

UNILORIN LEADERSHIP SERIES II

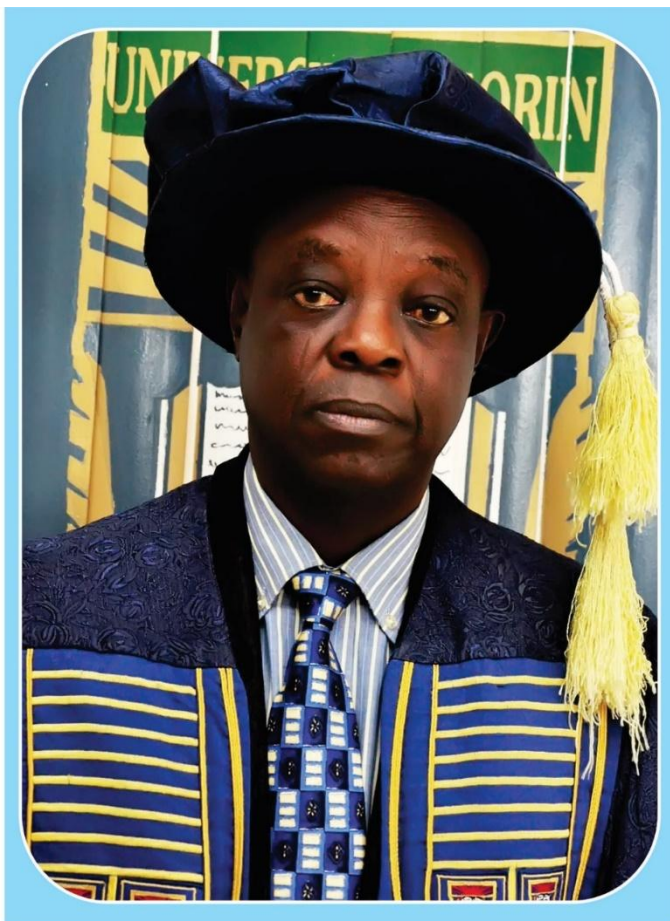


PROF. ABDULKAREEM: Footprints of a giant

(VC, UNILORIN, 2017-2022)

*(A Chronicle of the achievements of the 10th
Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin)*

Kunle Akogun



PROF. ABDULKAREEM:

Footprints of a giant

(VC, UNILORIN, 2017-2022)

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FOREWORD

With his gallant emergence as the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem blew a restful wind of hope for greater renaissance in all aspects of the University of Ilorin's life. The wind of hope was, indeed, palpable in the University community when he was announced as the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University on Monday, August 28, 2017.

Of course, the University of Ilorin has ever been a brand, with the appreciable, selfless and unforgettable efforts of the preceding Vice Chancellors of the University, but Professor Abdulkareem came as the 10th Vice Chancellor with the honest purpose of enhancing the brand equity of the University. He was explicit about his purpose; and everyone could see or perceive the strength of the purpose, his determination and foresight, in all the series of his inaugural speeches at different forums.

In highlighting his goals, and what would be his strategies and leadership style, Professor Abdulkareem unequivocally declared in his inaugural meeting with the Congregation that he would widen the frontiers of the University before the expiration of his five-year tenure. His aspiration, as part of the main contract he signed with the stakeholders of the University of Ilorin, was to impel, with greater force and resolve, the process of making the University much more recognised and impactful in the world. His main strategy, as he repeatedly laid it out, was to maximise the potentials and resources of the University as it has never been done before.

Part of his promises to the teeming staff of the University was to make everybody happy within the possibility and limit of the resources available to him. Thus, he pledged to reward the efforts and devotion of every single staff – senior or junior, academic or non-academic, within the governing statutes. One can smell a sense of honesty in this agreement! Professor Abdulkareem is not endowed with the pretentious skills of deception. He says what he means, and means what he says, at all times.

To the students of the University, Sulyman Age Abdulkareem was also a better harbinger of greater hope as it has never been before. True to his nature, he was not presumptuous to the students, who according to him, are the most critical and significant stakeholders of the University. He promised to rejuvenate their prestige by making his administration much more student-centric. The bottom line of his covenant with the students was that their welfare and academic matters would be prominent top priority.

At the beginning, Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem was very humble to recognise and appreciate the “astonishing, impressive and monumental” achievements of his predecessors in the infrastructural development of the University. He did not feign the humility he expressed in acknowledging the giant strides that all his predecessors took in cumulatively enhancing the infrastructural profiles of the University. What I think he had in mind with this acknowledgment was that ‘if I could not beat the record of my predecessors in their sprint for infrastructural development, I would not lower or retrogress the record’. Thus, he pledged to sustain the tempo of physical and infrastructural development in order to push it in his own way to attaining the world’s best environment for learning, research and community service.

Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem was also not deceitful about the philosophy of the administration he promised to run. Right from the outset, he was clear and down-to-earth about his philosophy. Of course, he does not know what some people called political- correctness. To this end, he made it clear to the community bluntly that he would be fair, just, firm, conscientious, selfless; and that he would be transparent in his dealings with every member of the community. It was his belief that his prudent use of power for the benefit of the larger purpose, justness of his cause, impression of his leadership examples, and steadfastness of his humility and restraint, will motivate the staff and students on the journey to greatness for which he was going to be a conscientious and focused driver. He said, “My leadership will be exemplary, honest, disciplined, transformational, prudent, embracing and God fearing. In the execution of every policy, I will sacrifice self-interest for collective interest in forging new frontiers for our University”. He added that he would never fear to negotiate, but he would not negotiate out of fear. He does not believe in bigotry, and he vowed not to promote it by any means in his dealings.

Of course, the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin envisaged what might be the consequence of his uncommon but sterling philosophy of leadership. He foresaw that in pursuing and actualising the ideals, he might definitely get some censures. But he seemed to have prepared and steeled himself to take the censures as long as the ideals would lead to the greatest happiness for the greatest number of members of our community. According to him, he said he would take the censures as the tax he would have to pay to lead us to the Promised Land.

While the foregoing is a form of course outline for reviewing the examinations Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem has written for five years, this book, *Prof. Abdulkareem: Footprints of a Giant (VC, UNILORIN 2017 – 2022)*, is a checklist, or a marking scheme, so to say, for grading him fairly and righteously. As an initiative of the Directorate of Corporate Affairs of the

University of Ilorin, and second in the series of the Unit's historical series, this book provides us details of the achievements of the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, thereby offering us immutable records to judge and preserve Professor Abdulkareem's performances and legacies. So, this book, to me, is, indeed, a scorecard, with the chronicles of the impressive performances of the 10th Vice-Chancellor of our University, which will not only eternally delight Professor Abdulkareem himself, but should also gratify all fair-minded and God-fearing stakeholders in the University. As Mr Kunle Akogun, the author of the book, mentioned in his introduction, this book is "a worthy parting gift" to Professor Abdulkareem "from the Directorate of Corporate Affairs and a veritable valedictory compendium for a great achiever and an astute manager of men and resources". Besides being a template for those who will want to judge Professor Abdulkareem fairly and conscientiously, this book, as a way of my genuine validation of the author's honest and accurate claim, is also an "invaluable reference material for those who are interested in having a bird's eye view of the comprehensive story of the University of Ilorin, with particular reference to its specific strides between 2017 and 2022".

Although the author of this book is the Director of the Directorate of Corporate Affairs of the University of Ilorin, and can be wrongly tagged as a publicist by those who harbour malice, he cannot be tainted with unprofessional or unethical motives. As the Chief Public Relations Officer of the University of Ilorin, his job essentially covers publicity through a deliberate prosecution of the University's public information mandates and philosophy. In performing this role, what is expected of any professional public relations officer is to have at heart, and concretely manifest, a decent dynamic ethical orientation built on truth, fact, accuracy and credibility. This book does not have a taste or padding of any form of sycophancy or cosmetics because the contents are verifiable facts. Philosophers assert that truth is 'what is that it is and what is not that it is not'. There is nothing phony in the chronicles in this book, and there is nothing in this book that smirks of insincerity. Of course, the book relies heavily on news reports on the accomplishments of Professor Abdulkareem in national newspapers, newsmagazines, radio and television stations and other media outlets, most especially the weekly **UNILORIN BULLETIN**. But, more importantly, the achievements that are chronicled in the book are out there in real entities to see or touch for anybody who might want to doubt the actuality of the achievements or the integrity of the author. They are undeniable legacies achieved in the fieriest and unfriendly circumstances - whether we like Professor Abdulkareem or not. Thus, the author is not specious with all what he has chronicled in this book. And there can be no better chronicler than Mr

Akogun himself because he is the statutory repository of the Vice Chancellor's activities.

As you shall be going through this book, come along with full sense of logic and reasoning, rather than emotions or bristling prejudices. This is only how you can appreciate this book and judge or appreciate Professor Abdulkareem fairly and conscientiously. The book, therefore, is invaluable in the way it might help in freeing many of us from the cave of the prison of distorted reality and illusion about the Abdulkareem's administration. The book will enable us to know what the cave dwellers do not know or care less to know because they are trapped in a world of shadows.

