

2nd Convocation at Chrisland University, Abeokuta

By

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I spent last night at Abeokuta, the capital of my state in Nigeria. By the archaic constitution of Nigeria, I am from Ogun state, Nigeria, in spite of the fact that I have been a resident of Lagos, Lagos state, since 1973 when I left Ijebu-Ode Grammar School and became an undergraduate at the University of Lagos. Ever since, I have been a resident of Lagos, but Nigeria recognizes state of origin. So, myself and my offsprings will always have to fill Ogun state until the archaic 1999 constitution is dumped or amended progressively.

However, I was not in my state of origin for sanguinal reasons. I was invited to the 2nd Convocation dinner and the convocation itself today, November 26, 2020 of Chrisland University, Abeokuta, Nigeria. This young but dynamic University was started by a visionary Nigerian, who for 43 years had gradually built from providing nursery, primary and secondary education before adding Chrisland University. I am very proud of 80-year-old, High Chief Dr. (Mrs.) Winifred Adefolahan Awosika who through the dint of hardwork has put together a world class University. Chrisland University is a very compact citadel on an undulating high ground of neat greenery. It is the temporary site as the permanent just received physical planning approval from Ogun state.

The dinner, yesterday was chaired by Chief Alaba Lawson, the immediate past president of NACCIMA. I was accompanied by my childhood friend Ambassador Julius Sodipe, who retired into Abeokuta and his wife. Highlights, included the polyglot M.C. who easily moved from French, into English, German, Pidgin, Ibo, Yoruba and Hausa, the guest speaker who shared great skills for life and the African Union Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology, Professor (Mrs.) Sarah Anyang Agbor who chose to give an early insight on her speaking capacity since she had been billed to give the Keynote Address at the convocation. The 28 graduands with five young women leading with first class degrees, danced happily to great music.

Today's convocation was chaired by none other than Chief Olusegun Aremu Okikiolu Obasanjo, the Baba of Africa and former President of Nigeria. The highlight was the convocation keynote address that another polyglot, Prof. Agbor, delivered on: "Leadership, Sustainable Growth, and National Building in Africa: A Reflective Perspective". She anchored her well received address on the African Union's Agenda 2063 on the Africa We Want. She spelt out the aspirations of Africa as we move towards 2063. Though the challenge of the Africa We Want is enormous, the hope is that the graduands would realize a better Africa than we currently have. Sad that the country hosting Africa is right now fighting each other. Nonetheless, Prof. Agbor's delivery will make many of the highly gesticulating tithes eating pastors in Africa very jealous.

The management of the University is fantastic with first class, Prof. Ayodeji Olukoju who I had known during my Unilag academic days, as Pro-Chancellor, and the indefatigable Prof. (Mrs.) Chinedum Peace Babalola as Vice-Chancellor. A distinguished Pharmacist who won the African

Union the Kwame Nkrumah prize for scientific excellence February 2020, the Vice-Chancellor is making great strides on tertiary education at Chrisland University.

University education in Nigeria has gone a lot wider on accessibility even if quality is wanting. How does one explain a situation in which billions are voted for the travels of the President and his staff, National Assembly as billions are regularly stolen but the government that pretends to be fighting corruption is unable to find enough resources to pay public University teachers?