UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, NIGERIA

OPENING ADDRESS OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR RAHAMON A. BELLO, FAEng AT THE 4TH INAUGURAL LECTURE IN THE 2015/2016 ACADEMIC SESSION DELIVERED BY PROFESSOR JANET NGOZI AJULUCHUKWU ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2016

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academics and Research), Professor Babajide Alo FAS, The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Management Services), Professor Duro Oni, The Registrar and Secretary to Council, Dr. (Mrs.) Taiwo F. Ipaye, FNIM, The Bursar, Dr. Lateef Odekunle, FCA The University Librarian, Dr. (Mrs.) Olukemi A. Fadehan The Provost, College of Medicine, Professor Folasade T. Ogunsola, Dean, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, Professor Afolabi Lesi Deans of other Faculties, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, Gentlemen of the Press.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the fourth Inaugural Lecture of the 2015/2016 Academic Session entitled: “Exploring Daggers, Drivers and Tool of Heart Disease in Nigerians.” The lecture will be delivered by Professor Janet Ngozi Akpara Ajuluchukwu of the Department of Medicine, in our College of Medicine.

Professor Janet Ngozi Akpara Ajuluchukwu was born on 6th November, 1955 in Degema Town of Rivers State, Nigeria. She attended Municipal Council Primary School, Bernard Carr Street, Port Harcourt; Santana War Emergency School Awo-Omama; Queen’s School, Enugu [1970-1973]; and Federal Government College, Enugu (1973-1975) for her primary, secondary and post secondary education.

In September, 1975, she had direct-entry admission to College of Medicine, University of Lagos and was on a Federal Government Scholarship from 1976 to 1980, when she graduated as the Alli-Idowu Surgery Prize recipient. In 1985, she commenced her Residency program in Internal Medicine, in the Department of Medicine, Lagos University Teaching Hospital [LUTH] and in 1989, she proceeded to
Department of Cardiology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA as a Visiting Fellow. Further cardiology opportunity opened up from 1990-1992 when she was offered the Equity and Merit Scheme scholarship by the Government of Australia for her M.Med program in University of Melbourne, Victoria/Royal Melbourne Hospital in Australia. She graduated with Best Student commendation in 1992; She also passed the USA ECFMG Examination.

In 1993, she completed the Nigerian Residency Program and was awarded the Fellowship of National Postgraduate College. She was also a recipient of Dr. Vincent Uzodike prize for best candidate in Internal Medicine. Lagos University Teaching Hospital [LUTH] employed her as a full time Consultant Physician/Cardiologist from 1993-1997.

She commenced her academic journey in 1997, when she was employed as Lecturer I in the Department of Medicine, College of Medicine, University of Lagos, with additional Honorary Consultant status in Lagos University Teaching Hospital. In 2000, she was promoted to be a Senior Lecturer and her appointment confirmed. This was followed by promotion to Associate Professor in 2005 and Professor in 2012. On research, she has collaborated extensively with colleagues at intra-departmental, inter-departmental, inter-faculty, inter-institutional and international levels.

In 2015, she was elected Member of American College of Physicians. In the years 2011, 2013, 2014 respectively, she and her colleagues won the Faculty Best Researcher for the Faculty of Clinical Sciences in the Unilag Conference and Fair. In 2009, she was awarded Fellowship of the International Pulmonary Vascular Institute.

Her current responsibilities include being Head of the Department of Medicine, College of Medicine, University of Lagos, as well as that of the Lagos University Teaching Hospital; She is Chairman, University of Lagos Medical Centre Management Board, as well as Chairman of the Novel Open-heart Surgery Supervising Committee of the LUTH Cardiac-Project [LCP].

An avid learner and a believer in self – development, Professor Ajuluchukwu has participated in the World Health Organisation Ten-day Cardiovascular Epidemiology Seminar in Funchal, Portugal. She has had opportunity of practical experience and exposure at various international institutions including Harlem Hospital, New York, North Western University Medical Centre Chicago II; and as a Visiting Professor at Department of Cardiology, Morehouse Medical School on professorial invitation.