Chapter One of the book narrates the trajectory of Professor Abdulkareem's life to the top. For those that are close to him, and who know some iotas of his life story, the book stokes their knowledge about his life that: Really, life was like a bumpy ride on a tortuous road. Indeed, he has a great strength that does not come from physical capacity, but from an indomitable will. In other chapters of the book, readers will find Professor Abdulkareem's unique achievements, or if you permit me to describe them as matchless achievements, in enhancing the advancement of knowledge (through the upgrade of the University Library, construction of lecture theatres, take-off of and investment on the Centre for Open and Distance Learning, increment in the number of the beneficiaries of TETFund interventions etc.); enhancing the University ICT facilities; promoting probity, equity and other core values; fostering internationalisation and linkages; enhancing effective and efficient human resources management; driving and increasing revenue generation; scaling up availability and maintenance of infrastructural facilities; and promoting best practices and good governance.

If we all read this book with unbiased mind, we will be quick to agree objectively that Professor Abdulkareem touched all the critical action plan, specific objectives and broad goals of the 4th Strategic Plan of the University of Ilorin, which formed the nucleus of his vision for the University. By and large, Professor Abdulkareem has conscientiously performed his duty as the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, as it has been evidenced in the chronicles in this book; it is left to mankind to give their credit deservedly. We are all history. Professor Abdulkareem has made his history as it has been written in this book, as much as it is possible. This book is a monument that has documented Professor Abdulkareem's deeds, which I, like the author of this book, and other fair-minded people, consider as worthy of remembrance. To us who are not prisoners of one-sided perspective and bitterness, we will be quick to agree that, with what is documented in this book, Professor Abdulkareem is worthy of being admitted into the Hall of Fame of the University of Ilorin.

Professor Abdulkareem has the moral courage, the courage of one's conviction, the courage to see things through. He knew that the world is in a constant conspiracy against the brave. He knew that there is the age-old struggle- the roar of the crowd on one side and the voice of one's conscience on the other. He did not allow the lure of the roar of the crowd to distract him from doing what he thought was right. As Hubbard said, "It does not take much strength to do things, but it requires great strength to decide on what to do". Abdulkareem allowed his great values to be his reference point to make decisions for the common good. He has tenacity to succeed, and that is where his strength lies- those who are close to him know this quite well. The glowing but frank comments of the Principal Officers of the University, Deans and Directors that worked with Professor Abdulkareem, which are documented in Chapter Seven of this book, lend credence to the strength of his character and purpose, firmness, frankness, boldness and integrity that drove his administration and his success. Honest efforts cannot be lost. In this book are little chronicles of his efforts. Let us then judge him by how good his good ideas were, not by how bad his bad ideas were- as Benjamin Affleck once advised.

This book is a good instrument and valued resource for enabling us to judge, appreciate and immortalise or commemorate Abdulkareem accordingly and justifiably. The book is good and easy reading. It does not have any form of exaggerations or sycophancy. Abdulkareem does not even crave for sycophancy. Therefore, I strongly recommend this book to everyone who has a pious, just and fair mind for objective evaluation and appreciation of a giant that was mostly misconstrued.

"The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and the will to carry on". With what has been chronicled in this book, Abdulkareem has left a lot to motivate us to carry on and move the University of Ilorin, with greater conviction, to a greater height.

Professor Adesina Lukman Azeez
Dean, Faculty of Communication
and Information Sciences &
Chairman, Editorial Board,
UNILORIN BULLETIN
September 2022



INTRODUCTION



Sustaining a Corporative Affairs initiative

This book, ***“PROF. ABDULKAREEM: Footprints of a Giant (VC, UNILORIN 2017 – 2022)”***, carefully chronicles the achievements of Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, during his five-year tenure (October 2017 – October 2022) as the University’s 10th Vice-Chancellor. It also itemises the several honours and laurels, which the multiple award-winning Professor of Chemical Engineering earned for himself and the University in the course of his stewardship.

It is the second issue of ***THE UNILORIN LEADERSHIP SERIES***, a concise end-of-term portrait of a passing phase in the rich history of the University. The historical series, which debuted in 2017 at the end of the tenure of the 9th Vice Chancellor of our great University, Prof. AbdulGaniyu Ambali, OON, aimed at creating an information data bank that will help to preserve, for posterity, the numerous legacies of successive administrations in the University.

The unprecedented initiative, which, before 2017, was never known in the annals of the University of Ilorin, was necessitated, as I stated in the first edition, by the paucity, or indeed non-availability, of any useful reference book on past chief executives of the University to fall back on by interested researchers on the respective administrations of the University. As I promised in my introductory remarks in the first edition then, Almighty Allah has graciously made it possible for us, through the present work, to institutionalise this great initiative of the Directorate of Corporate Affairs under my humble watch. Alhamdulillah!

It is my fervent hope and prayer that the initiative would be sustained and made a permanent event in the quinquennial transition programmes for successive Vice Chancellors.

As with the first edition, this book relies heavily on news reports on the accomplishments of the Vice Chancellors in national newspapers, newsmagazines, radio and television stations and other media outlets, most especially the weekly ***UNILORIN BULLETIN***, the University’s flagship information organ, which, incidentally, I have been editing since May 2012.

Through his giant strides in his five-year stint as Vice-Chancellor, Professor Abdulkareem substantially stamped his feet solidly in the sands of time and boldly wrote his name in gold in the annals of the University of Ilorin, thus ensuring that the history of the Better by far University would be

incomplete without a copious reference to him and his tenure. As much as possible, this book captures those Abdulkareem's unforgettable footprints, as contained in Chapters 3 and 4. These include: excellent staff welfare package, liberalisation of access to TETFund/NEEDS awards, impactful researches and patents, MoU with the Nigerian Army on the production of bullet-proof combat vests, University Library extension, establishment of the Molecular Laboratory, proactive tackling of the Coronavirus challenge, outmaneuvering the COVID-19 disruption to academic activities, pioneering virtual teaching/learning, CODL's final accreditation, MoU with Orient Farms on mechanised farming, and the N1 billion BUA Group's infrastructural development grant.

Others include: massive campus roads rehabilitation, the N600 million integrated poultry farm initiative, sustenance of 'Most Subscribed University' status, consecutive winning of JAMB's Merit Awards, achievement of the long-awaited Unilorin – ASUU rapprochement, a harvest of high calibre personnel exports, digitisation of academic transcripts' issuance, resettlement of Fulani herdsmen, resuscitation of Emeritus Professorship scheme, unprecedented sports development, personal endowment of annual prize for academic excellence, and massive infrastructural development that virtually turned the University campus into a construction site.

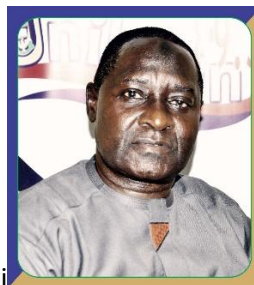
All these giant strides and more are adequately documented in this book that was conceived as a worthy parting gift to this hardworking don from the Directorate of Corporate Affairs and a veritable valedictory memento for a great achiever and an astute manager of men and resources.

I have no doubt that this book will be a worthy and invaluable reference material for those who are interested in having a bird's eye view of the comprehensive story of the University of Ilorin, with particular reference to its specific strides between 2017 and 2022.

The book is an account of the legacies of a silent achiever as told in compelling prose by someone who is statutorily the repository of the Vice Chancellor's activities.

While the glory arising from the successful publication of the book may be shared by all Unilorites, I take full responsibility for whatever shortcomings it may contain.

Kunle Akogun
Director of Corporate Affairs,
University of Ilorin
September 2022



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



I am immensely grateful to the Almighty Allah for giving me the inspiration and energy to conceptualise and sustain this project, ‘*THE UNILORIN LEADERSHIP SERIES*’, which began in 2017 with the book on the tenure of the 9th Vice Chancellor, Professor AbdulGaniyu Ambali. All praises and adulations are indeed due to the Lord of the Universe, the author and finisher of our faith, for giving me the vision to write this second in the series, the strength to combine its seamless execution with my rather tight schedule and the grace to complete it in record time.

So many people, each in their various ways, have contributed to making this book project a reality. And I am greatly indebted to them all.

When in February 2022, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, told me that one of the retired Professors of the University, who is a great admirer of his, Luke Edungbola, told him that as his five-year tenure was gradually winding down, there was the need for him to document his achievements in a book form, I felt a great sense of elation inside me. I was elated because, unknown to the Vice Chancellor, I had already started collating materials, with my Corporate Affairs team, for the second edition of the ‘*UNILORIN LEADERSHIP SERIES*’, to place on record for posterity, how the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University had impacted the Better-by-far institution in his five-year tenure (2017 – 2022). For us at the Directorate of Corporate Affairs, and for me in particular, this book project has been a self-imposed task since 2017 and which must not be allowed to die no matter what! So, despite the obvious body language of the Vice Chancellor, which has always shown him to be publicity-shy and that he would probably not buy the idea of having a whole book written on him for whatever reason, we started collating materials for his end-of-tenure compendium! If not for anything, we had planned to present it to him as a surprise parting gift, even if it would be in soft copy format. But as God would have it, Professor Edungbola became the *Deux ex-Machina*, and without any stress of trying to convince Professor Abdulkareem, he literally gave express approval to our tentative initiative and real work began in earnest on the book project in March 2022.

For his role as the ‘encourager-in-chief’, I deeply appreciate Professor Edungbola for indirectly facilitating the realisation of this book

project, by literally ‘wetting the ground’ for its acceptance by the Vice Chancellor.

