

**ADDRESS OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR LABODE  
POPOOLA AT THE 8TH CONVOCATION CEREMONIES FOR THE  
CONFERMENT OF FIRST, POSTGRADUATE AND HONORARY DEGREES  
AND PRIZES OF OSUN STATE UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA  
ON 19-21 SEPTEMBER, 2019**

The Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, SAN, GCON

The Governor of the State of Osun, and the Visitor to the University, His Excellency, Mr. Gboyega Oyetola

The Deputy Governor of the State of Osun, Mr. Benedict Alabi

The Speaker, State House of Assembly, Rt. Honourable Timothy Owwoye

The Chief Judge of the State, Rt. Hon. Justice Adepele Ojo

Chancellor of our University, Dr. Folorunso Alakija

Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council, Mallam Yusuf OlaOlu Ali, SAN

His Imperial Majesty, the Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, Ojaja II

His Royal Majesty, Ataoja of Osogbo, Oba Jimoh Oyetunji Olanipekun, Larooye II

His Royal Majesty, Oba (Dr.) Gabriel Aromolaran II, CFR, LLD Hons, the Owa

Obokun Adimula of Ijesaland

Your Royal Majesties here present

The Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission, Professor Abubakar A. Rasheed

The Registrar of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board

The Executive Secretary of TETFund

Esteemed Members of our Governing Council

Visiting Pro-Chancellors and Chairmen of Councils of other Universities

Visiting Vice-Chancellors

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration and Development)

Registrar

Bursar

University Librarian

Heads of Security Agencies present

Provosts, Deans, Heads of Department and Directors

Members of Senate

Members of Congregation

UNIOSUN Alumni Association

Dear Students

Members of the University Community and our host communities

Our Cherished Graduands, their parents, guardians and well wishers

Gentlemen of the Press

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Today is September 21<sup>st</sup>, and our Founder's day, and the first time our gathering will coincide with the convocation day as planned and approved by our Governing Council to henceforth be the norm. With gladdened heart and joyful mind, I welcome you all to the 8<sup>th</sup> Convocation Ceremonies for the conferment of first, postgraduate degrees and Diplomas of Osun State University and the conferment of honorary doctorate degrees on an eminent woman and some men of this very great country who have excelled in their various callings and professions. In forty-five days, I will be

three years in the saddle as the Vice Chancellor of this young and unique institution of higher learning, Osun State University, UNIOSUN for short!

I most heartily welcome our beloved Chancellor, Dr. (Mrs.) Folorunso Alakija, who has continued to be a great pillar of support to our University and whose each visit to the university has been a blessing. Her first trip was for the 6<sup>th</sup> convocation ceremonies of the University, while the second was to commission the access road leading to the university the ‘Folorunso Alakija Boulevard’, which she graciously supported the university to construct. Last year, on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2018, the sod was turned for the foundation of a world-class ultra modern Teaching Hospital; she and her family are building for the University. I am happy to report that work had since commenced on the site and moving with great momentum. I believe in God that very soon, we all shall be gathered to commemorate the opening of an ultra-modern Teaching Hospital for our university’s Medical Education and the provision for the health needs of Nigerians and beyond. Madam Chancellor Ma, your kind support and many other philanthropic gestures, the energy and the commitment to the UNIOSUN’s mission continue to amaze us all. We are forever grateful, mom!

I like to warmly welcome the Visitor to our University, Mr. Gboyega Oyetola, the Governor, State of Osun, who is making his first official visit to the University today, and his hardworking Deputy, Mr. Benedict Alabi. On behalf of the UNIOSUN community, I congratulate you both once again, for your victory at the polls and at the judiciary.

I would also like to heartily welcome the Speaker, State of Osun House of Assembly Rt. Honourable Timothy Owoeye, his colleagues, and all our eminent and distinguished guests from all over the country and beyond; especially the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC), Executive Secretary of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund TETFund, Vice Chancellors or their representatives, Rectors of Polytechnics and Provosts of Colleges of Education and Registrars of different institutions from far and near. We welcome and appreciate Professor Abel Olajide Olorunnisola to our University and for the thought-provoking Foundation Day Lecture he delivered yesterday.

I like to specially thank and welcome our Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council, the enigmatic Mallam Yusuf Ali, SAN for his positive guidance and leadership. But for the commitment of the Governing Council, our journey as a management of UNIOSUN wouldn’t have been easy.

