

ADDRESS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR REV. EGHOSA E. OSAGHAE AT THE 14TH
MATRICULATION CEREMONY OF IGBINEDION UNIVERSITY OKADA ON SATURDAY 12TH JANUARY 2013

PROTOCOLS/

On behalf of the Hon. Chancellor, Board of Regents, Governing Council, Senate, Staff and Students of Igbinedion University Okada, I welcome you all to the 14th Matriculation Ceremony of our Great University, and wish everyone a most blessed New Year 2013. The event of today is one of the most important landmarks in the hallowed traditions of a University. It chronicles the admission of the over 900 young men and women assembled here, who have been found eligible by reason of academic qualification and good character, into the Distinguished and Prestigious Roll of Students and Alumni of Igbinedion University and, through the window provided by IUO, the exciting world of learning.

I congratulate you, our matriculating students on this life-transforming transition and admonish every one of you to make the best use of the opportunities on offer through this matriculation and membership of IUO. As university, we pledge to guide and mentor you to grow well and become the very best in your chosen fields, as previous students before you have done all over the world. I am delighted to tell you that graduates of IUO have excelled in their post-graduation endeavours. Our well trained doctors, engineers, pharmacists, lawyers, biochemists, nurses, computer scientists, accountants, business administrators and political scientists, to mention but a few end up at the top of their postgraduate courses in foreign universities, get the most competitive jobs, or else make their marks as entrepreneurs in the footsteps of Chief Gabriel Igbinedion, the legendary entrepreneur and founder of our university.

But this is only part of the encouragement for our new students. Your matriculating set has been christened the Paragons set. If you know what paragon denotes, then you should be inspired to soar far above the heights already attained by your predecessors and peers. A Paragon is an exemplar, ideal, epitome, a shining example, model, and above all, a paradigm, meaning a path-defining school. To be called paragons therefore is a challenge that should drive and motivate you to be leaders, self-conscious role models and accomplishees of note. I believe that the Holy Spirit and not flesh and blood has divined the paragon paths for you, and bless God on your behalf for exalting you so. But please remember that by the matriculation oath you freely enter into today, the university will not hesitate to apply

appropriate sanctions where necessary. Do not steal, do not fight, do not abuse drugs, do not live off-campus, do not own or drive private cars in your first year, do not initiate or embrace cultism, do not cheat during examinations, do not visit hostels of the opposite sex outside designated hours, do not dress indecently, and do not show religious or ethnic intolerance of any kind. As I am sure you know by now, these acts which breach your matriculation oath will lead to expulsion, suspension or rustication. Our Human Help Directorate, which takes charge of counseling and guidance, is available to help students smoothen the rough edges of campus life.

Let me now briefly turn to our parents. First, I congratulate you also because by reason of your child's matriculation, you have also today been admitted into the Distinguished Roll of Strategic Stakeholders, Friends and Benefactors of Igbinedion University. Our pledge is that you will never regret the choice you have made to send your children to us. Indeed, it is a choice we believe you would continue to praise God for for the rest of our lives. In this regard, I think the testimonies of our legacy parents and families illustrate this God-given vision. Legacy parents and families are those who have or have had two, three and more IUO students and graduates. Their numbers have grown exponentially over the years. We have had father and two daughters graduating, mother and daughter, twin doctors, as well as brother and sister doctors and three sisters and one brother graduating. We have had seven and more students from one family, four from the same parents, and several other multiples!

Surely, there must be something about our university that these legacies are saying, as indeed there are several things to be said. But most importantly, these parents and families have put the lie to the efforts of those who have made it their preoccupation to run down our university through the fabrication of lies and disinformation to create panic, doubt and anxiety in our parents and stakeholders. How many times have they raised the dust about the accreditation of our programmes? Or the adequacy of our facilities? Or is it insecurity and diabolical machinations of perplexing ilk? Our legacy stakeholders know that the wicked lies told about us are the handiwork of those who have elected to de-market IUO. We are not moved because, thanks to our parents who are our greatest supporters, they are always put to shame. All our programmes in this university are accredited by the NUC and other regulatory bodies, including the MDCN, PCN, COREN, ICAN and the Council for Legal Education.

What we need to know is that accreditation is a continuous process of quality assurance. It is never granted once and for ever. Rather, depending on whether it is full (five years) or interim (two years) it is renewed after every cycle. You would be pleased to know that 90 per cent of our programmes have full

accreditation. The few with interim accreditation are therefore the exception. Parents have also expressed concern over issues of safety and security, actual dues and fees to be paid, municipal services and the like. Concern over such issues is perfectly normal, given the fact that many of our children are young adults at the stage of life when they can be easily influenced and are vulnerable to outside home syndromes.

But this is where – and why – we ask parents to work with us. The welfare, wellbeing and security of your ward are a triangular affair that involves parents, IUO and students. Personal security requires for instance that students should not work alone in isolated places, and success in academics requires attendance at lectures and hard work. University regulations require students to have 75 per cent attendance at lectures to be eligible to write examinations. Parents should monitor their children constantly to ensure compliance, especially at those times when they like to overstay their holidays. IUO has a full residency policy that requires all students to live on campus. Parents should not encourage any breach. We know that many parents want maximum comfort for their children, but they must be moderate and not vain in the luxuries they indulge their children with. This is the minimum required to prepare our children for the real rather than imagined or pampered lives.

Happily, the PCF provides a platform for engaging the university in the management of your children and the university. The Forum has been very proactive, and has moved from being a fault-finding body to a true partner, ready to bail the university out of the difficulties that beset it. In the last two years, the Forum has procured a 30-seater bus and four official cars for principal officers, built and equipped a Student Health Centre, including the provision of an Ambulance, built and equipped a student recreational centre, boosted water supply to the hostels, supported sporting activities and competitions, and is in the process of equipping model classrooms. We cannot thank the Forum and its executive led by Dr. Aibangbee enough. I plead with all our parents to take active part in the PCF and support IUO to be the university you have always dreamt of for your children.

To close, I join faith with everyone here today to praise and thank God for the 14th Matriculation of Igbinedion University. May the matriculating students of today live meaningful, exemplary and successful lives here at IUO and graduate to become the leaders that our country and the world at large are looking for, to take us from where we are to where we ought to be. God bless our Great Igbinedion University. Amen.