

A Communique Issued at the End of the Third Biennial Seminar of the National Association of Pro-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (NAPCNU) Held at the Trenchard Hall, University of Ibadan, Between November 19 and 22, 2007

The third biennial seminar of the National Association of Pro-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities was held at the University of Ibadan from the 19th to 22st of November, 2007, under the chairmanship of Chief Afe Babalola, OFR, CON, SAN, who is also the Pro-Chancellor University of Lagos. The Chief host was Mr. Gamaliel Onosode OFR , Pro-Chancellor, University of Ibadan. The theme of the seminar was: 'Managing for organisational stability and growth in the Nigerian University System'. The key note address, 'The Future of the University Concept in Nigeria', was delivered by Prof L. Akin Mabogunje, CON, NNOM. The sub-themes of the seminar covered topics such as Best practices for managing the university system,; Internationalization of Nigerian Universities; Capacity and technology gap in Nigerian Universities, Resource mobilization and management; Reforming, re-orientating re-branding academia; and Institutional autonomy.

Goodwill messages were received from various universities and establishments as well as from Prof Musa Abdullahi, Secretary General of the National Association of Pro-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities, who is also the Pro-Chancellor of the University of Jos. Regrettably, no representation was received from neither the NUC nor the Federal Ministry of Education.

The seminar noted that:

- i. years of national indifference and neglect have taken their toll on Nigerian universities to the point that no known Nigerian university ranks among the top 1000 universities in the world;
- ii. Governing Councils are very strategic in the stability and management of Nigerian universities;
- iii. high graduate unemployment rate in the country is being aggravated by the non-employability of some of the graduates being produced;
- iv. Sufficient attention has not been paid to universal best practices in higher education management in Nigeria. While some attention has been paid to resource mobilization, the same cannot be said for efficient management of such resources;
- v. ICT, a veritable tool for the efficient creation, preservation and dissemination of knowledge, has a relatively low rate among staff and students in Nigerian universities and could be accountable for some of observed deficiencies in the university system;
- vi. The insufficiency of management capacity in Nigerian university system;
- vii. While the quantum of resources being expended by proprietors of Nigerian universities has increased, the percentage of overall expenses being invested in education has not increased commensurately;
- viii. a high correlation between some of the vices rearing their ugly heads in Nigerian universities on one hand and the low level of technology, insufficient facilities and non-conducive environment on Nigerian campuses on the other;
- ix. public universities rely heavily on subventions from government which are inadequate for the needs of universities;
- x. a gap exists due to the absence of a National Research Foundation from which research funds can be accessed by researchers on competitive basis;
- xi. The emerging concept of a functional university is one that is entrepreneurial by using its innovations and inventions to strengthen entrepreneurial capacity in the society;
- xii. Universities in Nigeria have not sufficiently cultivated their alumni for financial support;
- xiii. The Nigerian university system is expanding at a rate higher than the number of academic staff being produced. There is also the acute shortage of skilled manpower within the system.

- xiv. Majority of the beneficiaries of the subsidized higher education in Nigeria are the elites whose children have been better prepared to gain admission to the available public universities;
- xv. the public perception of the average academic is taking a negative downturn as a result of some unethical practices gaining ground in Nigerian universities;
- xvi. the need for more frequent review of curriculum in response to societal needs

Consequently, the Seminar resolved as follows:

- i. To re-orientate Nigerian university communities towards seizing the opportunity of the prevailing democratic dispensation to ensure due process, adequate consultation and accountability;
- ii. Council should play its statutory and more central role in the governance and administration of university system in Nigeria;
- iii. Facilitate the review of the curriculum and the learning process with a view to creating a synergy between industries and universities in the production of adequate and appropriate manpower;
- iv. Ensure the enthronelement of best practices and zero tolerance for indiscipline among staff and students of universities with a view to restoring the integrity of the Nigerian university system;
- v. Expand the utilization of ICT in all activities in the university system and require all current and prospective students of universities to be computer-literate. No academic should be engaged in a Nigerian university without being computer-literate and skilful in the utilization of ICT for research and knowledge delivery;
- vi. Step up staff development programmes in Nigerian universities with a view to bridging the observed gap;
- vii. The recently introduced direct teaching and laboratory cost should be sustained and enhanced;
- viii. Universities should be innovative in identifying and accessing non-governmental avenues for funding. Government should put in place a mechanism for cost sharing among government, parents and other stakeholders in the funding of Nigerian universities;
- ix. Government should establish a National Research Fund for the disbursement of funds through proposal-based competitive access for academics within the Nigerian university system;
- x. Each university needs a strategic plan as a road map for development;
- xi. Nigerian universities should step up their activities towards providing adequate and innovative intellectual backup for development of entrepreneurship;
- xii. All Nigerian universities should keep an up-to-date and comprehensive list of graduates and follow up with a graduate-tracer programme with a view to enlisting and cultivating their alumni for developmental support
- xiii. Encourage first generation universities to pay greater attention to postgraduate training
- xiv. To call on Councils in Nigerian universities to firmly deal with any proven case of unethical behaviour among academic and non-academic staff
- xv. Call on Senates of Nigerian universities to be more alive to their responsibilities by ensuring constant review of curriculum
- xvi. Nigerian university system should play a major role in achieving our national aspiration to be among the best 20 economies in the world by 2020;
- xvii. The government should as a matter of urgency convene a national education summit of stakeholders to address the multi-dimensional problems of education in Nigeria.

APPRECIATION

The National Association of Pro-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities wishes to express its unreserved appreciation and gratitude to the Pro-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan, Deacon

Gamaliel Onosode, OFR, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Olufemi Bamiro, principal officers of the university, members of the Local Organizing Committee and the efficient Registrar of the university, Mrs. Omotayo Ikotun for the excellent arrangement put in place for the success of the seminar.

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Chairman

Secretary General