I like to also use this opportunity to welcome my colleagues whose efforts have helped immensely in shaping and sharpening the minds of today’s graduands. Thank you for your labour of love, and you are recognized. No doubt, you have helped to guide our graduands on a path to lead meaningful and better lives. I feel most blessed to have you all as colleagues and partners in this business of knowledge impacting. Of note, I would also like to congratulate the parents, guardians, families and friends of our graduating students. We understand, value and appreciate the sacrifices, you have made towards helping today’s graduands in their academic journeys.

Through our dear Visitor, I like to specially welcome on your behalf and on behalf of the entire people of our State, His Excellency, Professor Oluyemi Oluleke Osinbajo,

SAN, GCON, the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, who earlier today delivered the 2019 Convocation Lecture titled “**Six Decades of Chequered Nationhood: Nigeria Still Holds the Key to Africa’s Development**”. The lecture was no doubt ‘*a masterpiece*’, only expected from men and women of higher-quality and cerebral capability. Mr. Vice President Sir, your lecture has broadened and challenged our intellect more than ever.

### **Keeping up with Ethos of Convocations**

Meanwhile, as it has been for more than five centuries and in line with the history of the universities the world over, we shall keep up with the ethos and practice of what has become the height of university convocations. Just like it was in the late 1470s, when University of Oxford awarded the first honorary degree to Lionel Woodville, our University will be awarding *honoris causa* degrees of Doctorates of this university on three distinguished and accomplished citizens of this country. These three individuals have demonstrated excellence, and have excelled in their various fields of endeavours and so deserved the honour being bestowed upon them. Madam Chancellor, the recipients seated among us today are Dr. Bolanle Olawale Babalakin, SAN, Mrs Oyenike Monica Okundaye, an art enthusiast and entrepreneur, who has taken indigenous arts of carving and tie and dye to international acceptance, as well as Mr. Jim Ovia an accomplished banker of repute and founder of the Zenith Bank Nigeria Plc. The other award is a deferred one, and it is for the former Governor of our State and Visitor to this University, the redoubtable Ogbeni Rauf Adesoji Aregbesola. Lady and gentlemen, for, and on behalf of the entire UNIOSUN community, I like to appreciate your acceptance of the honour being bestowed on you all today.

Last year, we took a decision to spread the convocations ceremonies over three days. The first two days, Thursday- featured the award of degrees to graduands from Colleges of Agriculture, Education and Management and Social Sciences while Friday had Colleges of Humanities and Culture and Science, Engineering and Technology. Today, Colleges of Health Sciences, Law, and Postgraduate will take the stand. Our decision to spread the ceremonies over three days was based on consideration for other citizens of the state that may be affected by the deluge of crowd usually witnessed during our convocation ceremonies in the past.

### **Progressing Towards a World Class Learning Environment**

Ladies and gentlemen, I am happy to also inform you that Osun State University is twelve years old this year. Although we are young, we are moving very fast with the understanding that we cannot afford any excuses for non-performance or failures. Our efforts in the last three years of this administration have been to consolidate on the gains of our humble beginnings. It is with great pride that I report here today, that we have successfully redirected the institution back to the path paved for it by our founding fathers, which is to be a centre of excellence, providing high quality teaching and learning experiences which will engender the production of high calibre entrepreneurial graduates capable of impacting positively on their environment while being globally competitive. We have also continued to improve on facilities and equipment, just as we continue to invest in human capital development. These three are the key ingredients and necessary requirements towards achieving a world-class higher learning environment stature.

## **Academic Development**

The Visitor, eminent personalities and distinguished guests, the world is changing very fast daily and any institution of higher learning that is caught flatfooted will certainly be left behind. At UNIOSUN, we are cognizant of this and we have continued to make academic development the centre point of our institutional policy in order to be relevant to the changing needs of the society and our people. Noting our responsibility as a knowledge economy player, we have continued to place emphasis on increased access. This is because of our belief in the capacity of higher education in destroying the myth of underdevelopment and cycle of poor growth. Presently, our undergraduate programmes remain at fifty-five (55), spanning the fields of Agriculture, Education, Law, Sciences, Engineering and Technology, Health Sciences, Humanities and Culture and Management and Social Sciences. Our postgraduate programmes on the other hand remain at twenty-seven (27), at the postgraduate diploma (PGD), Master degree (academic and professional) and doctoral levels. At the same time, programmes such as Nursing, Accounting, Engineering and Urban and Regional Planning Programmes also enjoy professional accreditation from their various professional bodies.

