

LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITY, OJO, LAGOS. NIGERIA

Address by Professor Lateef Akanni Hussain, Vice Chancellor, Lagos State University on the Second Day of the 15th Convocation Ceremonies of the Lagos State University for the Award of Postgraduates Diplomas, Higher Degrees (Master's and Doctorate) and Honorary Doctorate Degrees on Thursday, 7 February, 2008 at 10.00 a.m. at the University Convocation Ground, Ojo Campus.

Your Excellency Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN, the visitor,
Members of the Lagos State Executive Council,
Former Governors of Lagos State, in particular, Chief (Dr.) Kayode Jakande (Baba Kekere) and Asiwaju Dr. Bola Ahmed Tinubu,
The Chancellor, Chief Dr. (Sir) Molade Okoya-Thomas CFR, OFR (KSJ)
The Pro-Chancellor and Chairman, Governing Council, Mr. Akin kekere- Ekun, OFR,
Your Eminence, Your Royal Majesties,
Your Royal Highness and Chiefs,
My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
Executive Secretary, National University Commission,
Former Pro-Chancellor of Lagos State University,
Vice Chancellor of other Universities,
Former Vice Chancellor of Lagos State University,
Deputy Vice chancellor,
Registrar,
Bursar,
University Librarian,
Principal Officers of other Universities,
Provost, College of Medicine,
Deans of Faculties and the Postgraduates School, and Ag. Dean of Students Affairs,
Director, School of Part-Time Studies,
Director of Institutes/Centres,
Members of Senate,
Heads of Department,
Members of Congregation,
President and Members of LASU Alumni Association,
President and Members of the Student Union,
Honoured Graduands,
Lucky Graduands of today,
Gentlemen of the Press,
Distinguishes Ladies and Gentlemen.

It a great pleasure and honour for me to add my humble voice to that of the Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor to welcome you to the second and final day of the 15th Convocation Ceremonies which is being held at the University Convocation Ground for the award of Postgraduate Diplomas, Higher Degrees (Master's and Doctorate's Degrees) and

honorary doctorate degrees to deserving Nigerians. You are all most heartily welcome to this great celebration of Achievements. We are grateful to you for honouring our invitation.

Distinguished guests, I crave your indulgence to welcome, in particular, his Excellency Babatunde Raji Fashola, **SAN**, Governor of Lagos State and the Visitor. Your Excellency is attending the Convocation Ceremony as the Visitor for the first time since you took over the leadership of Lagos State Government. Since assuming office as the Governor, Your Excellency has shown special interest in the affair and well being of LASU. For instance, our subvention is remitted to us regularly and punctually. It has become obvious that your Excellency is a Philosopher-king. Through your kind initiative and approval, a scheme for short term visits to LASU by renowned Nigerian scholars has been established. By the scheme, eminent Nigerian Scholars of international repute will be invited to LASU for short-terms to give series of talks on topical issues by each of them in his/her cognate area, for the benefit of staff, students and the general public. This programme is the first of its kind in the Nigerian University System.

The Senate of the University has worked arduously to establish School of Transportation as advised by Your Excellency. Other things being equal, the School should commence operation by the beginning of the 2008/2009 session in September 2008. We also wish to observe that your quiet but efficient style of administration is impacting positively on the lives of the people of Lagos State. It is obvious to discernible observers that the creation of the Special Traffic Mayors by your administration is taming the Lagos traffic monster. May the Almighty God bless your efforts and grant you the energy, wisdom and sound health to administer Lagos State, so that it will continue to flourish as Nigerian's centre of excellence. Eko o ni baje o, Amin.

The first Civilian Governor of Lagos State, Chief (Dr.) Kayode Jakande (Baba Kekere) is most welcome. We recall and cherish his role as the founding father of this citadel of learning. We heartily welcome the immediate past Governor of Lagos State, Asiwaju Dr. Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his tremendous contributions to the growth and development of LASU during his tenure Bless you. We thank your darling wife Chief (Mrs.) Remi Tinubu, President, New Era foundation for the generous endowment of two (2) million naira for the award of annual prizes to the best female Education Biology student. We want to assure you, Ma that we shall continue to invest the huge amount for the prize award annually as prescribed by you. Thank you and God bless.

