

**A SPEECH PRESENTED BY THE DIRECTOR OF DIRECTORATE OF GENERAL STUDIES
(PROF. A. E. AGBOGU) ON THE VALEDICTORY VISIT OF THE 6TH SUBSTANTIVE VICE-
CHANCELLOR OF FUTO (PROF. CYRIL CHIGOZIE ASIABAKA) ON 5TH MAY, 2016.**

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, "Ochi mmuta gburugburu"

Principal Officers here present,
Able and Dynamic staff of DGS,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is with momentous excitement and hallucinating joy that we happily welcome the sixth substantive Vice-Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri, our friend and brother, Prof. Cyril Chigozie Asiabaka, KSM, JP to this Directorate on the occasion of his valedictory visit. The joy and excitement we have mentioned stems from the fact that a valedictory visit means a triumphant visit i.e after achieving all that there is, or being victorious in a war theatre. Federal University of Technology, Owerri is such a war theatre, as such any Vice-Chancellor who navigates all the mine fields can be considered a conqueror. Our joy also flows from the love and concern this Vice-Chancellor has shown to events that concerns this Directorate. It is on record that this is the only Vice-Chancellor that has paid five official visits to this Directorate, in a bid to get closer to us, understand our problems and take necessary actions. It is also on record that this Vice-Chancellor is the 1st to embark on a valedictory visit. I stand to be corrected. Now, if he has anything to hide, will he expose himself openly like this? Mr. Vice-Chancellor you are welcome.

Let me follow this welcome with our sincere and heartfelt congratulations for the transformation that you are driving in all facets of life of this University. For the avoidance of doubt, let me sight a few of the life changing things associated with you: beautification and landscaping of entire FUTO, thereby putting the forest at bay; tarring of the entrance road to FUTO, constructing and commissioning several buildings including SEET dual three storey complex, new Physics department, Dental and Ophthalmology buildings, Post Graduate School, the building for Entrepreneurship Studies, several hostels, and most recently the ongoing staff quarters and new Project Management building to mention but a few. Mr. Vice-Chancellor, may I inform you that we are also aware of all your efforts to install a high powered transformer for the University in order to redress this prolonged absence of NEPA on campus. I can confirm that we are enjoying power from the national grid only as a result of this effort. We now only occasionally revert to the noise of generators, when there is a failure from national grid.

In the past ten years, successive administrations have concentrated on hiring staff without any plan for equipping them to work. This Directorate's strength was swelled from thirteen to fifty-four, with no clear plan of how these new recruits will function.

Here again, Mr. Vice Chancellor, you have on your own intervened by providing chairs, and tables for students and for our staff. Although much more is needed, yet, we appreciate the impact of what you have done so far. For the avoidance of doubt, what you are confronting with regards to tables and chairs among other things is a backlog of decay which you inherited. In the circumstance, only cynics will expect you to do miracle and abandon other equally pressing needs so as to satisfy their ill motivated will. Nevertheless, there is in addition several new lecture theatres which has eased teaching and learning for large classes. To cap it all, Ladies and Gentlemen, only last week this Vice-Chancellor approved the supply of a giant photocopying machine at the cost of 1 million naira. What else can I tell you?

Having said that Sir, may I quickly table the needs of this Directorate which we pray that you add to your priority list of things you will complete before your triumphant exit.

- a. provision and equipping of a befitting language laboratory
- b. more tables and chairs for staff and students.
- c. more office spaces
- d. furnishing of General Studies building – tiles, air conditioners, fans, fridges and other accessories.
- e. enhance the status of the Directorate to compare with Schools.
- f. Handing over the former SMAT building which will naturally complement the existing Directorate building. Even if all these cannot be achieved before your triumphant exist, we are happy that the Vice-Chancellor elect our friend and brother Prof. F.C. Eze is here, order him to follow your footsteps and make this Directorate a priority.
- g. Proving effective security for the Directorate.

On our part despite pockets of resistance, we have tried to key to the Vice-Chancellor's quest for excellence policy. In that regard, we have jettisoned all business as usual policy and now have embraced the change as enunciated by our amiable Vice-Chancellor. To that effect, GST courses are no longer taught at a time and place chosen by the Lecturer. We have insisted on teaching all courses at venues and times set by Senate. Furthermore, where there are more lecturers than venues, we have paired lecturers for effectiveness and control.

Also, we have deployed efforts to improve teaching and learning. This is achieved through tutorials and reading classes which we organize using the texts donated to the Directorate by this Vice-Chancellor. Both lecturers and the administrative staff have demonstrated absolute loyalty to the ideals and transformation agenda of your administration. This can partly be seen in the cleanliness of the environment and within the Directorate of General Studies building itself, and the business – like attitude to work exhibited by staff at all times.

Furthermore, with the unalloyed and undiluted support of the Vice-Chancellor to the Directorate, the Directorate of General Studies was able to organize a very successful international conference in 2015. Your love for this Directorate also attracted a big generating set to us for efficient and effective services to the masses.

I humbly welcome the Vice-Chancellor to this Directorate and also pray that God in His infinite mercies grant him a successful, pains free tenure, in Jesus name, amen.

Thank you and God bless us.



Prof. A. E. Agbogu

Director, Directorate of General Studies