In addition, Our MBBS programme is now fully resuscitated, up and running smoothly. With our Teaching Hospital under construction, we are in no doubt poised to contribute to the development medical breakthroughs, Thanks to Alakijas!

## **Access to Higher Education - No Student left behind/out**

At UNIOSUN, we believe that access to quality education cannot be free but can only be guaranteed if opportunities abound. Such opportunities include access to scholarship, financial support or opportunities to work and earn some stipends while schooling. Mr. Visitor sir, I am happy to report that between the last convocation and now, we have been able to provide different kinds of opportunities for our students to continue to remain in school. Arising from this, we have considerably reduced the number of students who seek to defer their studies or withdraw from school on the account of financial incapability. This we have been able to do through scholarship and financial supports/funding opportunities from individuals and corporate organizations. Notable among these are Mallam Yusuf OlaOlu Ali, Prince Tunde Ponnle, other members of our Governing Council and staff of the University.

Currently, our students can work on campus through our work-study programme. They are registered with the student affairs of the university as student companies/ or groups to render different services, including cleaning, ushering, grounds service like horticulture and grooming among others and get paid for it. Distinguished audience, permit me to use this medium to solicit for your support towards increasing our funding base for students' scholarship and financial support. No amount is too small!

## The 8<sup>th</sup> Convocation

This year's convocation like the previous ones presents the university another opportunity to graduate the students who have met the graduation conditions, which is; "*found worthy in character and learning*", into the world of service and global relevance. Through the award of *first* and *postgraduate* degrees and *diplomas* (i.e. B.Sc. B.A. B.Eng. B.Sc. and B.A in Education, LL.B, B.Nursing, PGD M.A., and M.Sc.) in various fields of Agriculture, Education, Health Sciences, Humanities, Law, Management and Social Sciences, and Science, Engineering and Technology.

Tables 1 and 2 below present the breakdown of the first and postgraduate degrees and diplomas as well as classes of degrees.

**Table 1: Breakdown of Postgraduate Degrees and Diploma (PGD)**

S/N	Programme	PGD	MA/M.Sc. /Master Degree	Professional Master Degree	Total
1.	Disaster & Risk Management			1	1
2.	Electrical & Electronic Engineering	6			6
3.	History & International Studies		1		1
4.	Intelligence & Strategic Studies		11		11
	Total	6	12	1	19

During this convocation the University will award a total of 19 at the postgraduate levels. At the undergraduate level, forty-nine (49) first class degrees representing 2.7% of the total number of graduands. Six hundred and seventy (670) second class upper and eight hundred and ninety-two (892) second class lower degrees. Also, a total of one hundred and ninety-four (194) will be awarded the third class degrees while only nine (9) will be receiving the pass degrees. The total number of the different degrees awarded at the first degrees, postgraduate degrees and postgraduate Diplomas during this year's convocation will be one thousand, eight hundred and fourteen (1,814). Since the first convocation in 2011, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, UNIOSUN has surpassed 10,000 mark. Till date, we have graduated a total of 10, 001 graduates, for a young and fledgling University like ours, this is not a small achievement.

**Table 2: CLASS OF DEGREE, FACULTY BY FACULTY**

<b>Class of Degree</b>	<b>Faculty of Agriculture</b>	<b>Faculty of Basic &amp; Applied Sciences</b>	<b>Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences</b>	<b>Faculty of Clinical Sciences</b>	<b>Faculty of Education</b>	<b>Faculty of Engineering &amp; Environmental Sciences</b>	<b>Faculty of Humanities &amp; Culture</b>	<b>Faculty of Law</b>	<b>Faculty of Management Sciences</b>	<b>Faculty of Social Sciences</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Class</b>	11	7	2	2	4	2	1	1	14	5	<b>49</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Class Upper</b>	46	86	19	25	79	33	74	29	199	80	<b>670</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Class Lower</b>	40	130	32	20	132	47	176	13	178	124	<b>892</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Class</b>	10	50	20	0	22	14	26	1	31	20	<b>194</b>
<b>Pass</b>	0	3	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	<b>9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>1814</b>