Even though the achievements of the Vice Chancellor were already visible, even to the blind, as a result of their on-the-spot reportage by the ever friendly Nigerian mass media, and of course the weekly **UNILORIN BULLETIN**, and those media reports could as well make a comprehensive write-up for the book we had in mind, we still thought that we needed to get inputs from the various Faculties, Directorates, Units, Departments, and Centres. The thinking was that it is good to hear directly from the “horses’ mouths” how the administration of Professor Abdulkareem had impacted their various units. So, we sent out letters to the various Heads of units. Despite the intervening workers’ strike that started in February 2022 when the letters were sent out, many responded swiftly. To those who obliged us their first-hand report of Professor Abdulkareem’s achievements in their various units, I say a big ‘THANK YOU’ and I must confess that their inputs, which formed a whole chapter in the book, were very helpful eye-openers that gave graphic insights into the Vice Chancellor’s tenure.

I thank the Dean of the Faculty of Communication Sciences, Professor Lukman A. Azeez, for agreeing, at very short notice and despite his very tight academic and administrative schedules, to write the Foreword to this book. I am not surprised by his swift response though, for we have come a long way together in the line of duties. We have always worked together on the weekly production of the **UNILORIN BULLETIN**, which I edit and of which he is Editorial Board Chairman.

I am also indebted to Professor Victoria A. Alabi, the Director of the General Studies Unit (GNS), for her wonderful input in editing the work despite her extremely tight schedule. When her name was suggested to me as the likely person to edit the book, I had no problem in acquiescing immediately. I had known the Professor of English Stylistics and Semiotics for her fastidious attention to grammar, syntax and other editing nuances since my first contact with her when she was the Editorial Board Chairman of the **UNILORIN BULLETIN**. Indeed, I must confess, I learnt a lot from the painstaking effort she put into editing the book.

The three Deputy Vice Chancellors - Professor Sylvia O. Malomo (Academic), Professor F. B. Sule (Management Services), and Professor Mikhail O. Buhari (Research, Technology and Innovations), as well as the other Principal Officers, Dr. Fola M. Olowoleni (Registrar), Professor Abdulwahab O. Issa (University Librarian), and Mr. Hakeem O. Sonde (Bursar), were veritable sources of inspiration to me in the execution of this book project. I greatly appreciate them for their encouragement and accessibility whenever I had cause to approach them for one material or assistance, as the case may be.

I cannot forget the invaluable inputs of all members of staff of the Directorate of Corporate Affairs for their various contributions to the successful execution of this book project. All of them, at least through their various reports in the *UNILORIN BULLETIN* and the *UNILORIN 89.3 FM*, contributed in no small measure to the comprehensive compilation of materials for the book. But I want to single out the following for their specific contributions to some portions of the book: Mr. Ibrahim Akintola Idris (Alooma), for his contribution to Chapter 7; Mr. Oluwasegun Alabi, for providing the materials for Chapter 4, and sundry other editorial inputs; Mr. Mubarak Oladosu, for his incisive content analytical research that formed Chapter 5, and Mr. Olanrewaju Awe, for his imaginative cover design. I also commend Mr. Abubakar Imam and Mr. Mustafa Abubakar, for their invaluable editorial back-up; Mr. Felix Dare Afolabi, Mrs. Adeitan Ekundayo, and Mr. Ismaila Saka, for providing excellent secretariat back-up; Mr. Sunday Fadesire and Mr. Tunde Bakare, for their invaluable graphic inputs; as well as Miss Precious Okeowo and Mr. Abdulfatahi Dauda Gidado, for providing the photographic content of book.

Staffers of the Office of the Vice Chancellor are also wonderful partners in the realisation of this book dream. I am particularly indebted to Mrs. Beatrice O. Ishola, the Deputy Registrar; Mr. Musbau Jimoh, the Personal Assistant to the Vice Chancellor; Mrs. Rachel Y. Ogedengbe, the Confidential Secretary; and the other supporting staff, for promptly making available useful documents and other invaluable logistic supports on demand.

To my colleagues in the pen confraternity, the Gentlemen of the Press, both at the Lagos and Abuja headquarters of the various media houses and at the state correspondents level as well as in the home media establishments in Kwara State, I say ‘thank you’ for all your fraternal supports for me. You have been our partners in progress at the University of Ilorin. Your extensive reportage of the activities of the Professor Abdulkareem administration was greatly instrumental to the success of this book project.

And finally, to members of my immediate family, I say thank you for your invaluable support and patient understanding of my peculiar job schedule, which, even the prolonged university workers’ strike could not stop from often taking me outside the home when others were ‘resting’ in the comfort of their houses. I am particularly grateful to my journalist sons, Abdullahi Oluwadare and AbdulRasheed Shoboi, whose initial proofreading of the manuscript and continuous pre-press editorial interventions helped in no small way to “clean up” some grey areas in the work.

For your respective contributions to making this project a reality, I say, ‘Thank you all and God bless’.

UNILORIN AT A GLANCE



The University took off in October 1975 as a University College affiliated to the University of Ibadan with the late Professor Tekena Tamuno, as its pioneer Head. Designated as Principal, Professor Tamuno was succeeded, in December 1975, when he became the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ibadan, by Professor Oladipo Akinkugbe.

When the University College became a full-fledged University in October 1977, Professor Akinkugbe became its first Vice-Chancellor and he held that position until October 1978. Other Vice Chancellors who have administered the University were: Professor A.O. Adesola, 1978 - 1981; Professor S. A. Toye, 1981 - 1985; Professor A. Adeniyi, 1985 - 1992; Professor J. O. Oyinloye, 1992 -1997; Professor S.O. AbdulRaheem, 1997 - 2002; Professor S.O.O. Amali, 2002 - 2007; Professor Is-haq O. Oloyede, 2007 - 2012; Professor AbdulGaniyu Ambali, 2012 - 2017 and the subject of this book, Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, 2017 - 2022.

At inception, the University of Ilorin started with three Faculties (Arts, Education and Science). Now, it is a 16-Faculty citadel of learning. The University now has the following Faculties: Arts, Basic Medical

Sciences, Basic Clinical Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Education, Engineering and Technology, Social Sciences, Management Sciences, Agriculture, Law, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Communication and Information Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine. And between the 16 Faculties, the University now has a total of 108 academic Departments.

There are presently about 50, 000 students while the University's staff strength is 3, 476. Many factors are responsible for this feat. These include the good name the University has made for itself, the high quality of its graduates, its tradition of maintaining a stable academic calendar, high moral standard of its students and alumni coupled with academic excellence and its beautiful and serene environment.

In order to increase access to higher education, the University, early at inception, introduced Remedial Programmes in its Arts and Science disciplines through which candidates who have potentials for university education are assisted to remedy the deficiencies in their entry qualifications.

Postgraduate studies commenced in the University in 1978 for the MSc degree programme in the Department of Biological Sciences. Since then, other Departments in the University have been running Postgraduate Diploma, Master and PhD degrees in academic and professional disciplines. The Postgraduate School was established on 8th November, 1983 to coordinate all postgraduate activities and ensure the effective training of postgraduate students that would lead to the expansion of the frontiers of knowledge and enhance national development.

The University attracts both academic and non-academic staff, from virtually every part of Nigeria probably because of its central geographical location and the deliberate efforts of successive administrations in attracting its workforce. In order to achieve the acclaimed universal concept, the University engaged the services of the Inter-University Council (IUC) London Office to assist in recruiting foreign world-class academics.

The University has been able to retain its quality staff and sustain excellence as espoused in its mission statement and has consciously provided the necessary conducive environment and demonstrated commitment to staff welfare.

The welfare of the students is given priority by the University. At the beginning of every session, the Student Affairs Unit organises an orientation programme for new students. This largely ensures peace and tranquility on the campus.

It is mandatory for all the students' clubs and associations to register with the Student Affairs Unit to ensure the proper monitoring of their activities. To bridge the gap between the University Administration and students and to inculcate leadership ability in them, membership of some

statutory committees is extended to the students. Such committees include Students' Welfare, Sports, Students' Disciplinary, Library and Publications, and Ceremonials, among others.

At the University of Ilorin, student unionism is a tool for progressive transformation of the lives and status of the generality of the institution's student populace. The sort of synergy that exists between the student body and the University administration is such that engenders mutual trust in a no-hold barred atmosphere of openness. The prevailing harmony at the University of Ilorin is not because of lack of conflicts between the students' body and the University management but it is a function of the deployment of effective mechanisms for prompt resolution of sprouting conflicts.

The University, through its Centre for International Education (CIE), has facilitated students exchange with foreign institutions based on existing Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with such institutions. This has promoted regional integration, acculturation and enhanced educational research opportunities.

The modest efforts of the University on internationalisation have yielded many gains, which include placing the University on the global map of higher institutions of repute, affording the University the opportunity to partner many reputable universities all over the world, affording the University access to facilities that are not available within the country, promoting internationalisation within the campus thereby exposing staff and students to international opportunities such as American Council for Learned Society (ACLS), and Fulbright Fellowship, participating in the programmes of international organisations in which the University is a member, such as the Association of African Universities (AAU). This benefits the University in a number of ways. For example, AAU pays for visiting scholars from African countries on short term visits. It also funds limited graduates' research; and helps the University to set new standards in terms of international staff and students.

Since 2011, Unilorin has maintained a steady presence among the most preferred education institutions by prospective students. According to statistics obtained from the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB), Unilorin was the 8th most preferred university by admission seekers in 2011; 5th in 2012; and 2nd in 2013. From 2014, the University has consistently maintained the 1st position, as the most sought-after University by admission seekers in the country.

