

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE PRO-CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR PETER OKEBUKOLA,
OFR, AT THE COMMISSIONING OF THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY BUILDING, MONDAY, 30TH
JUNE 2008**

On behalf of the Council of Osun State University, I like to extend a warm welcome to all who are present here today to felicitate with us as we commission the Central Administration Building and the College of Science, Engineering and Technology Building. Of course, as you are all most probably aware, these are not the first set of buildings in the University. Indeed, many universities that started much earlier than UNIOSUN cannot boast of the quality of the structures we already had in place before this time. However, Council has been particularly concerned with developing the infrastructure and facilities that would match our aspirations to build a world class university in the State of the Living Spring at the shortest possible time.

We give all the glory to God for helping us to this stage. The plan and vision of the defunct Implementation Committee was that these buildings and others in all the six campuses of Osun State University should have been ready several months before now. Indeed, our projections for enrolment had been based on the facilities that we expected would be available to the University by the presence of these structures and the facilities and equipment we would be putting in place. However, things did not work out as planned: not because we did not plan well, but because of circumstances beyond our control. Today, we can truly say, “God has really blessed our efforts.”

Developing the physical and other infrastructural facilities as well as proper equipping is crucial to the emergence and sustenance of a true university. Over the months, we have boldly asserted that our goal is to establish a world class university. As experienced practitioners, members of Council are fully aware of the implications of our goal. We know that a world class university is not cheap; neither is it built in a day. But we also know that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step and starts in a day. We have not been deterred by the fears and anxieties expressed. The outcome of our determination to proceed despite odds is what you are witnessing today. We have put together in the Management and Staff of the University men and women who have committed themselves to the realisation of our goals. Our pioneer management team and pioneer staff were carefully selected from a rigorous process to ensure that only those who share and could deliver on the vision are brought on board. Nine months after, we have continued to receive positive reviews and reports about the progress UNIOSUN is making.

As you have heard in the Vice-Chancellor’s address, the learning environment in the University has been witnessing significant positive changes in the past few months. The goal is to enhance the learning experiences of our students and equip our staff with the necessary wherewithal for them to perform maximally. What we are doing today can only enhance the process even further. The new structures that are being commissioned would provide adequate and proper space to do things the way they ought to be done. Not only are we providing space, we are also equipping the buildings with state of the art facilities. Our laboratories are being equipped with the latest and the best scientific equipments; our classrooms are being fitted with the latest gadgets to make learning a truly worthwhile experience and enable our products compete favourably with their counterparts world over.

In all this we have continued to receive the support of our proprietors. The Osun State Government ably led by our amiable Executive Governor, Prince (Dr.) Olagunsoye Oyinlola, has demonstrated unparalleled commitment to developing the University to the maximum level possible and deploying all resources that would match the vision. Governor Oyinlola has proven time and again that he is a man who has a clear focus and good understanding of his mission. He has shown what governors should be: leaders and not rulers, leaders who are committed to developing their people and helping them to realise their potentials; enabling them to function optimally. Assisted by an able and committed team equally committed to excellent functioning of the University, the Governor has continued to prove that he is truly “Ore ara ilu”

– friend of the people. Prince (Dr.) Oyinlola is not only Visitor to Osun State University, he has shown that he is a Friend of UNIOSUN.

Since the UNIOSUN vision has been launched into the public domain in October 2006, the Government has ensured that all those charged with one matter or the other in dealing with the affairs of the University are men and women of vision and rare competence. The Commissioner for Education, Alhaji Abdul Jelil Oyewale Adesiyen, has continued to demonstrate unalloyed support for the University. The Commissioner for Finance, Elder Moses Adetoyese Ojo, has been unstinting in his support. Other commissioners, past and present, who have served in our Planning and Implementation Committees including Alhaji Tajudeen Oladipo, Mrs. Bunmi Famoriyo, Dr. Richard Adebayo Faforiji, Mr. Ayo Akinsomi, and Alhaji Ajibola Lawal have all contributed to making this day possible. We cannot separate their efficient performance from the commitment demonstrated at the highest level of government in Osun State. Hence, our appreciation to the Government of Osun State, and to our Governor, Prince Oyinlola.

But there is a group I must not fail to publicly acknowledge and appreciate. These are the professional men and women, most of them in the Ministry of Works and Transport as well as the Ministry of Lands, along with a few consultants from outside, all of whom have worked in the background most of the time as members of the Physical Development Task Force and the Accelerated Physical Development Task Force. They include the Architects, Quantity Surveyors, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers, Town Planners and Estate Surveyors and other respected professionals who have given their time, talents and energy to the fulfilment of the UNIOSUN vision of putting in place world class facilities to match the academic aspirations. The Task Force was divided into Supervisory Teams responsible for overseeing developments in the various campuses. The Osogbo Campus Supervisory Team is led by Arc. (Mrs.) Olaronke Ajayi. On behalf of Council, please accept our appreciation.

Now, to our pledge: we all know it is not enough to erect buildings such as we are commissioning today. An important element in the equation is to what use the buildings are put and how they are maintained. Our pledge as Council is to ensure that we give leadership to the Management of the University to ensure that these buildings are not only equipped with the necessary equipment and facilities but they are deployed to the use for which they have been erected. As custodians of the properties of the University, Council is making a promise that these buildings would not go the way of public buildings that became decrepit within a few months of their being put to use.

In closing my remarks, I must appreciate my colleagues in the Council of Osun State University. One of us, who is unavoidably absent at this ceremony, is perhaps the happiest as we are giving her a special birthday present. Even as we celebrate today, I wish to seize this opportunity to say “Happy Birthday” to the Mama of Council, Professor (Mrs.) Janet Modupe Makinde. May you live long and experience even greater happiness each day.

I thank you for your attention.