

REMARKS

by

Chief Joe-Kyari Gadzama, OFR, MFR, SAN, FNIALS, FICMC, DipICarb, FNICarb, FCIArb, C.Arb.
(Of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister/Life Bencher/CEDR Accredited Mediator/Regulatory Consultant)
Shettima Ilmuye of Borno, *Sardauna* of Uba, *Bobajiro* of Akure Kingdom and *Okwulora* of Ukpo
Chairman, Board of Trustees, University of Maiduguri Alumni Association
Ambassador-at-Large, University of Maiduguri

on behalf of the

Board of Trustees, University of Maiduguri Alumni Association

at the

**24th Combined Convocation Ceremony of the University of
Maiduguri**

"There is nothing so useful to man in general, nor so beneficial to particular societies and individuals, as trade. This is that alma mater, at whose plentiful breast all mankind are nourished."

– **Henry Fielding**

PROTOCOL

INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to deliver these remarks on behalf of the Board of Trustees, University of Maiduguri Alumni Association at this auspicious occasion which marks the 24th combined convocation ceremony of the University of Maiduguri. The University of Maiduguri stands out as a leading academic institution in Nigeria notwithstanding the security challenges that have befallen it in the past years. At some point, the University of Maiduguri was the only functional University in the North Eastern subregion. The University withstood threats, attacks and destruction of its structures and facilities during some unfortunate incidents. I commend the University authorities, security

agencies, students and stakeholders for their laudable resilience and commitment to the cause of knowledge. I must also acknowledge the efforts of the University authorities in ensuring the progress of the University of Maiduguri Alumni Association.

ALUMNI OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI

The history of the University of Maiduguri is adorned with the accomplishments of its graduates. Our alumni have made substantial contributions in a multitude of fields including law, medicine, science, the arts, social activism, and beyond. During the 48 years of its establishment, the University of Maiduguri has produced leaders and very influential persons who continue to make an impact within and outside the shores of Nigeria. As part of the alumni we have, the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Kashim Shettima Mustapha, GCON; the Executive Governor of Borno State, His Excellency, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum, FNSE, mni; the Executive Governor of Adamawa State, His Excellency, Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri; the Executive Governor of Bauchi State, His Excellency, Bala Mohammed; the Executive Governor of Niger State, His Excellency, Mohammed Umaru Bago; the former President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Ahmad Lawan, GCON; the former Governor of Abia State, His Excellency, Okezie Victor Ikpeazu; the former Governor of Niger State, His Excellency, Abubakar Sani Bello; the Group Chief Executive of Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited, Alhaji Mele Kolo Kyari, OFR; the former Chief of Army Staff, (Ambassador) Lieutenant-General Tukur Yusuf Burutai, CFR (rtd); former Chief of Air Staff (Ambassador) Air-Marshal Sadiq Baba Abubakar CFR (rtd) and many others.

The above is in addition to the well-established group of distinguished Alumni produced through the conferment of Honorary Doctorate Degrees on world-renowned personalities.

We, as alumni, carry a profound sense of gratitude in our hearts, for this University has been our source of education and has through determination and commitment to teaching, learning and research, continued to equip generations.

According to Friedrich Nietzsche,

"He who would learn to fly one day must first learn to stand and walk and run and climb and dance; one cannot fly into flying."

The education we received during our time here was not just a mere milestone but rather the cornerstone of our success and the bedrock upon which we have built our futures.

For me, I had three options when it came to choosing a university – University of Lagos, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and University of Maiduguri. I am glad to have chosen the University of Maiduguri and to have studied at the prestigious faculty of Law

where I met the Late Honourable Justice Niki Tobi, JSC (Rtd) who later rose to become a Justice of the Supreme Court. To honour him for his impact, especially during my stay at the University of Maiduguri and my early career, we have the Honourable Justice Niki Tobi JSC (Rtd) Moot Court at the J-K Gadzama Court, Abuja.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The University of Maiduguri Alumni Association was founded about two decades ago. The Association was subsequently incorporated at the Corporate Affairs Commission on 5 July 2012 with the following aims and objectives:

- 1. Plan and sustain deeper relations and cooperation among alumni of University of Maiduguri all over the world, towards the development of the school's academic performance and the general well-being of its students and staff at all times;*
- 2. Defend and promote the integrity, as well as academic performance of University of Maiduguri as a foremost academic institution in Nigeria.*
- 3. Maintain a high standard of ethics, conduct, etiquette and discipline among registered members of the association.*
- 4. Establishment of commercially viable and self-sustainable projects anywhere in the world and channeling of proceeds therefore exclusively to University of Maiduguri's welfare and development programmes including scholarships, annual prizes and award schemes covering students and staff alike e.t.c.*
- 5. Creation and maintenance of endowment fund for the proper execution of the association development objectives.*

The University of Maiduguri Alumni Association has evolved significantly since its inception with various chapters across the nation and even abroad. What truly sets our Association apart is the enduring sense of community - the alumni network. These bonds, forged in the hallowed halls of this institution, remain unbroken even as we have ventured far and wide. The Alumni Association stands as a steadfast pillar of support, uniting alumni from diverse backgrounds and life experiences. Together, we have celebrated each other's successes, and we have provided solace and assistance during life's most trying moments.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Association held its Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 14 October 2023 at J-K Gadzama Court, Garki 2, Abuja. This is not without its challenges which the Board of Trustees and the University authorities are addressing.