Also, for two concurrent editions of the Nigerian Universities Doctoral Thesis Awards Scheme (NUDTAS), the University of Ilorin showed unprecedented class by winning three of the 17 available awards in 2008/2009 and 2010/2011 respectively. For three consecutive years, 2018,

2019, and 2021 the University of Ilorin won the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board's (JAMB) National Tertiary Admissions Performance Merit Award.

All these achievements did not just come out of the blues for the University. They are well-deserved outcome of consistent drive for excellence by the University under successive Vice Chancellors.

The University has recorded many achievements in all spheres of its main mandates: teaching, research and community service. The welfare of the staff and students are top priorities; teaching and research are of high standards; infrastructural development is receiving the necessary attention, excellent town and gown relationship is being promoted, internally-generated revenue is being enhanced, fiscal discipline, transparency and accountability are getting the necessary fillip and the University is already making a determined move through its GgMAX Integrated Poultry Farm to contribute to the nation's Gross Domestic Product.

The commercial poultry farm, established in 2022 with a N600 million loan granted by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), will contribute substantially to the Federal Government's move to revive the poultry subsector to reduce importation and close the existing demand and supply gap of eggs and allied poultry products. It will also significantly contribute to the reduction of the unemployment rate in the country while also serving as a training ground for Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture students of the University.

As should be expected of a well-rated institution, the University is a veritable breeding ground for high level intellectual exports to sister institutions in the country. With no fewer than 10 high calibre personnel export to other universities as vice chancellors, registrars, bursars and librarians, within a space of five years under the tenure of Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, the University of Ilorin has become a fertile stable for head-hunters looking for best brains to poach either to pioneer the establishment of new universities or to assist in consolidating on the achievements of growing citadels or even to help in retrieving flailing institutions from a certain abyss of decline in fortunes into which they might have been pushed by past administrative inadequacies.

At the University of Ilorin, the process of request and issuance of academic transcripts to former students has been entirely digitised to promote efficient service delivery with the institutionalisation of online application for transcripts as against the old manual application.

In fulfilment of one leg of its tripodal mandates, the University of Ilorin is a veritable research hub where impactful, life-changing and national development-targeted researches are regularly carried out. Successive administrations of the University made the pursuit of excellence in research

endeavours one of their cardinal priorities. This commitment has handsomely paid off as many of the University's researchers have secured official patents for some of their research outputs.

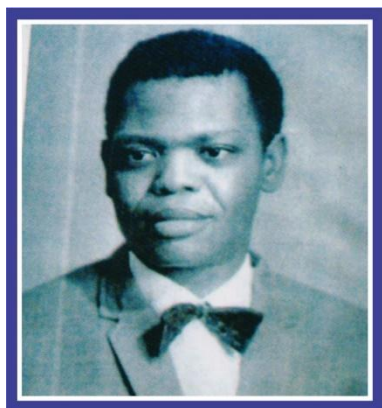
The culture of conscientious leadership and supportive followership is so contagious at the University of Ilorin that sundry staff unions have invariably become partners in progress with the management.

LIST OF PAST VICE CHANCELLORS



PRINCIPALS

1. Prof. T.N. Tamuno (September 1975 - November 1975)
2. Prof. O. O. Akinkugbe (December 1975 - September 1977)



Prof. T.N. Tamuno



Prof. O. O. Akinkugbe

VICE-CHANCELLORS

1. Prof. O.O. Akinkugbe (October 1977 - October 1978)
2. Prof. A.O. Adesola (1978 - 1981)
3. Prof. S.A. Toyé (1981- 1985)
4. Prof. A. Adeniyi (1985 - 1992)
5. Prof. J.O. Oyinloye (1992 - 1997)
6. Prof. S.O. AbdulRaheem (1997 - 2002)
7. Prof. S.O.O. Amali (2002 - 2007)
8. Prof. Is-Haq O. Oloyede (2007 - 2012)
9. Prof. AbdulGaniyu Ambali (2012 - 2017)
10. Prof. Sulyman Age Abdulkareem (2017 – 2022)



Prof. O.O. Akinkugbe



Prof. A.O. Adesola



Prof. S.A. Toye



Prof. A. Adeniyi



Prof. J.O. Oyinloye



Prof. S.O. AbdulRaheem



Prof. S.O.O. Amali



Prof. Is-Haq O. Oloyede



Prof. AbdulGaniyu Ambali



Prof. Sulyman Age Abdulkareem

LIST OF CHANCELLORS



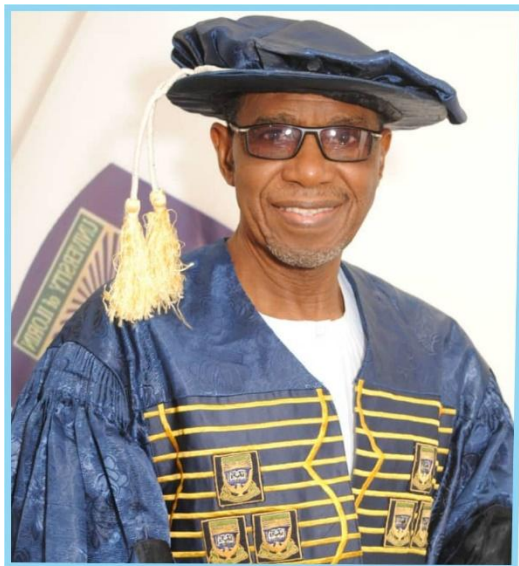
1. H.R.H. Umar Sulaiman (Emir of Bedde) (1978 – 1981)
2. H.R.H. K. S. A. Masa Ibi II (Aku Uka of Wukari) 1981 – 2000)
3. H.R.H. Justice Ambrose Allagoa (Amanyano of Nembe) (2000 – 2006)
4. H.R.H. Benjamin Ikenchuku (Keagborezi I, the Dein of Agbor Kingdom) (2006 – 2015)
5. H.R.H. Alhaji Abdulmumin Kabir Usman (The Emir of Katsina) (2015 -)



H.R.H. Alhaji Abdulmumin Kabir Usman
(The Emir of Katsina)

LIST OF PRO-CHANCELLORS, CHAIRMEN OF COUNCIL

1. H.R.H. Justice Ambrose Allagoa (1978 – 1982)
2. Mr F. O. Iheanacho (April 1983 – December 1983)
3. Alhaji A. R. Zayyad (1984 – 1986)
4. Prof. T. M. Yesufu (1986 – 1990)
5. Prof. C. O. Taiwo (1990 – 1993)
6. Alhaji Abdu Gusau (1993 – 1994)
7. Dr N. E. Nwauwa (Acting, 1994 – 1997)
8. Alhaji M. B. Kurfi (Wazirin Bauchi) (1997 – 1999)
9. Lt. Gen. Salihu Ibrahim (2000 – 2004)
10. Prof. Emeritus Ayo Banjo (2005 – 2007)
11. Alhaji Tukur Mani (Tarfakin Katsina) (2007 – 2012)
12. Alhaji Saka Saadu (Acting, 2012 – 2013)
13. H.R.H. Prof. Chukuka Okonjo (Obi of Ogwashi-Ukwu) (2013 – 2017)
14. Dr Abdullah Jibril Oyekan (2017 - 2021)
15. Mallam Abidu Yazidu (2021 --2025)



Mallam Abidu Yazidu

**DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLORS THAT WORKED WITH
PROF. ABDULKAREEM**

1. Prof. Nike Y. S. Ijaiya, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) (2014 – July 2018)
2. Prof. G. A. Olatunji, Deputy Vice Chancellor (RTI) (2014 – July 2018)
3. Prof. A. Y. Abdulkareem, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Management Services) (2017 – March 2018)
4. Prof. B. F. Sule, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Management Services) (2018 – April 2022)
5. Prof. Sylvia O. Malomo, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) (2018 – July 2022)
6. Prof. M. O. Buhari, Deputy Vice Chancellor (RTI) (2018 – July 2022)



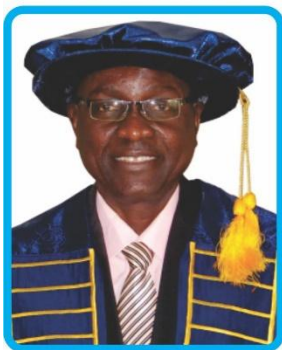
Prof. Nike Y. S. Ijaiya



Prof. G. A. Olatunji



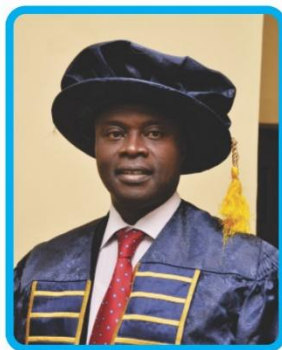
Prof. A. Y. Abdulkareem



Prof. B. F. Sule



Prof. Sylvia O. Malomo



Prof. M. O. Buhari

OTHER PRINCIPAL OFFICERS THAT WORKED WITH PROF. ABDULKAREEM

1. Mr E. D. Obafemi, Registrar (2013 – 2018)
2. Dr Fola M. Olowoleni, Registrar (2018 - 2023)
3. Mr Yusuf S. Abiodun, Bursar (2017 - 2018)
4. Mr H. O. Sonde, Bursar (2018 – 2023)
5. Prof. Abdulwahab O. Issa, University Librarian (2017 – 2022)



Mr E. D. Obafemi



Dr Fola M. Olowoleni



Mr Yusuf S. Abiodun



Mr H. O. Sonde



Prof. Abdulwahab O. Issa

Chapter 1

ROAD TO THE TOP



Who is Professor Abdulkareem?