With the permission of the Visitor, I wish to welcome Chief Dr. (Sir) Molade Okoya-Thomas CFR OFR (KJS), the Chancellor of the University and Asoju Oba of Lagos. It is gratifying to announce publicly that LASU has started to benefit from your business acumen. Your donation of N15 million for the construction of an Indoor Sports Hall for LASU is deeply appreciated. We noted your intention and directive to us to complete the building for commissioning during this Convocation Ceremony. The University authorities are eager too to do so, only through due process. We wish to assure that work will commence soon and the Indoor Sports Hall will certainly be one of the new buildings to be commissioned by His Excellency Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN, to commemorate his one year in office as Governor of Lagos State. Meanwhile, our dear Chancellor, we thank you formally and publicly for the generous donation. We look forward for more of such kind gestures from

you, your associates and companies, as promised during your maiden visit to the University on 12 August, 2007.

Let me salute our amiable, dynamic, enterprising and mission oriented leader, Mr. Akin Kekere-Ekun OFR, Pro Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council, for his enviable purposeful leadership of the University in the last one year. The Pro Chancellor and other distinguished members of the Governing council have never relented in their selfless and onerous task to make LASU the best of State Universities and, indeed the leader in entire Nigerian University system. The University Management, staff and students cannot thank you enough for the wonderful developments, currently taking place in the University, especially, through your network of friends and associates. We shall continue to look up to you in the concerted efforts to take LASU to greater heights.

As indicated during the Convocation last year, members of the University Management continue to work as a family. A very strong and cordial team whose strength is anchored on sincerity, comradeship and shared ideals. The weekly Management meeting has become an operational engine for decision-making and implementation of resolutions on issues affecting the University, staff and students. Prof. Tundonu Amosu, the Deputy Vice Chancellor remains a strong pillar and bridge between the past and present administration. Furthermore, the University is benefiting tremendously from the wealth of experience of Mr. Oluwatoyin Oshun, the Registrar. Mrs. Olapeju Aina Awoliyi remains a shining star of what a professional banker turned University Bursar should be. I make bold to say that she is living up to the expectation of her office. I find her very reliable and trustworthy in the discharge of her duties as the Bursar of the University. She has introduced new financial techniques to ensure transparency and accountability. Two of such innovations are mentioned below:

(A). Introduction of all Part-Time Students on to the Bursary Database

The introduction into the bursary database, the financial records of all the Part-time students through the allocation of bursary numbers to each of the students. This innovation has put the University in a good position to maintain the financial records of the students; and

(B). Introduction of additional control to ensure complete receipt of income through school fees

A control measure was put in place by the Bursary to detect fees collected but not credited to the University accounts. By this method, banks are put on their toes because all receipt can easily be monitored by the University and the system also enhances easy reconciliation of accounts.

Dr. (Mrs.) Adetoun O. Idowu, the University Librarian continues to demonstrates professional competence, confidence and great ability to transfer the University Library into a 21st century first class Library. Again, permit me to mention just three of her remarkable achievements as follows:

(A). Current books and Journals

LASU Library System can claim to be one of the libraries within the Nigerian Academic System having the most current books.

All the new acquisitions in the year are 2006, 2007 and even 2008 publications.

(B). Virtual Library/Electronic Database

The e-library wing of the Library is near completion. All that is left is to equip with computers and subscribe to various academic databases.

(C). List of Academic Websites that LASU Library now has access to include:

1. EBSCOHOST
2. www.online.sagepub.com
3. www.ajol.com
4. www.emeraldinsight.com
5. www.popline.com
6. www.agora.com
7. www.hinari.com
8. www.sciencedirect.com

All these sites will be resident in the Virtual Library very soon. While the cost of visiting some of these sites is free, the Library will need to pay for some through annual subscription.

The Library environment is now more user friendly as major renovation was carried out last year in the following areas:

- (1) A glistening terrazzo flooring
- (2) Modern sliding windows installed
- (3) Additional chairs for students
- (4) A newspaper reading table created for current dailies and magazines
- (5) A serene interior adorned with live ornamental plants
- (6) Functional toilet facilities
- (7) Internal and external painting of the Library building
- (8) The Library conference room is now a beehive of activities meeting, seminars etc hold there.