The Visitor sir, ladies and gentlemen, this year's convocation is very unique because for the first time, in the history of the university, we have two overall best graduating students, a male and a female. Both recorded a tie in their final Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). With joyful mind, therefore, I present the duo of Adedolapo Mojeed OGUNGBIRE, Matriculation Number CVE/2013/0030) of the Department Civil Engineering, College of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) and Precious Nneka OJIEH Matriculation Number POL/2014/0050 of the Department of Political Science, College of Management and Social Sciences as the overall BEST graduating students with a CGPA of 4.84 each. We heartily congratulate them.

### **Capacity Building**

At inception, the university assembled academics and scholars who were capable of impacting knowledge and character in our students as well as seasoned administrators who were experienced in university affairs and management. Twelve years after, we have not departed from that culture and practice. Understanding that the terrain and university education needs are changing everyday at a very fast pace too, the university has continued to encourage and promote the need for continuous upgrading and improvement among its staff members. Currently, there are thirty-five (35) academic staff members studying for their higher degrees of Masters and PhDs in various fields both in Nigeria and abroad. We are in no doubt that our students will be better served when they complete their studies.

Between the last convocation and now, the number of academic staff with doctorate degrees has increased, following the completion of study and award of PhD degrees to six (6) academic staff, while three (3) also received their Master degrees in various institutions within and outside Nigeria. In the same vein, some of our graduates were retained as Graduate Assistants upon completion of undergraduate studies with First class degrees of our University.

Given our commitment to staff development and continuous training which is unparalleled in Nigeria, through our Internal Learned Conference Programme, the university, between January and August this year, expended the total sum of ₦87,414,689.35 to sponsor about one hundred and fifty (150) members of staff to various local and international training workshops and conferences, bringing the total number to over 300 in two years. In the same vein, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), also expended ₦3,755,000 on five (5) staff members to learned conferences, trainings and workshops.

### **Staff Welfare**

We have been alive to our responsibility in the welfare of staff in a supportive manner taking into account their feelings and difficulties, in an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality. It is noteworthy, that the present administration in UNIOSUN has committed to itself to this. Within the last 34 months of this administration, different kinds of staff welfare scheme were created. As part of the welfare scheme for staff, the university set up the staff health fund with a base capital of ₦10 million and to be grown on annual basis. The aim of the fund is to take care of staff or their direct dependents serious health needs without having to resort to begging/soliciting for assistances. This administration also created the automobile and housing loan scheme for staff members. The loan is repayable at a single digit of between 4 and 6% interest rate. It is also no secret, that our workers receive salaries ahead of those in any public university in Nigeria.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, during last year's convocation, I informed the august gathering of the university's commitment to staff welfare as well as that of their dependents by offering 50% rebate in school fees for biological children of a staff. Today and one year down the line, I am happy to inform you that no less than fifty-one (51) members of staff have benefitted from the scholarship with a total cost of **three million, seven hundred and twenty six thousand, eight hundred and seventy five naira (₦3,726,875.00)**. This scheme will be sustained.

### **Students Outreach and International Exposure**

This administration assessed students' needs and came to the conclusion that for the future to be guaranteed, a new generation of academically, ethically, morally and socially conscious youth need to be groomed. In this realm, management of the university resolved that to achieve this goal, there is the need to embark on student empowerment and mentorship programme. We instituted what we call International Field Experience (IFE) which will enable our students learn and share experiences with their global peers. Between April 18 and May 18, 2019, the University, for the

first time-ever, sponsored 18 students of our College of Agriculture, Ejigbo Campus on academic student exchange programme to the Gambia for one month.

In July this year, the University also sponsored six (6) student leaders to attend and participate at the African Student Leaders Workshop on Peace and Reconciliation in Accra, Ghana. The stories of these students who were privileged to be part of the international experience is published in the just released Special Edition of the UNIOSUN NewSpring Magazine with the headline “UNIOSUN: Going Global!

Our resolve is to yearly provide our students this kind of experiences across the various faculties and colleges.

