



REMARKS

BY

**MAJ. GENERAL (Rtd) LAWRENCE A. ONOJA,
CFR, Ph.D, mni
PRESIDENT, ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE (AANI)**

**AT A COURTESY VISIT BY THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE OF AANI**

TO

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. GODWIN OBASEKI
EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF EDO STATE**

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2017

GREETINGS/APPRECIATION

On behalf of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Alumni Association of the National Institute (AANI), we express our profound appreciation to your Excellency for the opportunity of this historic courtesy call.

We once again congratulate your Excellency on your election and successful inauguration as the 4th democratically elected Governor of Edo State in the current democratic dispensation under the platform of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

As your Excellency is aware, your predecessor, Comrade Adams Oshiomhole, mni is a respected member of the National Institute. Much has been written about how he had positively transformed Edo state during his two term tenure as governor of Edo State. Notable achievements include massive rural and urban reconstructions, public schools reinventions, innovated sporting facilities (remaking of Ogbemudia Stadium), new public transportation (comrade Buses), improvement in maternal and child care, record mass public employment, bold and innovative approach to security through job-creation, mass beautification of the ancient city of Benin, massive water project, mass job creation through public works and prompt payment of salaries, including 25 per cent increase in minimum wage above the statutory N18,000 among others.

AANI is proud of these remarkable achievements by the Comrade Governor. Interestingly, your Excellency was part of the development team brigade in the past eight years administration of the Comrade Governor that made all these recorded achievements possible. AANI therefore salutes your Excellency for the great role you played in that administration as the Chairman of the Edo State Government's Economic and Strategy Team (EST). Part of your enviable achievements as Chairman of the Economic and Strategy team include:

- The formulation of the Edo State Economic Development framework 2010 - 2020 which introduced the culture of strategy dialogues and retreats in planning.;
- Securing the N25 Billion Infrastructure Development Bond from the Nigerian Capital Market in 2010;
- Obtaining the \$225 Million Concessionary Rates Development Loan from the World Bank which has been a major funding for the current infrastructure development initiatives for the State.;
- Successfully hosting Sector based Economic Summits and Policy Dialogue Series including the Power Round Table in 2010, Education Round Table in 2011 and 2012 Agribusiness Round Table.

AANI is confident that your Excellency will deepen the development agenda and consolidate on the remarkable past achievements. Your globally acknowledged inaugural speech is

a pointer to a peaceful and prosperous Edo State under your leadership as governor.

AANI wishes to reiterate its support and will partner with your Excellency in your commitment to improve the living standard and quality of life of the good people of Edo State within the context of your Vision for Edo State through job creation, agriculture and economic empowerment; infrastructural development; education; health; water and electrification; security; employment and welfare, investments in productive industries and technical and vocational skills; Women and Youth Empowerment among others.

AANI appreciates your commitment to further deepen the development of Edo State through these laudable development initiatives which is consistent with AANI's motto: Towards Better Society.

37TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We are here also to intimate your Excellency about our 37th Annual General Meeting (AGM) which comes up on Saturday March 4th 2017 at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) Kuru, Jos. At this historic meeting, your predecessor, Comrade Adams Oshiomhole, mni will be among the recipients of AANI Towards Better Society award given his remarkable achievements as a two-term governor of Edo State.

ABOUT AANI

The Federal Government in 1979 established the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, Plateau State. The Institute was conceived as a high-level centre institution with the primary objectives of serving as the nation's foremost policy Institute, developing a crop of top-class technocrats of high intellectual capacity, who will conceptualize and anchor the implementation of innovative and dynamic policy initiatives and strategies critical for national development.

So far over a thousand policy research papers have been commendably generated from NIPSS. The Institute has successfully run 38 Senior Executive Courses (SEC) after about 38 years of existence and has graduated close to 2000 members who are members of the National Institute.

AANI's Membership list includes former Heads of State, serving and past governors, heads of public service agencies, Customs service, military, para-military, traditional leaders, organized labour and organized private sector as well as the civil society. Others are serving and past top level executives from the Banking and financial sector, the presidency, states and local governments and the academia.

AANI has two administrative organs namely; Board of Patrons headed by former Head of State, General Ibrahim Babangida,

GCFR, mni. Members include former Head of State, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, GCFR, mni, Late Vice Adm. O.M. Akhigbe (rtd), GCON, mni, Maj. Gen. David Jemibewon (rtd), CFR, mni, Senator Olabiyi Durojaiye, mni, Lt. Gen. (Senator) J.T. Useni (rtd), mni and Prince J. Adelusi-Adeluyi, mni.