Of course, there are still some constraints, but with her determination and the usual support by the Governing Council and University Management, we shall overcome all the constraints. We appreciate the dedicated service of the University Librarian.

It is necessary to commend two outstanding officers who had done much contribute to the new LASU.

First is the indefatigable, indomitable and no-nonsense Director of the School of Part-Time Studies, Professor Olaide A. Adedokun who is quietly revolutionizing the School through series of reform measures. According to her, the School has focused on issues of quality control and assurance and has taken many right steps to ensure that there are no unjustifiable differences between the full time and part time students of the University. Notable among these positive measures are:

1. A streamlined and centralized admission process involving qualifying examinations, selection interviews and rigorous screening of candidates with minimum University requirements to procure degree and professional graduate programme;
2. Matriculation of all part-time students to ensure that, as the University tradition demands, entry of each student is formalized and appropriately documented;
3. An uninterrupted part time school academic calendar that makes for a predictable operational system expected of a reputable University;
4. Establishment of a Quality Control Unit that monitors the teaching and library facilities, provision of computer Science laboratories, environment and health facilities, carries out academic staff audit and ensures the sustenance of the right academic culture on the external campuses;
5. Conduct of Unified Semester Examinations that are heavily monitored, following acceptable patterns and standards of large examining bodies and relying heavily on the established computerized system;
6. The provision of full online services for admission, registration, result presentation and data management;
7. Great improvement in the availability of graduating students' results, up till the most recent (2006) academic session and for the first time ever, availability online of all current results of non-graduating part-time students;
8. Comprehensive and objective rationalization and harmonizing of academic programmes in the external campuses of the University;
9. Comprehensive review of honoraria payable to part-time (contract) academic staff in the School of Part-time studies, to encourage standardization, enhance quality control and eliminate exploitation of students on the campuses; and

Creation of a unique student-friendly learning environment in which direct communication of students with the Vice Chancellor, Director of the School and Assistant Directors is at the centre of conflict resolution and policy formulation.

By these measures, the Director has been able to plug many avenues of corruption, extortion, graft, inefficiency and other negative practices that gave LASU a bad name in the past. Prof Adedokun's administrative style is creating the real University culture, value,

transparency and accountability in the School. With her at the helm of affairs, the School of Part-Time Studies will land at the shore of excellence soon. Please keep the good work.

The second officer is Mrs. O.M. Olarewaju-John, the Director of Academic Planning and Basic Statistics. Within one year of her appointment at LASU, she has transformed the Academic Planning Unit. Some of the landmark events recorded by the Unit are as follows:

1. Production of the University Academic Brief;
2. First ever NUC Resource Verification of new/matured programmes in the University;
3. Calculation of University Full-Time Equivalent and determination of Academic Staff Need, based on Full-Time Equivalent for the 2005/2006 Academic Session;
4. Comprehensive NUC programme Audit of the University System; and
5. First ever mock accreditation conducted by the University.

Our very warm commendation for the University's preparation for the National Universities Commission's (NUC) Accreditation Exercise of the University's academic programmes/courses in November 2007. We urge her to continue the diligent service which deeply appreciated.

At this juncture, let me congratulate the graduands of today. There are two thousand, three hundred and forty seven (2,347) of them. Among them are (13) Ph.D holders, mainly from the Faculties of Arts, Education, Science and Social Sciences. Please, accept our warm felicitations for your outstanding academic performance.

We wish you continued success in life. We admonish you, however, to always be good ambassadors of LASU, your Alma Mater, which expects some contributions from you either as individuals or members of the LASU Alumni Association.

At today's ceremony also, the University is conferring honorary doctorate degrees on the following eminent personalities:

1. The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III
2. Alhaji Lateef Olufemi Okunnu
3. Mrs. Adefemi Abeke Taire
4. Professor Omotunde Aba Sagoe
5. Late Justice Muritala Okunola
6. Engineer Ahmed Olatunde Onipede
7. Rev. Idowu Akindele

These illustrious Nigerians have contributed to the development of Lagos State and the country at large. We congratulate them and wish them good health and many more years of service to their fatherland. May the sweet soul of the posthumous awardee continue to rest in peace.

