

2004 OUTGOING SPEECH

DEDICATION

My fellow members, I like to dedicate this speech to the Osun Indigenes Organization (TOIOG) selfless outgoing executive members. These are people who made my presidency an easy one and gave Osun a clearer direction since the year 2000. They made me understand what patience, caring and sharing have in common. It is “NOT” criticizing but critiquing, not self-centeredness but embracement, not inactive but active, not controlling but leading, not discouraging but encouraging. Definitely not with weariness but with vigor. Patience, caring and sharing expound progress, participation, hope, joy, understanding and results.

From the humble, forthright, consistent Vice President, Pastor Adeyemi. To the devoted, thorough and understanding General Secretary, Mr. Adeniji. Thank you for allowing our families to grow together in love and understanding, as well as receiving my phone calls even in the middle of the night. There are only very few who can discuss heart-to-heart with their friends like you do. You have changed the way the Osun Indigenes Organization communicates forever and, for good.

Without a doubt, our financial secretary is a gentle man with a tremendous capacity to accommodate all phone calls and criticisms. And resolve issues and grievances with great calm. Mr. Oluka, the assistant social secretary, I thank you for being a straightforward family man with respectful principles. I have been blessed to know and work with a quiet but positive social secretary, Mr. Ilupeju. I just want to express my appreciation to you in helping this organization realize that it is not a lot of words that matter but actions that do not ask for anything in return. The Family Interactive Program (FIP) Coordinator, Mr. Aderinkola, apart from his contribution to help the families in this organization to grow together, is one of the very few who have shown unwavering commitment for a long time. Your various calls to the Osun families have helped us realize why we may not have to worry about “family value” (as in the America of today) if we group together, work together, and trust together. As with Mr. Aderinkola, the Osun auditor, Mr. Akanni, is a very pious, long-term friend and a member who has helped the organization in fund-raising, social activities and consistently helping support other organizations with similar beliefs and ideas. The open-minded, humble whip is a man to emulate. Mr. Kareem has helped us enforced the most overlooked rules and regulations of the organization. Thank you for your selfless contributions. The contributions of the assistant social secretary at all our social gatherings cannot be over-stated. Mrs. Agbebi is a hospitable, uplifting mother to our kids. I have at the same time asked myself how can a father be humble, helpful and at the same time be sincere to our goals. The welfare director, Mr. Ayoade Adeyemi, has taught us it is all possible. Thank you for your advices and your readiness to talk to me anytime of the day.

I cannot but thank Mr. Atere, my ex VP and all the 2000/2002 executive members for establishing a strong footing for the 2002/2004 executives. Thanks for facing the challenges head-on when we took office.

FOUR-YEAR ACHIEVEMENTS

In my acceptance speech when I first took office (February 2000), my focus was to identify the challenges that we faced as a group and find where we can find solutions. I categorized the challenges as follows. Vertical Growth, Inclusion, Oneness, Constitution and By-laws, Finances, Outreach Program, Divided attention, Investments, Projects, Fund raising, and other personal/family obligations and interests.

In the past four years, the wonderful members of the Osun Indigenes organization have allowed me into their different homes to discuss the various approaches to not only find solutions, but to get them. I visited members anytime of the day. So if you ask me what the benefit of being the president of the Osun indigenes Organization is, I will say that members respect the office and you can be sure that they like to listen to you (the PRESIDENT) and give the advice(s) that will make your (President's) decisions easy.

Have we been able to find the expected solutions? YES, INDEED! Areas of our achievements in the past four years include:

501C3 - The most challenging task was to get our 501C3 status approved. With private meetings with members and research, the idea on the appropriate approach was born. Through persistence, focus, and prompt actions, the OSUN INDIGENES NON-PROFIT STATUS WAS APPROVED. This is a great achievement for us as an organization and for the future of our efforts.

INCLUSION - In an effort to develop a sense of inclusion we have been able to have a measure of achievement in moving from the era of resolving grievances to era of discussing project feasibility and solutions, un-timed meeting to organized schedules, individual commitment to group obligations, self centeredness to family interactive program, financial stagnation to financial growth thus, embracing vertical growth.

ONENESS and FIP - In my acceptance speech, I defined my notion of ONENESS as “a sense of inclusion in a progression towards oneness which is a notion of “family pride.” I like to thank those who met with me and supported the idea of the FAMILY INTERACTIVE PROGRAM (FIP). The organization has benefited from the various calls, interactions and visits as part of the program. For those who had expected that their suggestions should have been implemented as part of the effort, I hope you all understand and bear with me. I tried to merge various ideas and that was the best for the organization. Although there are so many other ideas that go with the FIP, I hope the new executive will find the program helpful in expanding family trust, values and re-orientation to the future cohesion of our children. I still believe that we will find groupings beneficial to formulate intimacy among families.