ANNUAL DINNER/ELECTIONS

The Annual Dinner of the Alumni Association is scheduled to be held on 14 December 2023 at the International Conference Center, Abuja. All Alumni should endeavor to pay for it, attend and invite other alumni. The elections will follow thereafter.

NEW ALUMNI OFFICES

I appreciate the University authorities for the provision of a new office for the Alumni Association at the University premises. As Oliver Twist, I will ask for more by urging the University to maintain and sustain it. In the same vein, I appreciate the Acting President of the Association for the provision of an alumni office in Abuja.

ALUMNI LEGACY PROJECT(S)

May I seize this opportunity to call on all the Alumni of the University of Maiduguri to consider contributing towards collectively putting up monumental and formidable structure(s) on the campus to serve as a lasting legacy bequeathed by her Alumni for the future generation of both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

As you are aware, the Alumni Association is entitled to a slot on the University Council. I vehemently urge the University to ensure that this slot is occupied by an Alumnus who is not in the employment of the University and such an alumnus should be recommended by the Alumni Association to ensure transparency and good representation.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND ITS BENEFITS

It is with great honor that we extend our warm welcome to the distinguished graduates, inviting them to become part of this cherished association while encouraging existing members to sustain their membership.

In the words of Jiddu Krishnamurti,

"There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning."

As you step out into the world, dear graduates, remember that your education is not confined to the years spent within these walls. It is a lifelong journey. It is the

cultivation of an inquisitive mind, the commitment to continuous growth, and the unending pursuit of knowledge.

While your time as a student is temporary, your status as an alumnus or alumna is a lifelong privilege. It is essential to recognize that one of the best communities to be a part of is the University community. The importance of the keywords - *Character and Learning* - that adorn the certificate issued by the University, cannot be overemphasized. We must carry the banner of our alma mater as worthy and exemplary ambassadors; representing this great institution with pride and honour in our endeavours.

May I borrow the words of Samar Mubarakmand to say that,

"wherever you go and whatever ends you pursue, you must always fulfill the trust reposed in you by your nation, your parents and your alma mater."

The University of Maiduguri has equipped us with the tools to shape our destinies and make a meaningful impact on the world. As we gather here today, we celebrate not only the achievements of the graduating students but also the enduring bond that ties us together. You are now part of a legacy, a tradition of excellence, and a network of individuals who share your experiences, values, and aspirations.

As you embark on this new chapter in your lives, do so with confidence, purpose, and the knowledge that your alma mater and the alumni network will stand by your side, ready to support you at every juncture.

Flowing from the foregoing, the benefits of the Alumni Association include but are not limited to the following:

- 1. Networking opportunities** – The Alumni Association plays a key role in providing networking opportunities. As mentioned earlier, the University has produced successful and trailblazing personalities. The support of former graduates will, in turn, help to raise the profile of the University.
- 2. Career building tools** – In addition to the provision of networking opportunities, the Alumni Association makes provision for career building tools such as job fairs, online resources for job seekers, etc.
- 3. Maintaining Connection with the University** – The Alumni Association keeps alumni in connection with the University by organizing special alumni social events, etc.
- 4. Welcome and Orientation Programmes** – The Alumni association can play a key role in the process of orienting new students to the university.

- 5. Giving Back to Alma mater** – The Alumni Association gives alumni the opportunity to give back to the University. I have mentioned the role of the University in the success of its alumni; this success promotes the University's reputation and encourages others to consider matriculation, offer support and award scholarships amongst others.
- 6. Loyal Supporters** – the Alumni Association supports and mobilizes support for the University.
- 7. Expertise** – Talented alumni will likely have a wealth of experience and skills to share with current students via talks and newsletters.
- 8. Global Impact** – Alumni are likely to be global ambassadors to the institution – they become points of contact with the international community.
- 9. Employability** – Alumni donate their valuable time to offer career support to current students through innovative schemes such as mentoring programmes.
- 10. Financial** – revenue contributors - Generous donations from alumni, scholarships and bursaries can be awarded to talented students who may not have the means to continue their university education.

CONCLUSION

I will end my remarks with the words of the great Nelson Mandela to encourage us all to imbibe the spirit of unity, humility and kindness;

*"When you are at the top, be careful of the monster called PRIDE.
Pride will make you look down on the people who haven't attained
your level of success.*

*When you are at the bottom, be careful of the monster called
BITTERNESS.*

*Bitterness will make you jealous and think that other people are
the reason you haven't made it.*

*When you are on the way to the top, be careful of the monster
called GREED.*

*Greed will make you impatient and make you steal or seek
shortcuts.*

*When you are on your way down, be careful of the monster called
DESPAIR.*

Despair will make you think it's all over yet there is still hope."

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, University of Maiduguri Alumni Association, kindly be assured of my best wishes, always.

Long live the University of Maiduguri!
Long live the University of Maiduguri Alumni Association!!
Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria!!!

I WAS MADE IN UNIMAID