The 10th Vice-Chancellor (11th Chief Executive) of the University of Ilorin, Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, was born on 21st January 1954 at Oro town, Irepodun Local Government area of Kwara State. He attended Government Secondary School, Ilorin, on Kwara State Government Scholarship, for both his secondary school education and the Higher School Certificate (HSC) from 1968 to 1974.

Young Abdulkareem later got the Federal Government Scholarship to study Chemical Engineering at the University of Detroit, Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A. between 1975 and 1980. At the end of the course, he came out in flying colours and was awarded the MChE, BChE (Chemical Engineering) specialising in Heterogeneous Catalysis/Reaction Engineering.

From 1985 to 1988, this high-flying intellectual was awarded the United States of America National Science Foundation Fellowship for his PhD programme in Chemical Engineering at the University of Louisville, USA. He also completed his PhD in flying colours and obtained the Engineer-In-Training Certificate of the State of Minnesota, USA in 1991. He became a Registered Engineer of the Nigerian Society of Engineers in 2002 and got COREN certification in 2004.

Academic Career

Prof. Abdulkareem, who joined the services of the University of Ilorin in 1996 and became Professor in 2005, was a Research Engineer/Assistant Professor (R&D) at the King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals, Research Institute, Saudi Arabia, between 1992 and 1994; Senior Development Engineer (R&D) at 3M Company, St Paul, Minnesota, USA (1988 – 1992); Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Louisville, Kentucky, USA (1985 – 1988); Lecturer, Detroit Board of Education, Detroit, Michigan, USA (August 1984 to August 1985); and Industrial Engineer, the Nigerian Steel Development Company, Ajaokuta (February 1983 – March 1984).

A consummate researcher and thorough-bred academic, he has a lot of inventions and has many Patents to his credit. These include:

- * Kareem, S. A., Unilor Oil Sorbing Wafers, Federal Republic of Nigeria, RP 16005 (2005);
- * Kareem, S. A. Unilor Lubricating Grease, Federal Republic of Nigeria, RP16006 (2005)
- * Kareem, S. A., Unilor Candle, Federal Republic of Nigeria RP16007 (2005)
- * Abdulkareem, S. A. and Amoloye, T. O. (2013). Catalytic Conversion of Low Density Polyethylene (Discarded Pure Water Sachet) to Solid, Liquid and Gaseous Hydrocarbon Fuels, NG/P/2010/332
- * Abdulkareem, S. A. and Abdulaziz N. A. (2013), Catalytic Conversion of High Density Polyethylene (Discarded Yoghurt Bottles) To Solid, Liquid and Gaseous Hydrocarbon Fuels NG/P/2010/333
- * Ajiboye, A. T., Adedokun, G. A., Adewuyi, O, A., Abdulkareem, S. A., Yusuf, A. O. and *Mahmoud, H. O., (2016), Unilorin Automobile Speed Limiter, Developed for NUC and AVCNU Research Challenge.

With over 80 publications in highly-rated journals and 10 patented works, Prof. Abdulkareem has attended and presented incisive papers at 75 major conferences/workshops both locally and internationally.

A versatile academic, the Vice-Chancellor has many professional attainments to his credit in the course of his career. He was Editor, ***Science & Humanities Journal***, University of Ilorin in 2004; Technical Reviewer, ***Research Journal of Science***, University of Maiduguri in 2008; Associate Editor, ***Nigerian Journal of Technological Development***, University of Ilorin in 2009; External Examiner (PG ChE Department), Ladoke Akintola

University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomoso, between 2010 and 2014; External Examiner, Fountain University, Osogbo (2014); External Assessor, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (ChE Doctoral Candidates), 2014 – 2016); External Assessor, Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University, Sokoto (Petroleum Chemistry Professorial Candidates (2014 – 2016); External Assessor, LAUTECH, Ogbomoso (Chemical Engineering Professorial Candidates); External Assessor/Examiner, Federal University of Technology, Minna (Chemical Engineering Professorial and Postgraduate Candidates; External Assessor, Modibo Adama University of Technology, Yola (Chemical Engineering Professorial Candidates); External Assessor, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa (Postgraduate Chemical Engineering Candidates); External Examiner, Kwara State University, Malete (Industrial Chemistry Department).

Prof. Abdulkareem, who delivered his Inaugural Lecture, entitled ***“Making Stuffs, Hot Stuffs: The Power of Mind over Matter”*** at the University of Ilorin in 2007, is a winner of a number of Honours and Distinctions and is a Member of several Professional Societies. These include: Outstanding Researcher Award Winner – 1st Nigerian Universities Research Exhibition (NURESDEF) Organised by the NUC, 2004; 3M Research Laboratory Circle of Excellence Award Winner, 1990 – 1992; Graduate School Dean’s Academic Citation Winner, University of Louisville, Kentucky, USA, 1988; International Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society, 1988; and the American Golden Key National Honour Society, 1986.

He is a Member of the American Chemical Society, 1978; Member of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, 1978; Member of Tri-State Catalysis Club (Kentucky), USA, 1985; Member of the Scientific Research Society, USA, 1986; Member of the American Society of Plastic Engineers, 1988; Member of the Chemical Society of Nigeria, 2000; Member of the Nigerian Society of Engineers, 2002; Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Administrators and Researchers of Nigeria, 2013; Fellow, The Institute of Corporate Administrators of Nigeria, 2014; Outstanding Education Service Merit Award by National Association of Nigerian Students, 2014; and Awardee, Distinguished Personality Award of Excellence for Contributions to Research and Human Capital Development by the International Science, Technology, Education, Arts, Management and Social Science Research Nexus, Unilorin, Ilorin, 2016; Fellow, Nigerian Society of Chemical Engineers, 2019; Fellow, Materials Science and Technology Society of Nigeria, 2020.

Professor Abdulkareem has held many important administrative positions in the University, among which are: Director, SIWES (2000 – 2008); Member, ASUU Coordinating Committee (2001 – 2010); Member, University Standing Committee on Linkages, Unilorin (2003 – 2010);

Member, ASUU Representative Committee, Unilorin (2002 – 2010); Chairman, Unilorin Muslim Community (2005 – 2008); Head, University Admissions Unit (2006 – 2009); Dean, Student Affairs (2008 – 2010); Member, University of Ilorin Steering Committee on the West African Universities Games (WAUG 2011) (2008 – 2011); Chairman, Unilorin Research and Development Committee (2008 -2010); Sourced VC candidate for ABU, Zaria Vice Chancellorship vacancy (April 2015); Project Coordinator, Unilorin Drone Team for the 31st Convocation Ceremonies/40th Anniversary (September 2015); BOT Member, Cyber Security Experts Association of Nigeria (2015 to 2017); Chairman, Unilorin Committee for the 6th Edition of the Nigerian Universities Research and Development Fair held in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, (February 2016); Chairman, Unilorin Panel on Evaluation of Committee of Deans of Engineering & Technology of Nigeria organised Students Project Exhibition – University of Abuja (May 2016); Member, Management Review Committee of Global Engagement of Unilorin (May 2016 to October 2017); and Director, Laboratory-To-Product (LABTOP) Centre (September 2015 to October 2017).

From June 2010 to June 2015, Professor Abdulkareem was Vice Chancellor of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

Community Service

A service-oriented patriot, Professor Abdulkareem has also made his impact positively felt in a number of services to the community. He is the Inventor and Initiator, Non-patented Sachet Water Business Establishment in Nigeria, a business initiative that is worth over N7 billion daily, according to NAFDAC (1995); Team Leader, Durable Hydrophilic Web Formation – 3M Company, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA (1991); Lead Engineer, Methanol to Olefin Catalytic Project, King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1993 – 1994); Lead Engineer, Alpha Olefins Oligomerisation Project, \$400 million scale-up project co-sponsored by SABIC and KFUPM, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1993 -1994); Co-opted Member, Committee on the Establishment of Kwara State University by the Kwara State Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2007); and Facilitator, Unilorin Campus Mini-Bus Services in Conjunction with the Students' Union (2008/2009 Session).

He is the current Chairman, Committee of Vice Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (CVCNU).

The erudite scholar and astute administrator is married to Hajia Falilat Abdulkareem and they have six children.

Appointment as UNILORIN Vice Chancellor

With the impending expiration of the tenure of the 9th Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. AbdulGaniyu Ambali, and the subsequent advertisement of the vacancy in April 2017, the multiple award-winning Professor of Chemical Engineering put in his application. After a rigorous interview by the University Council/Senate Selection Board, headed by Dr Abdullah Jibril Oyekan, the then Council Chairman, Prof. Abdulkareem was adjudged the most suitable and he was recommended for appointment. The University Council, thereafter, met on August 28, 2017, and ratified the Selection Board's recommendation.

Announcing the appointment of Professor Abdulkareem as the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, the then Council Chairman, Dr Oyekan, said, "At its meeting on Monday, August 28, 2017, the Council, in accordance with the University Act and the provisions of the Universities (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Act 2003, considered the recommendation of the Selection Board and I am happy to announce that the Council approved the appointment of Prof. Sulyman Age Abdulkareem as the 10th VC of the University of Ilorin".

"The appointment is to take effect from 16th October, 2017", the Council Chairman pointed out.