The second administrative organ is the Heritage Council which includes His Eminence, Alhaji Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar III mni, Sultan of Sokoto as Chairman, His Royal Majesty, Igwe Nnaemeka Alfred Ugochukwu Achebe, mni Obi of Onitsha, HRM Oba Rilwan Babatunde Aremu Akiolu mni, Oba of Lagos, HRH Alhaji Iliyasu Bashar mni, Emir of Gwandu, HRM Alhaji Sani Sami, mni Emir of Zuru, HRH Alhaji Ahmed Hassan II, mni Emir of Nasarawa and HRM Orhue Felix Mujakperuo, mni Orodje of Okpe.

EDO HAS PRODUCED REMARKABLE AANI MEMBERS

A good number of members of National Institute is from Edo State. Mr. Oseni S. Elemah mni, Chief Executive Officer of Edo State Internal Revenue Service is a pride of AANI. Other members of the State Chapter of AANI include;

- Dr. Mojeed Momoh, mni
- DIG Parry Osayande, mni
- Gen Charles Aichiavbere, mni
- Dr. Dominic Osaghae, mni
- Brig. Gen. D.D. Idada Ikponmwen, mni
- Gen. Godwin Abbe, mni
- Gen. Enahoro, mni

- Gen. John Edokpelor, mni
- Chief Eddy Kponmwen, mni
- Mrs. Betty Igboyi, mni
- Dr. Tonia Nwabueze, mni
- Iyom Josephine Anenih, mni, among several others

Indeed our visit to Edo state is to celebrate the successful tenure of Comrade Adams Oshiomhole, mni who is the first mni governor in this democratic dispensation. AANI is proud of the remarkable achievements by the Comrade Governor and thank your Excellency for who was indeed notable part of the development team brigade in the past eight years administration of the Comrade Governor.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF AANI

The main objectives of AANI include;

- To serve as a think-tank to all levels of government;
- To establish the means of contributing objectively to national discourse on any issues affecting the positive development of Nigeria and proffer appropriate recommendation and implementation strategies to the Government;
- To promote the noble ideals of the National Institute as embodied in its motto: "Towards a Better Society";

- To interact with the Federal, States and Local governments and other organisations or associations, with similar objectives.

Our 37th AGM is scheduled to hold Saturday 4th of March 2017 at NIPSS Kuru, Jos.

I was elected the President of the Association at the 33rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) at NIPSS Kuru in March 2013. I was re-elected for a second term in office as AANI President at the 35th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association held Saturday March 7th, 2015. Other duly elected National Officers include; Dr. Garba Usman Tetengi, Ph.D, SAN, mni, Vice President, Comrade Issa Aremu, Bsc, MA, NPOM, mni, Secretary General, Mrs. Nghargbu Maryamu Patricia, mni, Assistant Secretary General and Mrs. Comfort Olu Eytayo, CFA, FCA, mni Treasurer. Others are Hon. Sola Ephraim-Oluwanuga, LLM, BL, MA, FCI Arb (UK), mni Legal Adviser, Dr. Pat Emembolu Eze, MON, PhD, mni, Welfare/Social Secretary, Alhaji Abbas Bello, FCA, mni, Financial Secretary, Air Cdre Clement Ogbeche, DSS, CNA, mni Internal Auditor and Dr. Juliana Mulmicit Mafwil, Ph.D, mni Publicity Secretary.

AANI also has elected executive members in the 36 States of the Federation including the FCT.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

- Welfare of Members
- AANI held Special Town Hall Meeting/Policy Dialogue on "Effective Implementation of the 2016 Budget" in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture on Tuesday August 9th, 2016 at the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre, Abuja. We plan to have another edition this year.
- Resuscitation of AANI State Chapters
- AANI Reunion in 2014.
- Annual General Meetings (AGMs)
- AANI Magazine
- AANI Calendar
- Renovation of AANI Secretariat
- Intervention and advocacy on broad national issues
- Periodic interactive session with the Media (Meet-the-Press)
- Support for Nigeria's diversification/industrialization. We recently bought a made in Nigeria car (IVM saloon car) from Innoson Vehicles Manufacturing (Nigeria) Limited.

SUPPORT/APPEAL TO GOVERNMENT

- AANI supports and identifies with the Federal government in its quest to reposition the country
- NIPSS is a policy bank for all the ideas that will assist this administration to realize these three-point noble

agenda of fighting insecurity, fighting corruption and revival of the economy. We therefore call on all Nigerians to support the President in realizing these objectives.

- We recall that past administrations have commendably utilized NIPSS research findings to bring about Niger-Delta Amnesty Programme (Late President Umar Musa Yar'Adua), Federal Road Safety Commission (former President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida), FERMA, Ministry of Women Affairs among others.
- We suggest that President Buhari should inaugurate the board of NIPSS and other corporate policy Institutions to enhance their corporate governance.

XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS ON NIGERIANS

AANI wants to use this opportunity to strongly condemn the indiscriminate unprovoked xenophobic attacks on Nigerians resident in South Africa. AANI calls on the government to hold South African authorities accountable for the security of all Nigerians and indeed Africans in South Africa.

Thanks.