

**SPEECH BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF OSUN,
OGBENI RAUF AREGBESOLA, AT THE INAUGURATION
OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
OSUN STATE (UNIOSUN) AT THE EXCO CHAMBERS OF
THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR, ABERE, ON TUESDAY
NOVEMBER 27, 2012**

Protocols,

It gives me great pleasure to be here this morning to preside over the inauguration of the Governing Council of University of Osun State (UNIOSUN). It has been a long and tortuous journey but we are happy that we have docked at the joyous harbour.

This event remarkably caught us in a particularly joyous mood – the second anniversary of our coming to power.

Where do we go from here? We must proceed from the premise that the university was ill-conceived, hurried put together for political expediency and took off on a shaky ground. It was ambition gone blind to have set up a multi-campus university when a single campus university can hardly be funded. It has never been part of the university idea to set up a university just to give the people of the locale a false

sense of satisfaction of having a university campus in their community.

I have never hidden my preference for the ideal university. This is a regional university operated on a collegiate system and well-funded. This university, though well-grounded as a foremost centre of ideas, but will also be an institution for equipping its graduates with life sustaining skills, rather than issuing them bland certificates and compound the misery.

While we are waiting for this ideal university, I want the new Governing Council to make UNIOSUN one. For this reason, your appointment is not a reward or patronage. Rather, it is a call to an arduous task for which success is not guaranteed. You must note this ab initio and gird your loins in earnest for the challenges ahead.

I want a marked difference in philosophy, curriculum, societal relevance and funding for this university. There must be a paradigmatic shift in the philosophy of a university as an elite recruitment centre whose only noticeable value lies in the social etiquette acquired in its campus and certificates brandished by

its graduates. I want a university that will equip its graduates with specific skills even in unusual areas like the liberal arts, social sciences and the core sciences. This university should be a pathfinder for society. It should lead in the search for solution to societal problems by standing above society, passing judgement on it and seeking to change it by first changing itself and through its own excellence impact society.

Let me be more specific. I want this university to pioneer research into areas like cheap mass housing for its campus and transfer this knowledge to its immediate environment. I will want this university to also pioneer research into cheap alternative power source for its campus. This knowledge will then be made available to the state and possible the rest of the world. Again, I want the environmental science faculty to make a statement with the environmental architecture of your campus. This again will be replicated in society. I will really want the state secretariat to be the first beneficiary of this applied knowledge.

On funding, I want a clear departure from the lazy approach of twin dependence on tuition and subvention from the owner state. It is immoral to pass the full burden of cost on the students. While we will not fail to fulfil our obligation to the university but rather improve on it, we want your major task therefore to be repositioning the institution for better funding through endowments, income from intellectual outputs like patents and innovative business ideas. Since society is the first beneficiary of university graduates, it is also necessary that the larger society be part of the funding of the university. This is not begging, it is a reasonable and legitimate exchange. You must therefore task individuals, enterprises and corporation for the funding of the university.

I am charging you to position UNIOSUN differently from the rest. Ideally, every university ought to be unique. The vision should be putting in place cutting edge infrastructure, producing graduates that are world beaters and encouraging Nobel laureate faculties.

This vision should be reflected in your first assignment, which is the recruitment of the Vice Chancellor for the university. As has become demonstrably my practice, I demand that you go for merit and select the candidates that best approximate this vision and will lead the institution into its greatness.

Let me congratulate you for the unenviable task you are being saddled with. It is the stuff that real men (and women) are made of. Nevertheless, I have no doubt that you are capable of performing the task to satisfaction.

I thank you for your attention.

Osun a dara.