### **Student Relaxation Centre and Motion Ground**

The importance of socialization in the lives of contemporary students underscores the need for relaxation/recreation areas within the academic environment. Since more and more students spend a greater part of their time on campus or around it, this administration has found it necessary to explore other funding opportunities by seeking support from corporate bodies in the form of Corporate Social Responsibility. To this end, the **First Bank Nigeria, Plc** recently approved the proposal of the University to build a modern relaxation and motion ground for our students. This motion ground when completed will provide space for students to socialize and recreate. In addition, the motion ground will offer spaces for small businesses and offer a green space for students to take pictures and/or make films.

### **Recognitions, Breakthroughs and Achievements**

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the University continues to soar in recognition through many of its activities and staff members who have never relented in various endeavours as we continue to seek global relevance in the comity of universities worldwide. Ours is no more a case of *can we do it?* Today, I am proud to inform this august gathering, we have a positive wind behind our back and UNIOSUN can only go higher. One of the great achievements is the 100% pass recorded by our *PIONEER* graduating Nursing students in their professional examinations by the Nursing Council of Nigeria. I am very proud to say that this feat is uncommon even in older universities.

During our last year’s convocation, I informed the gathering of the establishment of the Global Affairs and Sustainable Development Institute (GASDI). The Institute aims to integrate economic, social, cultural and environmental objectives in development. I like to inform this gathering that the Institute organized its first international Symposium. The two-day event had many internationally acclaimed scholars and researchers in attendance physically, and through virtual participation from at least four continents of the world (North America, Europe, Asia and Africa). The two day event was a spectacular success and we intend to continue the practice on a yearly basis. The institute aims to be a centre of excellence in postgraduate teaching, research, and societal development in all areas of sustainable development.

Also, the recent birth and approval of two faculties and new departments in the College of Agriculture is worthy of mention as the university now has the Faculty of

Agricultural Production and Management (FAPM) which comprises the Departments of Agronomy (AGY), Animal science (ANS), Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness Management (AEM) and Agricultural Extension & Rural Development (ARD) and the Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources Management (RNRM) which comprises the Departments of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources Management (FAM), Forest Production and Products (FPP), Social and Environmental Forestry (SEF) and Wildlife and Ecotourism Management (WLM). In the early part of this year, the Board of the Candido Da Rocha Foundation was successfully inaugurated at a meeting hosted by the university on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2019. The first lecture of the Foundation titled ***Fraud Detection and Prevention: The Roles of the Reporting Company and the External Auditor*** was delivered by Prof. Rafiu Oyesola Salawu of Obafemi Awolowo University on 19 September, 2019 as part of the year's convocation activities

As our own contribution towards creating a better society, we have also commenced a Start Up Scheme for UNIOSUN alumni and alumnae who have innovative and bankable proposals. The idea is to create a pool of entrepreneurs and job creators. Each successful proposal will receive a Start Up capital of ₦200,000:00 repayable over a period of three years at a one digit interest rate.

Our members of staff continue to gain global recognition through their research efforts and scholarship. During the year, The World Health Organization (WHO) commissioned Dr. M.A Adeleke and other scholars in Africa and the United Kingdom to develop entomological manual for the elimination of onchocerciasis in Africa. Also Dr. A.O Surakat won a Global Health Network on Mentorship and Development competition. By this award, he is expected to convene a workshop on bioethics together with Dr M.A Adeleke. The workshop will be fully funded by Global Health Network in October, 2019 and will be hosted by our University.

Also, Professor Labode Popoola was appointed member of the Advisory Board of the West Africa Network of Excellence for Clinical Trials in TB, AIDS, and Malaria (WANETAM). Also on September 4, this year he was selected to serve on the Academic Advisory Committee of the SDG Academy of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network, (UNSDSN). As a member of the Academic Advisory Committee (AAC), he will be joining others to provide strategic advice and guidance to the SDG Academy on its core mission, as well as feedback related to its annual work plan and flagship programmes and partnerships across the globe. The appointment is based on his excellent leadership of SDSN in Nigeria, and participation in the Global Master's in Development Practice Programme (MDP).

Similarly, our students recorded yet another successful outing in the Nigerian Institution of Civil Engineers by becoming this year's Winners of Engineering Quiz Competition. The duo of Sotonwa Temidayo and Ogunleye Emmanuel emerged in first and third positions respectively at the quiz competition held in Osogbo early this month.

