

**AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY HIS EXCELLENCY, THE GOVERNOR OF OSUN STATE
AND VISITOR, UNIOSUN, PRINCE OLAGUNSOYE OYINLOLA ON THE OCCASION OF
THE FORMAL TAKE-OFF CEREMONY OF OSUN STATE UNIVERSITY HELD IN OSOGBO
AND CAMPUSES OF THE INSTITUTION ON FRIDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER, 2007**

Today marks another watershed in the history of educational development in Osun State with the formal handing-over of Osun State University to its Proprietors by the Implementation Committee on the establishment of the University. This ceremony equally symbolizes the commencement of activities at the various campuses of UNIOSUN, as the first batch of 1,250 first intakes into this model university matriculate today.

First and foremost, let me express the appreciation of the government and people of Osun state to members of the Implementation Committee of this University, who have, for the past eight months toiled night and day to make real, our dream of putting in place a University which would be second to none in terms of provision of qualitative education as well as the production of first-class rated graduates.

I equally want to commend the people of this state for the very enthusiastic embrace received by UNIOSUN, especially in locations in which the campuses have been located. It is evident that our government has taken bold, commendable and visionary steps to equip our children for the very gigantic task of taking over from the present generation, as leaders of tomorrow. I enjoin all communities in which the Campuses of UNIOSUN have been sited to be hospitable to students and staff of the institution.

I must also congratulate the first set of student who have been admitted into the first-class university out of the over 100,000 candidates which sat for the entrance examinations. It is remarkable that the admissions exercise has been adjudged very thorough and fool-proof. Of equal importance is the need for me to formally welcome the pioneer staff of UNIOSUN, who from all indications constitutes some of the best brains in the academia.

I feel highly delighted to recall that the original plan of government aims at achieving quality service delivery for students and workers engaged in this institution. I assure all that standards set by this new university will not be compromised. It is expected that UNIOSUN, would in its first five years of take-off, provide state-of-the art laboratories for teaching and research, which will ensure that students and staff make breakthroughs in knowledge generation in their fields of study. More importantly, this university has been designed to emerge among the top three in Nigeria in its academic programme within the next five years while also working towards the enviable goal of producing a Noble Prize winning Scholar in twenty-five years.

As you may be aware, the University's twenty-five years strategic plan, income from tuition and other user fees as well as state and local government contributions would be invested to ensure that UNIOSUN ranks among the best in the world in its academic programmes in the university system.

I need not stress the fact that government has committed enormous resources into the establishment of this university which would be run as a self-financed institution. Tuition is set in relation to the quality of education to be delivered in this institution. It is our plan to let people from all over the world come to UNIOSUN to see how a world-class university is run.

It is pertinent for me to reiterate our resolve to take advantage of useful grants and programmes offered by a Public-Private sector partnership for further development of the university.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are not unaware of criticisms in some quarters which have attacked the tuition fees charged by this institution. It is apparent that most of these pronouncements have been made mischievously to score cheap political points while others have condemned the policy as a result of sheer ignorance. I must explain that quality education requires huge financial investment and our plan is to

guarantee excellent education that will make graduates at UNIOSUN hold their heads high anywhere in the world and compare favourably with products of the best universities in the world. Such ill-informed critics have failed to consider the fact that our government is currently a co-proprietor of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology on which we continue to expend enormous resources as Osun State statutory contribution to the running and maintenance of the educational institution.

As you may or may not be aware, our administration, at inception, inherited an educational sector bedevilled by several ills, notably, haphazard policies and lack of purposeful direction. It was apparent that all-important sector was in total shambles with our educational institutions closed down for several months before the inception of our government as a result of the failure of our immediate predecessors to cater effectively for the future of our children.

Our administration realizes the fact that education remains the critical determinant of the advancement of any society. Accordingly, we have evolved policies and programmes which have assisted us in our efforts to rejuvenate the education sector. It is avowed determination to continue to pay particular attention to the development of our children.

Given our commitment to the development of education, government has taken steps to genuinely transform this sector through robust policies which would promote promising educational programmes. I want to congratulate prospective undergraduates who would be afforded the opportunity of growing up in an information technology environment with the attendant high expectations of equipping themselves for future roles in national development.

May I, at this stage, enjoin the pioneer staff of this university to take cognizance of the fact that the new agenda of UNIOSUN must address the challenge of building not a model university, but also producing the best human resources available anywhere in the world.

In the pursuit of the goal of making UNIOSUN a world-class university, I have set up an International Advisory Board to advise me on strategies for fast-tracking the development of Osun State University as the University to beat in the areas of teaching, research and community service. The Board will foster linkages with international development partners and leverage the sourcing of external funding for the University. I am happy to announce that Sir John Daniel, the President of the Commonwealth of Learning and immediate past Assistant Director- General of UNESCO, has agreed to be the Chairman of the board. Others members are:

- (i) Dr. Iring Wasser CEO of the European Accreditation for Degree Programme in Engineering, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Mathematics.
- (ii) Dr. Alice Sena Lampley of the Association of African Universities.
- (iii) Dr. Stamneka Uvalic Trumlic, Head of Quality Assurance at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.
- (iv) Professor kai-ming Cheng of Harvard University of Hong Kong.
- (v) Professor Juma Shabani, Director, UNESCO Bamako Cluster office.

I am informed that with the policies adopted for the running of this University, it is forbidden for staff to go on industrial action upon any flimsy excuse thus making it possible for undergraduate to complete the programme without disruptions or inhibitions. There will be no room for cultism and there will no room for disruptions to the academic calendar.

It is therefore incumbent on student of this institution to seize the very wide opportunities available in UNIOSUN to train themselves and imbibe the spirit of learning and broadening their horizon in their various educational pursuits.

Let me also inform lucky undergraduates who are matriculating today that the authorities of this institution will not condone acts of lawlessness, moral decadence and other ills which have plagued some universities in the past few years. Staff and students whose conducts fall short of expectations would be requested to take their exits honourably or be ex-communicated from the university community.

Government has directed that the university Council, working through the vice chancellor should ensure a symbiotic relationship between parents and the university authorities, which would enable both parties, monitor the performances and conducts of their children and wards.

Before ending this address, I wish to once again congratulate the pioneer students of UNIOSUN who are matriculating today for making history. Let me also reassure the remaining 4,000 students who would be resuming in February, 2008 as part of the first batch of students that all facilities would be ready before the resumption date.

To parents, our well-wishers as well as our critics, I must state without any fear of equivocations that the current administration in Osun State will never engage in politics of deceit. We have never promised what we know we cannot do and we never engage in dishonourable antics. Our avowed policy, until we disengaged from government in May 2011, will be to carry our people along. I seek partnership for the erection of structures that will stand the test of time and which all of us, the good people of Osun will be proud of. It is on this note that I want to wish members of UNIOSUN community, students and staff, very memorable and successful tenure.

Thank you all and God Bless.