

**AN ADDRESS BY THE PRO-CHANCELLOR AND CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL,  
PROFESSOR PETER OKEBUKOLA, OFR, AT THE SPECIAL CONVOCATION FOR  
THE INSTALLATION OF THE CHANCELLOR AND THE CONFERMENT OF AN  
HONORARY DEGREE OF LAWS (LL.D., HONORIS CAUSA) ON THE VISITOR  
HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2009**

On behalf of the Council of Osun State University, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the epoch-making event of the installation of His Imperial Majesty, Ooni of Ife, Alayeluwa Oba Okunade Sijuwade Olubuse II, CFR, as the first Chancellor of Osun State University and the conferment by the University of the first honorary degree on the Visitor, Prince (Dr) Olagunsoye Oyinlola, the Executive Governor of Osun State.

Today establishes yet another milestone in our determination to create and nurture to maturity a unique intellectual citadel which would proudly assume a prominent position in the comity of first class institutions in the world. The appointment and installation of the Chancellor for the University represents a significant development for the institution. The relevant statutes of the Osun State University (Establishment) Law of 2006 provide for the office of the Chancellor. The statutes are very specific in defining the person and quality of the person to be so appointed and declare emphatically that the Chancellor “shall be a **distinguished** person in society who is also visibly committed to the ideals of university education.”

Our Law also provides that the Chancellor shall be appointed by the Visitor to the University. We are truly delighted that His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Osun State, Prince (Dr.) Olagunsoye Oyinlola, in his characteristic way of making the right decision, has chosen to exercise his discretion by appointing Oba Okunade Sijuwade Olubuse II, the highly revered Ooni of Ife, as the first Chancellor of our University.

We have no doubt whatsoever that the appointment is the right one that would catalyse the growth and development of our young institution. As we have heard from the citation of the Kabiyesi as read by the University Orator, His Imperial Majesty has had a distinguished life and career and his influence and reach span virtually all the continents of the world. His leadership qualities are glowing and his commitment to knowledge production and the ideals of university education are unquestionable. Kabiyesi is indeed a round peg in a round hole and his appointment can only add value to our institution as we seek to position it as a leading player in the provision of high quality tertiary education in this generation. The quality of the attendance we have at this ceremony is partly a reflection of the esteem with which our Chancellor is held in the society.

One of the tasks to be performed regularly by the Chancellor would be presiding over the University’s convocation ceremonies and conferring degrees on those that the University have found worthy of such honour. Today, the Chancellor has conferred the first honorary degree of the University, the Doctor of Laws (LL.D., Honoris Causa), on no less a person than the Visitor to the University, Prince (Dr.) Olagunsoye Oyinlola.

Osun State University (Establishment) Law of 2006 empowers the University to confer the honorary degree of the University in any of its Faculties on any person who it may deem worthy of this distinction. It is no coincidence that the first person that the University Council and Senate considered worthy of the distinction is Prince (Dr.) Olagunsoye Oyinlola. In five short years, Prince Oyinlola’s administration has impacted greatly on the socio-economic and political landscape of Osun State such that the hitherto sleepy state has attained a new visibility

among the states of this country. Working with obviously meagre resources but deploying same judiciously, the soldier-governor has redefined the art of governance to incorporate meeting the needs of the people and achieving the aims of government without inflicting undue hardship.

Through the singular courageous act of establishing Osun State University, His Excellency has impacted greatly on the educational landscape, not only of this state but the country at large. I can affirm without any equivocation that the University is on a steady march to the top league of tertiary institutions not only in this country but in the world. The Oyinlola Administration in Osun State has deployed enormous resources to the development of this University and has shown that it is prepared to leave a legacy behind for future generations not only to savour but to build on. There is no doubt that Prince Oyinlola is deserving of the honour that has been bestowed on him today and on behalf of my colleagues in the Council of the University, I congratulate His Imperial Majesty and His Excellency for the honours done them today. May you both live long to continue to offer distinguished service to our fatherland.

As we share the joy of this day, it is worthy to reflect, even if briefly, on some of the issues that will ensure our cherished march toward attaining our dream of developing Osun State University into a true centre of academic excellence become a reality. We at the University cannot but continue to appreciate the support of the Osun State Government under Prince Oyinlola who has continued to exhibit the highest level of commitment and dedication towards the realization of UNIOSUN project by deploying the much needed resources for the development of the University.

However, as it has become obvious in the past few years, the long term sustainability of tertiary institutions would require the contributions and support of all stakeholders in the system. Even at the planning and implementation stages, the founding fathers of this University had recognised the important role to be played by other sectors if the University is to develop properly. In particular, the development of supporting facilities in creating a truly unique learning environment requires resources that are beyond the capacity of any government for now. The strategy proposed was that the resources made available by Government should be concentrated on developing the academic infrastructure, while the institution should make opportunities available to private investors to participate in the development of supporting facilities including student hostels, shopping complex, cafeteria services, banking and such other services that would facilitate the emergence of real academic community as are to be found in all developed societies of the world.

For example, no world class institution today can be said to be complete without having some form of residential services for at least a percentage of its students, but these are not necessarily provided as a social service by the government or the institution. Rather, investors are encouraged to participate in the process and in this way; the benefits of the presence of a university in a community are spread to other tiers of the economy. The concept of private sector involvement in the provision of supporting facilities in tertiary institutions has been embraced by Nigerian universities for some time now but given the general orientation of our universities, the implementation is still in the infancy and private sector contribution to the development of facilities for student use remains low. It is, however, in pursuit of this kind of arrangement that we now have in place at our Okuku Campus seven blocks of hostels each having 10 rooms for male and female students. The hostel, like such other facilities is operating on a Build, Operate and Transfer basis (BOT). I wish to seize this opportunity to appeal to other host communities to embrace this spirit of public-private co-operation in the provision of student hostels and other infrastructures facilities for the overall development of the University. Vast opportunities exist in

all our campuses for private sector involvement in the development of our facilities and these are being made available on very generous terms, indeed, mostly at no cost to the investor.

We on our part will continue to create the enabling environment for investors to have a peace of mind. Apart from the provision of infrastructural facilities and equipment that have created a conducive environment for teaching and learning, the University places great premium on the welfare of its students.

At this juncture, let me appreciate the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sola Akinrinade, and his team, the University's Principal Officers for their immense contributions, dedication and commitment to UNIOSUN PROJECT. My gratitude also goes to members of University Governing Council for the various sacrifices they have all made for the development and growth of this University. Their experiences have contributed immensely to the achievements so far recorded.

Finally, the Visitor, Your Excellencies, Your Royal Highnesses, Vice-Chancellors, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you most profoundly and sincerely for honouring our invitation to this ceremony and wish you journey mercies back to your various destinations. God bless.