Also, in the recently released M.Sc. Human Resource Management postgraduate entrance test results of the University of Lagos, our graduates outshone other

applicants by claiming the first five highest scores, and with 15 UNIOSUN graduates being among the only 30 admitted into the programme.

### **Linkages and Partnerships**

Osun State University has continued to explore partnerships and collaborations from across the world. This is because of our belief that it is only through such partnerships and collaborations that the university can project itself within emerging global systems of higher education. Besides, such collaborations and partnerships provide opportunity for our staff and students to work with the best of their peers and to gain access to complementary resources, equipment and knowledge. Conscious of the above fact, the University sought the membership of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU). The ACU has over 500 member institutions in 50 countries across the commonwealth with membership spreading across Africa, Caribbean, Europe, North and Central America, Oceania and Pacific as well as the South America regions of the world. I am glad to report that UNIOSUN is now a member of this reputed body. The benefits of being a member of this body include the opportunity for staff and students to access grants, scholarship, fellowships and other funding as well as other international collaboration and partnerships, while enjoying all rights accorded members. We have also joined the Association of West African Universities (AWAU), while actively retaining and engaging our other partners.

### **Conferences, Lectures and Intellectual Engagements**

Just like previous years, the last one year has been a very busy one for the university. In March of this year, we partnered with the Association of African Universities (AAU) to organise the 2nd Research Transparency and Reproducibility Training Workshop with the title "*Data Ethics and Skills for Reproduction of Research Findings using Stata*" between Monday 11th and Thursday 14th of March, 2019 at the MicCom Golf Hotels & Resort, Ada, State of Osun.

The University also successfully conducted an In-House workshop on TETFund guidelines and procedures for our staff at the MicCom Golf Hotels and Resort, Ada, State of Osun between Thursday 4th and Friday 5th of April, 2019.

On Tuesday 9th of April, 2019 UNIOSUN in collaboration with the Code of Conduct Office, Osogbo organized a sensitization workshop on strict compliance with asset declaration and code of conduct. The workshop was organized for members of staff to guide against running afoul of the code of conduct regulations. Conscious of the need to be a strong Open and Distance Learning (ODL) University, the university trained staff on development of course material on open and distance learning courses. In preparation for the commencement of ODL in the University, not less than one hundred (100) staff members were trained on Course Material Development in a two-day Workshop held on Okuku Campus between Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>, March 2019.

We also hosted ICT Entrepreneurship Training for students of tertiary institutions in the state of Osun between 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2019. The training with the theme "Youth Empowerment 2019: Awakening Entrepreneurship in Youth through ICT Training" was sponsored by Omoluabi Mortgage Bank in collaboration with the

University. In addition, Osun State University on Tuesday, 25th June, 2019 became a centre of global attraction when it hosted delegates from across the globe to participate in a 2-day international symposium on sustainable development which was organized by the Global Affairs and Sustainable Development Institute (GASDI), Osun State University.

### **Matriculation Tree Planting Scheme**

The Visitor, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, in the course of this session, we introduced the “Matriculation Tree Planting Scheme” for our students whereby every matriculated student in a session must plant a tree to commemorate the commencement of their studentship in our University. This scheme was flagged off on 24<sup>th</sup> of June, 2019 as the first of its kind in the Nigerian Educational System. The Campaign which will be a yearly campaign is anchored on the Sustainable Development Goals 3 “Good Health and Well Being” 11 “Sustainable cities and communities” 13 “Climate Action” and 15 “Life on Land”. The scheme is part of our efforts to protect, restore and promote a sustainable ecosystem across the six campuses of the university. With tree seedlings supplied by the University, the students are expected to tend and nurture their trees throughout their period of study in the university as well as connecting with nature and the University even after they would have graduated.

### **Benefactions/Appreciation**

On behalf of the Governing Council, Senate, Advancement Board, staff and students, permit me to express my appreciation to the following benefactors who made financial and materials donations to Osun State University over the last one-year period. First, our greatest appreciation goes to God Almighty, the greatest Benefactor and our Creator, who in HIS infinite mercies has granted us a peaceful year since our last convocation, perhaps the longest stretch since 2012! HE is forever worthy of our appreciation. We believe that, with HIM, peace has come to stay in this University. So also, I like to thank the people and government of the State of Osun, for giving us a University and allowing us to run it as a University should be run.

