution is finalizing the installation of its university radio studio, Radio Campus, thanks to the valuable support of our partner, Bread for the World (Germany).

This radio station aspires to become a true platform for education, awareness, and the promotion of peace, social cohesion, and intercultural dialogue, particularly in an African context marked by the resurgence of hate speech, conflict, and community fragmentation.

In addition to this innovative media project, the University has launched its monthly campus newspaper, titled *Le Journal du Campus*, whose first issue appeared last October. This publication aims to highlight the scientific, cultural, and spiritual activities of our academic community, to encourage student expression, and to strengthen the institutional visibility of UPAC.

We also take pride in the growing partnership with the Embassy of Israel, which continues to expand through promising new projects in various domains, opening up exciting prospects for our university.

In the field of sports, UPAC, whose athletes have qualified for the final phase of the University Games to be held in Ebolowa in 2026, intends to build stronger teams and nurture athletes who will continue to make our institution shine.

In short, UPAC is committed to continuously improving its living and learning environment to ensure the fulfillment of its students and to guarantee their academic and professional success.

Mr Secretary General, Personal Representative of the Minister of State, Minister of Higher Education,

We are deeply honored to have you among us. Your presence bears witness to the high esteem in which the Minister of State holds us—not only in view of your position of responsibility but also as a mark of respect for your distinguished academic and intellectual career.

Let us therefore warmly applaud **Professor Wilfried NYONGBET GABSA**, Secretary General of the Ministry of Higher Education and a steadfast spokesperson for UPAC within the said Ministry.

I also take this opportunity to once again express our profound gratitude to His Majesty, Professor Jacques FAME NDONGO, Minister of State, Minister of Higher Education, Chancellor of Academic Orders, for his constant and benevolent support.

Mr Secretary General, please convey to him the renewed expression of our deep appreciation.

To our partners and special guests,

We express our heartfelt gratitude for the trust you continue to place in us—through your strong presence here today and your consistent support at every decisive stage of our institution's journey. Your partnership remains a cornerstone of UPAC's mission.

To the parents,
We thank you sincerely for the renewed confidence you place in our ability to educate and train your children into upright, responsible, and useful members of society.

To the teaching and non-teaching staff,
Continue to be the exemplary workers you have always been—dedicated, competent, and ethically irreproachable. Your daily commitment is the key to our collective success.

To our students,
A successful academic year begins on the very first day. To those who may still be hesitant, I say: commit yourselves now to the path of hard work, discipline, and excellence.

May the Almighty God bless and keep you. May He guide and enlighten your steps throughout this 2025–2026 academic year.

Last but not least,
I wish each and every one of you, in your respective capacities, a most successful 2025–2026 academic year.

Long live the Protestant University of Central Africa!
Long live the Ministry of Higher Education!
Long live Cameroon!

Thank you for your kind attention.