

## **An Exciting End to a Hectic Year**

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On Saturday December 8, 2018, I landed back in Eko, Nigeria. The Portuguese had named Eko as Lagos way back. And it attained the status of the capital of colonial Nigeria under that foreign imposed name until Abuja wrested that capital title away from Eko. However, Eko remains the soul and the economic capital of Nigeria. I will hesitate and avoid the arrogance of my fellow Lagosians who easily ascribe the title of economic capital of West Africa to Eko.

I was away for almost 2 months, mainly in Addis Ababa, the diplomatic capital of Africa except for a week each in Malabo, Manama and Nairobi. Being in Malabo and Nairobi were in furtherance of my effort on coming up with the roadmap for the operationalization of the African Union Humanitarian Agency.

Being back in Lagos allowed a return to family and some of my post retirement routines that include my early morning golfing as part of a consistent 3 others, joined at times by occasional others who constitute the group I refer to as torchlight golfers. We use night balls and follow their glows with our respective torchlights. Starting between 05:30 and 06:00, we have the Ikeja golf course unto ourselves and we are normally free from the Lagos traffic problem or go-slow as we call it. By the time we finish 18 holes between 07:30 and 08:00 we equally have a relatively easier return home as most of the people who got on the road from the mainland to work in Lagos Island, Victoria Island, Ikoyi and Lekki are already close to their work venues. This fun exercise I missed in Addis Ababa. Though I carried my golf bag, I did not use it even once.

Returning gave me the joy of family life, including receiving my Princess Adelayo Badejo whose parents took her straight to their classier part of Lagos on her arrival in Nigeria after birth at Houston in August.

On December 09, 2018, I had the opportunity to discharge a responsibility I owe to Magodo Associates as the Secretary of the organization. It was the 10th annual general meeting of Magodo Associates which I had joined at inception. It is made up of 28 retired or serving members of the academia and other professionals that include a foremost Senior Advocate of Nigeria. The ten-year old association promises to evolve into a strong civil society think-tank in Nigeria. We had considered "Nigeria: Which Way forward", at a symposium in May this year. For next year, we decided to consider a number of issues like the state of education in Nigeria, building and mentoring a youth vanguard as well as share knowledge on planning for retirement. After a heated debate, we stood down for a later time, consideration of the role of the Chinese in the developmental zeals in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular.

Today, December 10, 2018, aside from torchlight golfing, I continued working on the realization of the African Union Humanitarian Agency, took steps on preparing for the second part of the examination process towards becoming a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, U.K. I had earlier acquired the status of an Associate a few weeks after my retirement from the United Nations. I also collected my certification of admission unto the Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse Panel of Neutrals having completed all the requirements as a Mediator under the Lagos State alternative dispute resolution arrangement.

Looking forward to festivities around the yuletide and a return to Addis Ababa for the completion of my assignment.