FINANCE - In February 2000, our bank statement was in the range of \$6,000.00. In March 2001, the bank balance was \$5,453.09. The organization quickly realized the need to do better in raising fund. With various suggestions and assurances from members, we came up with ideas to save more without jeopardizing our spending. Thanks to all members for sacrificing and supporting the idea to raise fund amongst members on the fly. It worked! Today, we are closer to \$20,000.00. The new executives know better than I do. I am therefore very sure they will do much better.

TRANSFORMATION VISION AGENDA - The “Transformation Vision Agenda” is a strategy that was coined to embrace all efforts to face our challenges. A sound rules and regulation signifies not only that we are organized but that we are not a temporary organization. Thank God, the first part of the agenda was passed this year, 2004. It has solidified our constitution, it has helped re-examined ourselves as an organization and as a family. Hopefully it will create a new sense of belonging to all members to know The Osun Indigenes Organization is ready to care, share and serve not only for today but also for the future. I will encourage the new executive and the committee to present and pass the second part so we can leave behind discussions of the past to take the next step. So many ideas are embedded in the agenda and the sooner we start to use them the better.

OTHERS - We have taken a stride in investment, projects and fundraising. The success is very dependent on the second part of the Transformation Vision Agenda. I am very confident that the new president will do very well in these areas.

OUR HOPE

As God has been our help in the past years, we have hope for years to come to strengthen us together. But strength does not come when we re-invent the wheel. Osun Indigenes Organization will gain strength when we build, as we have been doing, on the first foundation. And now that the pillar is in place, it is now time to beautify its completion with elegant beams, chandeliers, furniture, etc. Hope you all know what I mean. It means that we do not have to create new offices/officers, strategies, 501C3 status, agendas, etc, but to use all we have in place to get to a new level. (It creates weary minds when we ramble around the same original ideas every time.) And for each member, it is time to merge your discrete, individual ideas with that of the Osun Indigenes Organization. (Having visited so many members, it is not encouraging to hear some say, “I am taking this and that gadget home to help Osun people.”) As good as it sounds, it is very obvious that such member is a member of an organization that s/he does not want to embrace. It is equally unbelievable that some members go to Nigeria and do not see it fit to volunteer to carry the Osun donations to Nigeria. Hope no member will take this personal but as a challenge. It is obvious we have a lot of challenges to crumble.

OUR CHALLENGES

- Endurance – This calls for patience to critically evaluate members and their responsibilities before judging. We need to run with patience the race that is set before us.
- Understanding – We are all volunteering, not getting paid. We need to work together to achieve our objectives
- We instead of “I” – There is no need for any of us to spend one’s \$100 to achieve little when an additional \$100 from a partner or group can double the money and the return. I urge us to refrain from embarking on projects for individual glory (Not saying you cannot do things on your own but do it with a difference.) We are all reaping the fruit of American collective efforts. Any black country or neighborhood however wealthy it is is a filthy, underdeveloped hood compared to a white country or neighborhood. The difference is, “group effort” (Agbajo owo l’a fi soya.) When you see your principle conflicting with the group efforts at all time without flexibility, you may need to watch yourself. I do not think a whole group’s idea can be absurd, but only an individual’s.
- Outreach – TOIOG need to realize we cannot do it alone. Effort should be developed to encourage other states to start TOIOG affiliations.

REMINDER! - What We are Not.

- We are an organization where members have no overriding personal agenda. In this organization all personal agenda are merged to form a group agenda. Personal agenda is when a member would rather cause a commotion, criticize with ulterior motives, and allow personal principles to override group ethics.
- Not for Profit. We are not getting paid for our services. We are here to uplift where joy is missing, here to embrace where there is no love,.....
- Not a copycat of other organization but rather try to do things better by being creative. We do not care to adopt old, primitive techniques that would not stimulate advancement.
- Not a subordinate of other organization but supporters of all productive efforts. Our 501C3 specifically does not allow us to be an official member of another organization but a non-profit organization that supports other organizations with identical views and beliefs.

FINAL COMMENT

This organization is blessed with members who have been consistent in their caring sharing efforts. I will encourage all members to focus on positive efforts that benefit the organization. I thank those who are willing at all times to see the positive sides of the organization and pray that God continue to help them as they strive for norms that would speed the transformation of our society. When we talk, discuss, demonstrate our concerns, we all need to remember those who are given the grace to control their emotions and are always ready to contribute rather than disrupt, ready to discuss rather

than argue, ready to serve rather than control, ready to abide rather than hinder ready to embrace rather than disrupt and ready to compromise rather than confront. It is these people who have kept the sanity of this organization.

I just want to thank all members of this prestigious organization for allowing me to make a thirteen-year impact within my four-year term.

GOD BLESS US ALL !!!