We wish to acknowledge the peaceful atmosphere on our campuses, notably at Ojo, Epe, Ikeja and Surulere. The conducive environment is a major motivation for hard work, dedication and commitment by staff and students. Lectures are now held as scheduled, followed by examinations and prompt release of results. While the University is rewarding the brilliant students with University scholarship, to the value of ₦20,000 per annum, the lazy students are being shown the way out. The new LASU is for scholarship and academic excellence. There is no room for the indolent. We are proud to announce that over 357 students have benefited from the University scholarship. We welcome more students to the club of scholarship winners. I must express the appreciation of the University to all the staff, especially the academics for their industry and high sense of responsibility.

The University Information and Communication Technology (ICTC) Centre is making very steady progress as the centre has been able to record the following achievements and innovations:

1. NETWORKING FOR INTERNET SERVICES

I must use this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to students in Faculties of Engineering, Science and Management Sciences for their historic role especially in the area of networking of various campuses for Internet service. Instead of giving out the networking services project to private companies with its attendant huge costs, the students, supervised by *Mr. Toyin Enikuomihin*, a lecturer in the Department of Computer Science of this University successfully laid the network for Internet Services.

The University saved a lot of money by this cost saving method and it also gave the students the opportunity to excel in the area of Information and Communication Technology.

2. CREATION OF SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS AND WEB SERVICES

Right from the inception of our ICTC, we were determined to create in-house our software application and web services. All the software the University uses for students' registration, their results, generation of their profiles, post-UME screening tests, hire purchase scheme for computers, just to mention a few, was created by both students and staff. LASU has active website, www.lasunigeria.org. It has become the major notice board of the University where many of its activities are publicized. This University website is also managed by students and staff Applications used for web operations are the creation of both Dr. Moses Akanbi and Mr. Gbolahan Idowu, lecturers in the Department of Computer Science of the University.

In a recent rating undertaken by an international IT organization in Madrid, Spain, with regard to use of websites for teaching and research, LASU's was adjudged as one of the most updated University websites in Nigeria. The same organization ranked LASU as the 5th amongst Nigeria Universities; and the 1st amongst State owned universities.

3. INTERNET SERVICES

The ICT centre is equipped with a V-sat of international standard. It provides Internet services for both the centre and the entire University main campus in Ojo. Very soon it will provide the same services for the V-sat was built by ICSL (ex-Schlumberger), one of the

world's leading ICT companies. The hub station of our V-sat is hosted in Aberdeen, Scotland. Negotiations are under way between LASU ICT and ICSL with a view to providing, via LASU V-sat, Internet services for companies and organizations within our environs e.g. Alaba International Electronic Market and Agbara Industrial Estate just to name a few.

3. LOCAL CISCO ACADEMY:

The University has paid for the establishment of a CISCO Academy with the assistance of the Federal Government. This academy will soon be open to both LASU students and members of the general public interested in acquiring skills and taking CISCO certified examinations. The local Cisco Academy will be housed by an ICT unit financed and equipped by Union Bank of Nigeria.

4. ICT CENTRES: PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP

Since the inception of this administration, the University has built three ICT centres-all in Ojo Campus. The first centre was built by this Administration. It houses one hundred and eleven (111) desktop computers purchased from HP on the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with this computer hardware Solution provider. The University paid for all the computers. This laboratory is at the disposal of the University community and, also national and international organizations who are interesting organizing in all kinds of IT training.

The second centre was built and donated to the university by the Federal Government through its agency, the petroleum Development Training Fund called PDTF. We are grateful for this important gesture from the Federal Government. We intend to make use of this PDTF ICT centre for the establishment of an Institute of Software where programmers will be trained for both public and private organizations.

The third ICT centre was built and donated by Zenith Bank. Zenith ICT Centre is dedicated specifically to students for their research and documentation. Recently Zenith Bank has added to the centre the development of a robust mast infrastructure for effective and increased broadband services. This superior broadband technology will give the university the golden opportunity to undertake the use of video conferencing for teaching and research. On behalf of the entire University community, I thank the Management of Zenith Bank led by Chief Jim Ovia for its unforgettable assistance to the University. I must say that LASU is on its way to becoming a University of the 21st Century where the latest information technology is deployed for teaching and research.

5. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ICT ACADEMY IN LASU

The implication of this donation by Zenith is this: LASU is virtually on the verge of creating an ICT Academy of international standard. The University needs two additional structures to create the ICT Academy modeled after those in the University of Turin, Italy, and Barcelona, Spain. One of the structures is a 5-star ICT conference centre to provide accommodation for all categories of those who would want to acquire various IT knowledge. The second structure is an ICT Centre promised by the Lagos State Government. Already, the University Management has integrated into its ICT Master Plan another ICT Centre promised by Asiwaju Ahmed Bola Tinubu's Administration. We are

aware that it has been approved by the Government's Tenders Board. LASU needs the fourth ICT Centre from Lagos State Government in order to consolidate its dream of building Nigeria's first ICT Academy. I seize this opportunity to appeal to His Excellency, Babatunde Raji Fashola, Governor of Lagos State, to provide the University with this ICT centre as a New Year gift to usher in a prosperous and successful ICT Academy in our University.

BENEFACCTIONS

All these positive developments have earned LASU a lot of goodwill, support and encouragement from many individuals and corporate bodies as follows:

- (i) Scholarships: Dr. Gbolahan Elias, SAN, a member of the Governing Council gave a donation of N500,000.00 (five hundred thousand naira only) to supplement the endowment in honour of his late father, Justice Taslim Elias our first Chancellor.
- (ii) Emeritus Professor Lateef Akinola Salako, a renowned Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Ibadan donated five thousand, one hundred and twenty five (5,125) volumes of medical journals are invaluable to our College of Medicine.
- (iii) Chief (Sir) Molade Okoya-Thomas CFR, the Chancellor of the University, as mentioned earlier donated N15 million for the construction of an Indoor Sports Hall. Julius Berger Plc built and equipped a 1,500-capacity Lecture hall. The building was handed over to the University a few months ago.
- (v) zenith Bank Plc made good its promise by building an ICT Centre and fully equipping it with computers and bandwidth. The building was commissioned by His Excellency Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN, Governor of Lagos State and Visitor to the University.
- (vi) The Petroleum Development Training Fund completed its ICT building.
- (vii) Endowment to the Faculty of Business Administration by the Estate of Dr. babatunde Augustine Godonu Amusu. The family gave a cheque for the sum of ₦2 million (two million naira) to be invested in perpetuity. The interest accruing from the endowment is to be used for the award of an annual prize of ₦100,000 to the best graduating student in the Department of Business Administration and Management Technology. For this year's convocation prize, the family gave the University another cheque for the sum of ₦100,000.00 (one hundred thousand naira,).
- (viii) Professor T.A. Bolarinwa's endowment of two prizes in the Faculty of Education; and
- (ix) Professor Molara Bamgboye's endowment of an annual prize for the best graduating student in the Department of Chemistry.

We are profoundly grateful to these donors for their huge and invaluable support. The University will make use of these resources judiciously to promote teaching, research and service to the Community. We appeal to other philanthropists to donate generously to the University. All donations will be grateful acknowledged and used properly. LASU is poised to contribute its quota to the solutions of the socio-economic, environmental technological and political problems of Lagos State and Nigerians as a whole.

UPGRADING OF ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

The positive response of assistance and encouragement by individuals and organizations have become a high motivating factor for us to improve our infrastructure facilities, especially in the area of energy, which is a sine qua non to the success of any institution or organization. Realizing the pivotal role of electricity supply, the Governing Council graciously approved the purchases of two generators of 1, 000 and 50 KVA respectively at a cost of N31 million to upgrade power supply at the Ojo campus. The two generating sets have been purchased and are about to be installed. Another 500KVA generator was purchased and installed at the Epe Campus. Life of staff and students at the Campus has improved for the better.

In conclusion, we wish to thank, once again, our Visitor, His Excellency, the Governor of Lagos State, the Chancellor, the Pro Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council and members of Council for their worthy leadership roles that keep LASU on the fast track. I should also thank members of Senate, Congregation, all members of staff and students for today's celebration. We appreciate the presence of all our distinguished guests for adding colour and dignity to the great occasion.

Thank you all and God bless.

Lateef Akanni Hussain
Vice Chancellor