

UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, NIGERIA



OPENING REMARKS OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR RAHAMON A. BELLO, FAEng, AT THE 2014/2015 CONVOCATION LECTURE ENTITLED: "POSITIONING NIGERIA AS THE TECHNOLOGY HUB OF AFRICA" DELIVERED BY DR. OGBONNAYA ONU, THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2016, AT THE UNIVERSITY MAIN AUDITORIUM, AKOKA, LAGOS

Chairman of today's Lecture, **Engr. Vincent I. Maduka, OFR**, the Former President, Academy of Engineering and the Former Director-General, NTA

The Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council of the University of Lagos, **Professor Jerry Gana, CON**

Members of the Governing Council,
The Convocation Lecturer and the **Honourable Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu,**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academics and Research), **Professor Babajide Alo, FAS**,
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, (Management Services), **Professor Duro Oni**,
The Registrar, **Dr. (Mrs.) Taiwo F. Ipaye, FNIM**,
The Bursar, **Dr. L. A. Odekunle, FCA**,
The University Librarian, **Dr. (Mrs.) Olukemi Fadehan**,
Provost, College of Medicine, **Professor Folasade Ogunsola**,
Deans of Faculties and Directors,
The President, University of Lagos Alumni Association, **Olorogun (Dr) Sonny Kuku**,
The Chairman, Ceremonies Committee, **Professor Timothy Nubi**,
Members of the Committee,
Heads of Departments and Units,
President and members of the University of Lagos Students Union,
Great Akokites!!!
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,
Gentlemen of the Print and Electronic Media,

On behalf of the Council, Senate, Staff and Students of the University of Lagos, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the 45th Convocation Lecture of this great University. This is the first major activity of this year's Convocation Ceremonies for the graduating students of the 2014/2015 academic session. We are lucky to have with us to deliver this Convocation Lecture, a scholar, an astute Administrator, a distinguished alumnus and the Honourable Minister of Science and Technology, **Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu**.

I want to also specially welcome and appreciate the Chairman of today's Lecture, a foremost broadcaster, the Former Director-General, NTA and the Former President, Academy of Engineering, **Engr. Vincent I Maduka, OFR**.

The combination of the Chairman for today's Convocation Lecture and the Lecturer himself on the topic "Positioning Nigeria as the Technology hub of Africa" is not accidental. Nigeria is in the mantra of change. Today's lecture can, thus, rightly be taken as a contribution of the University of Lagos to the discussion on the expected positive change of the administration of General Muhammadu Buhari.

The topic of today's lecture brings to the fore the fundamental developmental necessity that must be given the necessary priority for the nation's economy to stabilise and grow in a way to position Nigeria as a force to reckon with. Without a technology base, Nigeria's manufacturing ability and full realisation of the benefits of its natural and agricultural raw materials will be a mirage. This also interplays with the general issues of food security, unemployment and diversification of the revenue base for the economy.

With the pedigree of Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu, the lecturer, a thorough analysis of the current status of the technological needs and the way forward is in the offing with panacea for the strategies for socio-economic advancement using technology as a vehicle. The input of the Chairman, who himself is a technocrat, will combine beautifully with the Convocation Lecture to form a document which would serve as University of Lagos' template for our Nation's economic recovery using Science and Technology.

While not pre-empting the lecture, it is most likely that Human Capital Development and capacity should feature prominently and the contributions of the University system viz-a-viz the town-gown relationship should come to the fore. Apart from the production of the right calibre of human capital for the economy, the University system should be the major origin of concepts and ideas which translate into technology. Our Universities have to be properly positioned and given the enabling environment and framework to play this role.

In our quest to position Nigeria as the technology hub for Africa, it is our considered opinion that:

- (a) There is the need to structure our research and development efforts to be target-driven. Targets should be set for themes considered essential, which should also focus on Nigeria's immediate technological needs.
- (b) Technology development and advancement should be a major component of the economic agenda and should be prominent in the government's economic policy.
- (c) The large number of Research and Development Institutions existing in the country need to be harmonised and structured for synergy between them and the Tertiary Institutions so as to maximise the potentials as well as ensure effectiveness in the deployment of available R & D resources.

The University of Lagos has re-kitted its research facilities and put in place the Research and Innovation office, aimed at ensuring that our researches are society-needs driven and that research results reach end-users and not just end on the shelves. We are thus ready to contribute maximally to the rejuvenation efforts of government aimed at repositioning Nigeria technologically.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you and wish you happy listening.

Professor Rahamon A. Bello, FAEng
Vice-Chancellor, University of Lagos, Akoka
Monday, February 29, 2016