In a brief chat with *Unilorin Bulletin* shortly after his appointment, Prof. Abdulkareem, whose area of specialisation is Heterogeneous Catalysis/Reaction Engineering, pledged to do his best to raise the banner of the Better by far University even higher.

The Vice Chancellor-designate said, "I thank almighty Allah for the grace of being appointed. I know that everybody that entered the race was confident and competent also. But in the end only one person can emerge and I thank God I was the one".

Excitement all over

With the announcement of Professor Abdulkareem as the new Vice Chancellor came a torrent of congratulatory messages from both within and outside the University.

In their separate reactions, leaders of the various workers' unions in the University – the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), the National Association of Academic Technologists (NAAT), and the Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU) –

commended the decision of the University's Governing Council and pledged their support for the Vice Chancellor-designate.

The then Chairman of Unilorin ASUU, Dr Usman Adebimpe Raheem, said, "We give glory to God for a successful process. We also congratulate the Chairman of Council, Dr Jubril Oyekan on a job well done. The selection is, to the best of our opinion, a well-deserved one and there are lots of hopes and expectations from the Vice Chancellor-designate. We continue to pray God to be with him and lead him. We have no objection as academic staff to the selection of our member and he has a track record of being a consistently disciplined person, and we will expect that he brings this to bear on the administration of the University."

In the same vein, the then SSANU Chairman, Mr Mohammed Jimoh Akanbi, described Prof. Abdulkareem's selection as a "welcome development." He said, "We thank God for the smooth transition; there is no chaos, no problem and we pray for him for a successful tenure. As I know him, he is very humble and intelligent and I believe that he is going to pilot the affairs of the University well for the next five years."

On his part, the NAAT Chairman, Mr Awolola Olufemi Paul, said, "The announcement came to us as a very joyful piece of news. We are happy for his being chosen as a Vice Chancellor; his track record is also excellent. As technologists, we are very happy and we align with him because we know that with him we can move forward and we know he is capable of moving the University forward. And as a Union, we know we are going to give him the full support to be able to carry out his activities to the fullest and we will always pray for him that he will be able to take this University to greater heights. So, I can assure the University community that my own Union is going to give him the full support that he needs to carry out his activities on the campus."

The Chairman of NASU, Comrade Zubairu H. Ibrahim, also said, "We were happy when it was announced and we pray that God should give him the optimum wisdom to direct the affairs of this University. While praying for him, we urge him to take the welfare of staff as one of his cardinal priorities so that we can jointly move the University to a greater height."

Also, in his congratulatory message, the then Governor of Kwara State, Dr Abdulfattah Ahmed, described Professor Abdulkareem as "a tested administrator and academic of high repute, whose appointment will not only sustain the successes of his predecessors but record new milestones in the Better by Far University".

In the congratulatory message signed on his behalf by his Chief Press Secretary, Alhaji Abdulwahab Oba, the erstwhile Governor assured the University of his administration's support and cooperation, especially in the

areas of human capital development and research on agricultural practice and sustainable energy.

The Igbomina-Ekiti Muslims Forum (IEMF) also hailed the appointment of Prof. Abdulkareem as the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin. The Forum's Chairman, Alhaji Abdulazeez Olawuyi, led members of the Forum on a congratulatory visit to the Vice Chancellor in his office and beseeched Allah to guard and guide Prof. Abdulkareem to succeed in his new position.

Chapter 2

A FOCUSED VISION AND AN AMBITIOUS MISSION



Following his selection as the 10th Vice Chancellor, Professor Sulyman Abdulkareem did not waste time in articulating his agenda for the University of Ilorin in the next five years. In the following culled texts of his maiden addresses to the University Congregation, the University Senate, and his first press interview, he set an ambitious agenda for himself:

(1) LET’S SEIZE THIS MOMENT TOGETHER TO WIDEN THE FRONTIERS

Prof. Abdulkareem’s address to the first Congregation of the University of Ilorin he chaired on October 25, 2017

It is with a great sense of humility and gratitude to the Almighty God that I address this Congregation today as the 10th Vice Chancellor of this great University. I do not see this address as just an ordinary ritual that a new Vice Chancellor must observe. Rather, I see it as a veritable platform for making an inviolable pledge with the distinguished members of this University Community – the pledge of a newer and greater course we will have to run together; the pledge that will drive our shared and common goal of strengthening the tempo of our progress to a greater height.

The course of the journey and desired destination were set by the visionary founding fathers of this University about five decades ago. Although the captains of the ship on which the University is making its voyage to greatness have interchanged regularly and peacefully at different points in time, the spirit that guides and illuminates the course of the journey

has been enduring. This is the spirit of self-sacrifice. It is the spirit of extraordinary commitment to the larger purpose and common goal. It is the spirit of service that makes a good number of us to find meaning in the vision of this University. It is the spirit that makes a good number of us to find meaning in a purpose that we see as being greater than our personal gains, ambitions and sentiments. This is the spirit that has driven us in our journey since 1975.

This moment requires that we WIDEN our frontiers. It requires that we go higher. It requires that we continue the journey with a newer and better history. Greatness, which is our destination, is not given; it can only be earned. To earn the desired greatness, we must continue our sturdy sail of progress, but on a more reinvigorated and redirected course. This is the moment we all need to reaffirm our enduring spirit that has been driving us with greater vigour and greater sense of duty. This is the moment when we need to be much more seriously and sincerely faithful to the ideals of our mission and vision. The moment demands that we should act boldly and swiftly in order to refreshen our journey to greatness and to strengthen our foundation for a far, far better Unilorin.

As I will be driving you in the next five years on our journey, my actions will be tailored towards achieving some specific objectives that will move our University towards the destination of greatness our founding fathers desired. It is my intention to WIDEN the frontiers of this University before the end of my five-year tenure. In so doing, I pledge to emphasise the following:

Welfare of the Staff: This moment that we are made for demands that we revive a more robust regime of motivations for all staff that have been labouring and sacrificing for the achievement of our desired greatness. Therefore, I intend to make everybody happy within the possibility and limit of the resources available to me. I will reward the efforts and devotion of every single staff – senior or junior, academic or non-academic, within the governing statutes. As a way of motivating staff, I have advised the management of our internal communication organs, Unilorin Bulletin and Unilorin FM Radio, to give more attention in their dissemination of information and correlation of events to the celebration of the unique contributions of all deserving staff that exhibit exemplary dedication to our course of greatness, rather than superfluously focusing on the activities and routines of the management. This, to me, is a least form of motivations that we should not be denied if we deserve it. If we are to seize this moment together, we must enjoy it together.

In a similar manner, awards of TETFund grants would be made very transparent to make sure that only deserving staff that have shown exemplary

commitment to excellence and growth of the University get the grants. I want to repeat it, if we are to seize this moment together, we must enjoy it together. We will not only ask of you what you can do for the greater good of this University, we will also persistently ask ourselves what the University can do for your own good as well. As we ask for a higher standard of dedication of your life to the greater purpose of moving the University higher in all ramifications, we should compensate you with the same standard of deserving rewards to motivate you and develop you through training and re-training for the larger goal. If we are to seize this moment together, we must enjoy it together.

Infrastructural Development: There is no doubt that my predecessors, particularly the immediate past Ambali administration, had, with a great sense of purposefulness, significantly pursued our mission of providing world-class environment for learning, research and community service. His achievements in infrastructural development are astonishing, impressive and monumental. There is no doubt that he has boldly left his indelible footprints on the 'rock of age', having purposefully transformed our University into a world-class campus. It is my desire to sustain the tempo of the physical and infrastructural development in order to push it in my own way to attaining the world's best environment for learning, research and community service.

Discipline: With all sense of frankness, I must state that this moment demands from us a much more disciplined attitude to work and to our mandates in general. Our integrity, dutifulness, commitment and dedication must be voluntarily renewed and positively upgraded. We need to reform some bad habits that are consciously or unconsciously becoming endemic, and which are strangling our progression in our journey to the desired land. This moment requires that we have a greater sense of responsibility and dutifulness, recognising that we have a duty of promoting the glory of the University. This moment requires that we have a revival of absolute discipline, hard work and self-sacrifice. It is my desire to lead us in this renaissance by examples. Our enduring conviction strengthened by leadership examples should motivate and propel this rebirth. It should not be compelled; it should be learnt and adopted willingly for the larger purpose that has been driving our journey. Let us, therefore, renew our attitudes, ethos, resolve and dedication to widen our frontiers and move the University to loftier heights. Let us find pride in the work we do. Let us commit ourselves to our work in order to get deserving job satisfaction and self-fulfilment. Let me state it clearly that as this tenure will place premium on rewarding deserving staff, it will not hesitate to frown at and reprimand deserving staff. Let us have a new

era of greater responsibility. Let us have a new age of greater discipline, hard work and self-sacrifice. Let us recognise that we have a duty to ourselves and to our University. If we do our work conscientiously by playing no/shunning truancy, laziness, lateness and derelictions, “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself” and not any leader or boss. Let us rekindle our enduring spirit of selfless service to resolutely travel on the course of making our University better in all ramifications.

Excellence: The vision of our University is to become an international centre of excellence. This moment demands that we pursue this vision more vigorously to achieve greater excellence in our mandates, particularly in teaching and research. It is in our agenda to fundamentally drive this University on a course of becoming more reputable for research outputs that can change the world. This is also the dream of the Chairman of our Council who had prodded us to aim at producing a Nobel Laureate within a short time. This, to me, is achievable if we have a renewed energy, devotion, focus, attitudes and ethos that can rekindle our unique Unilorin spirit for attaining greater heights. Let our Unilorin spirit entail the spirit of “we can” because as Franklin Roosevelt said, “The only limit in our realisation of tomorrow will be our doubt of today”.