Ours is a lucky and blessed University, throughout the year, we have received support from various quarters. Chief among these is the 250 bed Teaching Hospital donated by our Chancellor, Dr. (Mrs) Folorunso Alakija and her husband, Mr. Modupe Alakija. Work is ongoing at a fast pace to meet the delivery date. We can never thank you enough, Mom. I also like to appreciate Interventions from the Federal Government through TETFund and the NEEDS Assessment Scheme. We also received gift of books and other materials from various donor organisations and individuals.

Two of UNIOSUN-Ukraine Medical Doctors, Dr. Adeyemi Sheriff Adegoke, M.D, MiM and Dr. (Miss) Osho Oluwadamilola Olatundun, B.Sc Biochemistry, M.D both made a donation of three (3) copies of Guyton Physiology textbook, Keith Moore Anatomy textbook and Harpers Biochemistry textbook to the University. We also appreciate the good gesture of the Engr. Tunde Ponnle’s Scholarship Scheme for Indigent but Diligent Students, LASAL Foundation, Youth Fellowship/Stephen Band Scholarship, Cherubim & Seraphim Church, Segun Aina Foundation, The Late

Emmanuel Idowu & Maria Areogun Scholarship Foundation, Great People's Foundation for the scholarships granted to our students. Our appreciation also goes to the former President of the Academic Union of Universities (ASUU) Dr. Dipo Fashina, for the prize award of one Hundred Thousand Naira endowed to the College of Health Sciences for the student with highest CGPA spread across each academic session for five years. We cannot but continue to thank our indefatigable and selfless Pro-chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council, Mallam Yusuf Olaolu Ali, SAN for his continued contributions and donations to the University. I like to also appreciate the following individuals and organisations for their contributions towards the **8<sup>th</sup> Convocation ceremonies**, our Pro-chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council, Mallam Yusuf Olaolu Ali, SAN for the donation of ₦3 million; Kingsmann Graffix Enterprises for the donation of 250 convocation carrier bags; Black House Media (BHM) for the media support for the pre-Convocation Press Conference; UBA Plc for donation of ₦500,000, LASACO Assurance Plc for donation of ₦150,000; Time Building & Construction Company for donation of ₦100,000; NEEDS Technologies Ltd for donation of 100 meters asphaltic road to the Main Campus of the University; Hansmag Nig Ltd, donation of 100 meters asphaltic road to the Okuku campus of the University; the donation of four scrolls for the Honorees by AGM Consults, and KAO Concepts Ltd for the donation of plaques to the two overall best graduating students. Also, we sincerely appreciate Professor Clement Odunayo Adebooye, our immediate past Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic, Research, Innovation and Partnerships) for the gift of a Toyota Hillux Van to the University.

### **The Result of Perseverance is Progress**

Once again, I congratulate all the graduands, their parents/guardians, families and well wishers. You have persevered and your presence in this convocation ceremony is a demonstration of your progress, though, silently achieved through toiling and burning of the proverbial midnight candle. Graduation is an important turning point for all students. Although, many of you view it as an ending to your school lives and experiences, rather, it is the beginning of putting into practice the knowledge acquired all through the years, which you have devoted to studying at UNIOSUN. Our country, Nigeria, and indeed the world await and beckon at you. I urge you to find your purpose and resolve to play a role in shaping our world. A better world will not come through mere wishing, but by collective actions of individuals who are driven by the passion of making the world a better place for all. Be one of them. A sustainable world devoid of injustice and inequity is the sum of all of our dreams and aspirations. Become creators in the world; you wish to see. Do not be limited by the oft touted statements of your Professors about their so-called good old days. Your days are actually better. Seize the moment, take advantage of the countless opportunities, be diligent, be honest, love Nigeria, be prayerful and all shall be well with you. As we send you forth today, go out there to excel. There are no short cuts to success. Forget not your Alma mater, and always be a good ambassador of UNIOSUN and your families.

I wish you many blessings, and the very best of luck, as you travel toward a brilliant and sustainable future. Don't forget this charge – **The Result of Perseverance is Progress.**

I am glad to inform our graduands that, for the first time in the history of this University, their certificates are ready for collection. Please see the appropriate registry staff.

Thank you all for your attention

**Labode Popoola, PhD, FFAN**  
**Vice Chancellor**