

UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, NIGERIA



KEYNOTE ADDRESS OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR RAHAMON A. BELLO, *FAENG* AT THE SWEARING-IN CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS STUDENTS UNION (ULSU) ON THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2015

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic 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,**

The Bursar, **Mr. Lateef Odekunle,**

The University Librarian, **Dr. (Mrs.) Olukemi A. Fadehan,**

The Provost, College of Medicine, **Professor Folasade T. Ogunsola,**

Dean, Student Affairs, **Professor Tunde Babawale**

Deans of other Faculties,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Gentlemen of the Press,

I feel highly delighted to address this historic gathering today. We are making history here today as we return to full Student Unionism at the University of Lagos after a 10-year spell. We are, by the event of today, putting the past behind us and looking forward to full democratization of our life at the University of Lagos, thus paving way for an environment for full development of future leaders for our nation. As you all know, we have nurtured a new dispensation to fruition. This culminated into the adoption of a new Constitution at the end of 2013/2014 session and eventually its implementation which has produced the first set of Members of the Executive of the University of Lagos Students Union (ULSU) for the 2014/2015 session.

Let me, at this juncture, congratulate all those who participated in the election process which produced this first Executive of this Constitution. By this, I mean all those who served in the Electoral Committee which defined the procedures, the screening and other prescriptions of the Constitution, the Dean of Student Affairs and his team and the Electoral Committee under the chairmanship of Dr Alabi Soneye.

There is no perfect constitution or system. We all have to ensure that we adapt it to our situation. The electoral process may not have been perfect, but once it is credible and fair, it should be acceptable. Whatever loopholes have been observed in the last election should be worked upon and plugged so that future elections will be flawless. The Collegiate system used has ensured that the elections are devoid of hooliganism and other electoral malpractices. All those who participated in the last elections, the Contestants and the delegates have all made history. Your names will feature prominently when the history of ULSU is written.

I specially congratulate the people of the moment, the members of the ULSU 2014/2015 Executives, who are to be sworn in shortly viz:

1. Mr. Abiodun Martins	-	President
2. Mr. Bisoye Olaniyi Akinsulire	-	1 st Vice President
3. Vacant	-	2 ND Vice President
4. Mr. Olufemi Paul Babalola	-	General Secretary
5. Mr. Olasunkanmi Tunji Bello	-	Assistant General Secretary
6. Mr. Olakunle Charles Adegunoye	-	Public Relations Officer
7. Mr. Oluwatobi Emmanuel Olanisimi	-	Welfare Secretary I
8. Mr. Lekan Junior Mustapha	-	Welfare Secretary II
9. Mr. Enitan Abayomi Oguntola	-	Financial Secretary
10. Mr. Taiwo Adeola Suleiman	-	Treasurer
11. Mr. Micheal Olamide Opadoja	-	Social Secretary
12. Miss. Awunuka Stephanie Etiaka	-	Sports Secretary
13. Mr. John James	-	Internal Auditor

By today's swearing-in ceremony, the management of the University of Lagos has fulfilled its own side of the bargain. We have allowed the restoration of full Student Unionism at the University as I did promise upon assumption of office. We are allowing a level playing ground for Student Unionism. I believe our scheme of education is not complete without this phase of our life on campus. Now that we are there, I want to plead with all our students to guard this very jealously and not allow anything and I repeat, anything to truncate this and take us back to the dark days. It has taken us ten years to get back to where we are today. Do rally round the members of the Executive to ensure we join hands to continue to make University of Lagos the University of First Choice and the Nation's pride not only in academics but in all facets of our life here.

This administration is a student-friendly administration and will continue to explore ways to make studying at the University smoother and friendlier for law abiding students. This explains why we have been able to deliver on our earlier promise for the full restoration of student unionism on campus. Conscious of the fact that we are starting on a new note after a 10-year break;

- i. We have made provision for a take –off grant to the Union
- ii. We have rehabilitated fully the students Union Building

All of these will enhance a smooth take-off of your administration. I consider this new set of executives to be lucky given the recent donation of a new bus to the Union by the Lagos State Government.

On your behalf, I express our profound appreciation to the Lagos State Government for this commendable gesture.

Ladies and Gentlemen, although this is a student-friendly administration, it however, has zero tolerance for hooliganism in whatever guise, academic misconduct and any act that runs foul of the regulations of the Institution or trample upon the rights of others in the community. We will fight for your rights and ensure that nobody infringes on those rights, no matter how highly placed. We believe in constructive engagement and consultations at all levels and for all stakeholders in the system. Do take advantage of the open door policy that we run to get informed on issues and nip whatever comes up in the bud before it develops into crisis. Do not allow external influences to prevail on issues that are essentially internal. The office of the Dean of Student Affairs shall be available for consultations 24/7. Do take full advantage.

The University provides a veritable platform for collaboration in research and cross fertilization of ideas and relationships even across gender, race and culture. We the management and yourselves have to jointly work on ways to make the quality of our academic activities better. Our classrooms, laboratories, hostels and recreational facilities are grossly inadequate quantitatively and qualitatively. Together, we have to join hands to bring them up to the standard expected of a first class University. I once again enjoin you all to take good opportunity of this leadership platform that has been provided. Make positive contributions to the University. Work cooperatively by way of constructive engagement with the University Management. Your performance at this level will write the testimonial for your future leadership roles in the larger world. God will assist us all.

Before I end my address, I recall that I did promise sometimes last session that cross-gender visitation will be reinstated as soon as necessary arrangements are concluded. I like to inform you that cross-gender visitation will be allowed, commencing from 1st May 2015. All Hall Masters and Mistresses have been so informed and have agreed.

The rules and regulations guiding this will be spelt out and publicised appropriately before then. However, visitation will last from 4pm - 8pm on weekdays and 2pm - 8pm on weekends.

Once again congratulations.

Professor Rahamon A. Bello, *FAEng*
Vice-Chancellor, University of Lagos
Thursday, April 9, 2015