We should aspire to greater excellence in our teaching by modifying our teaching to be student-centered, student-oriented and character moulding. There is also the need to discourage all forms of assaults and exploitation of students. Our University is a brand for discipline and probity in the Nigerian University System. This should be sustained through exemplary leadership, expected of us all. In achieving excellence in our teaching, we shall make frantic efforts to rationalise our programmes in a way that adheres strictly to the principle of comparative advantage. This objective will be pursued without threatening or strangulating the extant programmes that have been giving us glory. It is our desire to attract many more international students. I believe we can achieve this if we rejuvenate our Centre for International Education, and if we pursue the goal of attaining excellence in some specific areas of human endeavour that tally with global needs and problems.

At this juncture, let me stress the fact that we are not unmindful of the role of workable and reliable internet services in achieving excellence that is recognised by enviable ranking. To this end, efforts will be made to strengthen the internet services on our campus. Lecturers and students who pay tokens for the services should not be short-changed in any way and for any reason. The current administration will do all that is necessary in close alliance with COMSIT to audit and harvest the problems militating against optimal internet services and optimal functioning of our portal. With

concerted efforts in this direction, lasting solution to the seemingly perennial internet service delivery problem should be at hand.

In achieving all these goals, we cannot definitely depend solely on government subventions, whose continuity is even uncertain. Indeed, the hallmark of a good university is its ability to fund its mandates from what it generates. My aspiration is to enhance our resolve to be one of those good internationally recognised universities that can maximize its potentials and resources to enhance its impact on the world. One thing that readily comes to my mind is how to generate funds from our massive land endowment. This University has nothing less than 15,000 hectares of land mass, the largest in Nigeria, and perhaps on the continent of Africa. I envision that we can leverage on this endowment to uplift the image and glory of our University. I put a challenge to our Faculties of Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine, Engineering and Technology in this regard.

There are many other potential avenues and ventures from which we can make a lot of money to make us self-sufficient. I believe, for example, that our Zoo, as small as it is, can generate substantial amount of funds for us. We will, therefore, rehabilitate it and develop it to an international standard that will not only give us greater glory but also yield substantial revenue for the University.

Let me restate that this moment is made for all of us and we should seize it together for the greater purpose of elevating our University. On my part, I will be fair, just, firm, conscientious, selfless, transparent and innovative. In pursuing and actualising these ideals, I might definitely get some censures. But I will take the censures as long as the ideals will lead us to eternal peace and glory. I will take the censures as the tax I will have to pay to lead us to the promised land. As Simon Johnson said, "Life cannot subsist in society but by reciprocal concessions". Obama also once said that "democracy requires compromise even when you are 100% right". Where and when there is a need for compromise and concession, let us avail ourselves the opportunity with the spirit of service that drives us and for the greater purpose of retaining us at the top. The stability of this University remains sacrosanct and non-negotiable. Let me borrow from Roosevelt to inspire you that "We must move as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice for the good of a common discipline because without such discipline, no progress can be made, no leadership becomes effective". As Kennedy also said, "Let's not labour on those problems which divide us, let us explore what problems unite us".

It is my belief that our prudent use of power for the benefit of our larger purpose, justness of our cause, impression of my leadership examples, and steadfastness of my humility and restraint, will motivate us on this journey to greatness. Let us seize this moment together. Since I don't have

answers to all problems, I will want to appeal to you all with Benjamin Affleck's saying that "Judge me by how good my good ideas are, not by how bad my bad ideas are". Like I said in my address at a forum that I was chosen by the Almighty to navigate the ship through the course of our journey to greatness at this moment does not mean I am the best among you. This is why my first appeal to you all is that we should continue to inhabit this spirit of togetherness and commitment to the larger goal, which has indeed assisted successive captains of our ship to be successful and effective. Like Obama said in his second inaugural address, "We are made for this moment, and we will seize it - so long we seize it together".

Thank you for your attention.

(2.) YOUR SUPPORT IS OUR VICTORY

Professor Abdulkareem's address to the First Senate of the University of Ilorin he presided on

Distinguished Senators, it is with great pleasure and appreciation I address you today for the first time as the 10th Vice Chancellor of our great University. Let me state from the outset that I am humble to recognize that my appointment as the Vice-Chancellor by the University Council is not in the least a result of any special ability that I have over anyone of you, the distinguished Senators or over any of the eminent members of our community that contested for the position with me. Rather, I consider my appointment as an opportunity that God has destined to come to me. As Napoleon Bonaparte said, "ability is of little count without opportunity". It is in the light of this that I consider this inaugural speech as a plea for your support.

University of Ilorin has an uncommon spirit which is one of the key factors that distinguish the University from others – and that is the spirit of commitment to the stability and greatness of the University. It is the spirit that extraordinarily drives us all to the larger purpose and common good of the University with a great sense of self-sacrifice. And for discerning minds that had reflected on what makes our University thick, they would have understood that it is the extraordinary drive for the common good and larger purpose that had assisted successive leaderships of this University to be successful and effective.

I do not want to take the Unilorin spirit for granted. This is why I will want to essentially appeal to you, as President Roosevelt did in 1933 in the First Inaugural Address that has been driving American society till date, that "Let the larger purposes bind us us all as a sacred obligation with a unity of duty". Our common interest is to sustain the tempo of the progress of the University to the zenith of recognition and excellence. Let us, therefore, re-

commit and re-energise ourselves, with stronger sense of sacrifice, to the common goal. Your support is indeed essential for our common victory. As J.F. Kennedy also said in his Inaugural Speech when he became the US President, “In your hand, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course”.

I need then to share my mind as to what should be our course for the next five years that I will be driving this great University. As a long-standing and active member of this University community, I am not oblivious of the direction of progress of this University. Equally, I have been envisioning the better and greater course and destination the University could aspire to reach. Our founding fathers were genuinely farsighted and purposeful in their design of our vision and mission statement. A good university cannot stand for anything lesser than the aspirations in our lofty vision and mission statement. Successive leaderships of this University have been interpreting and implementing the spirit and letters of our statement of goal in different but equally remarkable ways. And this is why I must appreciate all my predecessors for laying solid foundation on which I can build and which I must endeavour to improve.

Operating within the framework of the University vision, mission as well as the foundation laid by all my predecessors, my dream is to enhance the status and ranking of our University as an international centre of excellence for learning, research, probity and service to humanity. There is no doubt that we have attained the vision of becoming an international centre of excellence for learning, research and community service, but it is my personal conviction that we can improve our status and ranking in this regard as urgently as possible.

The main fulcrum and focus of a good university is research, and in the light of this, I will want to fundamentally drive this University on a course of becoming more reputable for research outputs that can change the world. I believe this is also the dream of the Chairman of our Council who had prodded us to aim at producing a Nobel Laureate within a short time. This, to me, is achievable if we have a renewed energy, devotion, faith, attitudes and ethos that can rekindle our unique Unilorin spirit for attaining greater height. Let our Unilorin spirit entail the spirit of “we can” because as Franklin Roosevelt again said, “The only limit in our realisation of tomorrow will be our doubt of today”.

In order to remove all forms of limitation in our realisation of our goal of becoming internationally-recognised centre of excellence that produce impactful research outputs, I intend to pursue the following specific framework of actions and strategies:

- Re-orientation of staff and students' attitudes towards commitment and excellence;
- Strengthening of our reward system and general welfare policies;
- Enhancing academic freedom;
- Re-commitment to staff training;
- Expanding opportunities for research funding from within and outside, particularly from robust collaboration with the corporate bodies and international research funding agencies;
- Inculcating greater academic integrity;
- Motivation of greater disciplines that can make our leadership and stewardship very effective; and
- Recruitment process reinvigoration and re-focusing for attracting the best minds that can produce remarkable research outputs that will give us the desired status of center of excellence.

In an attempt to provide world-class environment for learning, research and community service, I felt the need to improve on our Internally-Generated Revenues. Presently, we are generating far less than what the Government expects from us. To provide world-class environment for learning, research and community service, we cannot solely rely on Government subventions whose continuity is even uncertain. Indeed, the hallmark of a good university is its ability to fund its mandates from what it generates. My aspiration is to enhance our resolve to be one of those good internationally recognised universities that can maximise its potentials and resources to enhance its impact on the world. One thing that enthusiastically comes to my mind when I think of how to generate funds is the use of our land. We are endowed with not less than 15000 hectares of land mass, the largest any University in Nigeria has. I envision that we can leverage on this endowment to uplift the image and glory of our University. I put a challenge to our Faculties of Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine and Engineering and Technology in this regard.

There are still other thousand ways of making our University a vibrant university that is absolutely self-reliant, which, I think, are lurked inside each and every one of us, and which I will like you to willingly release to assist the leadership in achieving our common goal.

Of course, it is one of my intentions and goals to sustain the enviable infrastructural development of the University, which has been one of the priorities of successive leaderships of this great University. I know this can be achieved with the prudent management of the various intervention funds, but also with the doggedness for expanding our revenue base.