Professor Ajuluchukwu has more than 60 publications in reputable national and international journals on cardiovascular risk factors, ‘daggers’, hypertension and
heart failure in Nigerians. In partnership, she and late Professor F. Anjorin reviewed the current Cardiology Chapter of the famous ‘Medicine in the Tropics’ text book by EHO Parry. In partnership with NGOs, media and TV houses, she is involved in healthcare professional updates, free health and screening programs at worksites, worship sites, as well as community health education and promotion. She also reviews for Journal of National Medical Association.

Professor Ajuluchukwu’s notable assignments in Cardiology include Temporary Adviser to the World Health Organisation on Secondary Prevention in Resource – Poor Countries; member of the National Expert NCD Committee of the Federal Ministry of Health; Executive Secretary to the Cardiovascular Subsection Committee.

She has served her colleagues as Treasurer of the Nigerian Cardiac Society; Secretary of ASPON; Council member of the Nigerian Hypertension Society; Council member of the American Heart Association Epidemiology and Prevention Section; Trans-Atlantic Coordinator of the Cardiolink Program. Since year 2000, she has been serving at the International Society of Cardiac Ultrasonography (ISCU) as an invited Faculty/Resource person, presenting echocardiography papers in Egypt, South Korea, Japan etc. She has been a frequent participant at Association of Nigerian Physicians in the America meetings, and presented a paper on ‘Heart Diseases in Nigerian Women’ in Chicago in 2009.

She is an executive member of the Heart Friends Around the World (HFAW); Board member of the Chike Okoli Foundation, Down's Syndrome Foundation; and the Project Director of Dr. Olaniba Heart Foundation. She is a current member of the Pfizer Cardiovascular Board, and Africa Heart Failure Cluster. She is a life member of the Full Gospel Men's Fellowship International, and a grand-patroness of Catholic Women's Organisation.

Professor Ajuluchukwu is happily married and blessed with four (4) lovely children.

It is my pleasure to invite Professor Jane Ngozi Akpara Ajuluchukwu to present her Inaugural Lecture.

Professor Rahamon A. Bello, FAEng
Vice-Chancellor, University of Lagos
Wednesday, February 17, 2016
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Deans of other Faculties,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,
Gentlemen of the Press.

Professor Janet Ngozi Akpara Ajuluchukwu has just presented a comprehensive and rich inaugural lecture entitled: Exploring Daggers, Drivers and Tool of Heart Disease in Nigerians.

The lecturer highlighted the fact that heart and blood vessels are innocent bystanders, damaged directly or indirectly by risk factors. She also affirmed that hypertension is the most common, and found in 10%-40% of Nigerian adults. She stated hypertension is a predominant cause of up to 30% of heart enlargement, heart failure and even acute deaths; while heart attack was noted in 3%.

Professor Ajuluchukwu again averred that one positive health habit such as low salt consumption or increased physical activity can positively influence different health conditions. She disclosed also that environmental and societal factors influence upstream conditions that result in the fall and rise of different heart diseases or their risk factors.
She affirmed that risk profile of Nigerians has not improved, with a devastating toll on younger victims. Thus calling for re-strategising and prevention by all stakeholders including the Government. She believes that Nigerians can respond well to appropriate treatment as shown by long term survivors of heart disease patients, especially if adherent to treatment.

According to her, tools of heart disease range from simple to highly sophisticated for diagnoses and management. She advised that invention or acquisition of new tools for knowledge and prevention should also anchor on ‘new age’ solutions such as Station-of-Life Map, I-T/digital communication, social media, music and drama.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, you all will agree with me that Professor Janet Ngozi Akpara Ajuluchukwu has fulfilled her toga as Professor of the University of Lagos by paying her academic debt. She is therefore discharged and acquitted. I urge you all to buy copies of the lecture for proper digest and for your libraries.

I thank you all for listening and hereby declare this inaugural lecture close.

**Professor Rahamon A. Bello, FAEng**

Vice-Chancellor, University of Lagos,

Wednesday, February 17, 2016