Our students are our utmost priority and golden treasure. Without them, we cannot subsist. This is why it is my intention to rejuvenate their prestige. Student's welfare and academic matters will be prominently made a top priority. There will then be a need to modify our teaching to be student-centered, student-oriented and character moulding. There is also the need to discourage all forms of assaults and exploitation on students. Our University has been a beacon in Nigerian University System for discipline and probity. This will be sustained through exemplary leadership, expected of us all.

Overall, the continued stability of this University is sacrosanct. We have enjoyed it for the past 17 years, and it has given us an image that draws the largest number of admission seekers within and outside our country to us. It is one of the identities that make us different and better than the others in Nigeria. I will, therefore, oblige to negotiate anything but the continuous stability of this great University will remain non-negotiable.

I have no doubt that you will agree with me, from the aforementioned, that we have a lot to do together. I want to repeat that the success or failure of our course rests on all of us. On my own part, I will not fail in my responsibilities, and I will open my doors and ears for your pieces of genuine advice. I will not deceive myself by thinking that I know the answers to all problems. "He that is taught only by himself has a fool for a monster" as Ben Johnson rightly said. In this hallow chamber, let us be free to express our mind for the genuine purpose of generating consensuses that will lead us to our desired destination. You can be sure that I will always examine what is said rather than he who says it. I do not believe in bigotry and I will not promote it because as Edward Chapon said "bigotry dwarfs the soul by shutting out the truth".

"Authority without wisdom is like a heavy axe without an edge, fitter to bruise than polish" (Anne Bradstreet), and like Benjamin Disraeli, I had long known that there is no wisdom like frankness. What you should all expect from me is nothing but frankness, righteousness and firmness. My firmness, of course, will always be in the right way, and will always be strengthened by my conscience, which I believe, in line with J.F. Kennedy's philosophy, will be my final reward as history will be the final judge of my deeds.

I also want to assure you that I will drive us all with the principles of justice, fairness, consideration and co-operation because I believe these are the principles that can lead us to eternal peace and existential glory.

In our operation and journey together, there will be dissents and disagreements, but such dissents and disagreements should not lead us to anarchy. Let me remind you that we are on this bus together and we cannot afford to let it crash. We should all be involved genuinely in the Unilorin Project, even if there is a need to beg anyone for such genuine commitment to the larger goal of making the Project to work and succeed for us all.

When there is a need to make compromises, concessions and negotiations, let us make it with genuine purpose for common good that binds us together. For me, taking J.F. Kennedy again as a model, “I will never fear to negotiate, but I will not negotiate out of fear”. We all belong to Unilorin Team that is committed to Unilorin Project, which must not fail. Our compromises, concessions and negotiations should emanate from our resolve to make success of Unilorin Project and should not be a dictate from outside or due to malice.

My leadership will be exemplary, honest, disciplined, transformational, prudent, embracing and God fearing. In the execution of every policy, I will sacrifice self-interest for collective interest in forging new frontiers for our University. Together, we can make it. Together, let us rejoice in the confidence that Unilorin remains on top for ever. Again, your collective support is our collective victory.

Thank you for your attention.



(3.) MY VISION, MY MISSION

In his maiden press interview, the new Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, pledged that ‘equity’ will be his watchword as he strives to move the University forward

Q: Congratulations, sir, on your well-deserved appointment as the 10th Vice Chancellor of the Better by Far University. We wish you God’s

guidance in steering the ship of the University. Sir, what is your agenda for Unilorin?

A: My agenda is to see the foundation, understand the foundation laid by my predecessors and try as much as possible to build on it to move the University ahead.

Q: *Can you expatiate on this mission, sir?*

A: Well, apart from some other problems the University may be facing, the one that is of utmost concern to me is that of trying to raise more Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) as stipulated by the National Universities Commission (NUC). We are to be raising 30% of the internal revenue annually but right now we are making between 15% and 18%. So, I am hoping that by creating more avenues for raising our IGR, we can get staff and students more involved and together we can move the University forward.

Another area of concern is research. We have to give people the needed equipment, tools, and machineries to get their work done properly, so that we can feature prominently in international, national and even local journals.

Q- *Talking of research sir, you are currently the Director, Unilorin Laboratory-to-Product Centre (LABTOP), which we understand is already making waves in terms of getting some of the University's research endeavours to the industry. As the Director now moving to the position of the Vice Chancellor, we know it will be one of your priority areas. Sir, how do you intend to enhance the University's research endeavours so that it will gain more national prominence?*

A: The Centre is supposed to be a warehouse for researches going on in the University. As I have said, my focus will be on research generally across board. You see, before I assumed duty as LBTOP Director two years ago, there were four or five patents on ground. Today, we have over 21; In fact, I have some on my table to be sent to Abuja. So, the re-awakening that is needed has already started. My prayer is that by enabling all researchers to be able to do their works, we would have more of these innovative and first class researches that would give us more patents for this University.

The Centre I am leaving, I don't intend to ignore it but more so, what I will want is that people, after I am replaced with another director, will know where to go when they have done a good work to get it patented.

Q- Indeed, sir, these two major areas of focus are worth pursuing. This issue of facing IGR, what are the specific things you intend to put in place to raise it above the present percentage to the NUC specification of 30%?

A: Let me start by saying that what is within me is probably minute compared to what is within all of us and my prayer is that we all work together to identify areas where more revenue can be raised. But let me point to one. We have 15,000 hectares of land. According to the latest information at my disposal we are using less than 1,000 hectares of land and at a recent meeting I remember telling my colleagues that it is a shame that somebody must come from Nepal to come and use the land that we could have been using that is lying fallow to raise enough profit for his own pocket or for his own Bank. We, here, have been looking at the same land for how many years now. But the issue is that it is never late when you are doing the right thing. What I want us to realise is that we must challenge our Faculties of Agriculture and Engineering and Technology. You need to know that those that are into mechanized farming on a very large scale do not need to have degree but they have a passion for farming. They know what to do and they are doing it right. My prayer is that what is needed is for these two Faculties and other interested stakeholders to do enough agriculture business on campus for us to make waves, make money and key in our students. I think that we can put that to effect and that is the starting point.

Another one that is ready and we should take advantage of is our water business. We are bottling water and sacheting water. Do you realize that for every truck we produce, four other trucks come from town to supply our daily need of water on campus? Why can't we expand our water business such that no water is brought from outside the University to meet our demand inside? if we do that we are bound to make more money. Like I said, I am sure that there very more intelligent and talented people on campus. I am going to seek and pray for and hope to get their ideas to put to work.

Let me say it here that this is Team Unilorin and we are all members and we must all play our role to take this University to glorious heights.

Q: Thank you sir. Talking on research, sir with your well-known passion for research and the ambition of the University Council Chairman to raise Nobel laureates for the University, do you think this is possible?

A: It is possible but where I am going to begin is in the attitude. The bigger a challenge is and the more you are willing to solve that challenge the richer and more glorious you are; when you are able to solve that challenge. Wherever we are now, I am hoping that when people are sensitized to the yearning of the University Governing Council they will realize that we have

to go beyond ordinary research to a research that can solve problems. Which one will bring fame? Nobody knows; but what I know or want is that every research we go for or have should be applied towards solving a particular problem. If we have a bigger one, we are going to know that we have landed a big one and if the whole world sees it and they will take it as being big and that is where glory will come from. I have no doubt that we have the talents needed on ground. What it will take is to nourish, encourage and sensitize these people to come out. They come with challenges especially when they are empowered and encouraged to make their work done. There is a limit to what people here can do.

Again I consider myself lucky. I have between five and seven patents now for the University but the issue is that I know that there are more talented people than me all they need to do is to be challenged and once they are challenged they would work conscientiously. Even when I am not in the University my brain is working. So, I expect people to know that solving problem is to get married to the problem and not disengaging until you have a solution. That spirit must be developed in all of us. It is not easy but I am nourishing at least giving at least one academic lecture. How long it will take, I don't know, two, three weeks or so. But it will be a general knowledge lecture, in other words investigation, patenting etc and everyone on campus can benefit including non-academic staff. Because when you have a good idea, carrying it to a practicable or doable stage involves your weaving a few things into that idea that is actionable and can bring more money for the University. We must all be sensitized to go about occupying our minds with trying to lead the University by solving problems

Q: On patented products. Sir, are you not worried that most of these things are rusting on the shelves?

A: No, they are not rusting. In fact, one of my patents is being industrialized in the State of Osun, Nigeria. That is the one that takes pure water sachet and turns it into ***Holowsoviet*** material, a material that selectively takes oil and leaves water intact. Anytime that there is oil spillage that is the remedy. A company that is working with the University of Ilorin is producing that in Osu, State of Osun. It is a multi-billion-naira company just commissioned few weeks ago. It has just started and as I have said none of these inventions is rusting on the shelf.

Let me say this that the entrepreneur something is not what an inventor can control. You must carry your work to a stage where if somebody has money in his pocket or is willing to bank his money on something profitable, he should find a ready product waiting on your shelf. It is not

rusting it is just that we are waiting for the right man and who has the right interest and enough money to do the financing.

The company in the state of Osun wants to be involved in the Ogoni land cleanup and that is why he is partnering with us because he sees that it is a good product to be involved and he is financing it. Some Nigerians who also see the need for involvement are also interested. The important thing here is that before you put your product on the shelf, for God's sake let it be that if somebody has the money to go forward let it have the answers there so that the person can go into business and that is what is happening in the State of Osun right now.

I thank God that the *Anti-Oil spillage research work* to cleanup Ogoni land has got a life of its own now but again even in abroad you must make a march between an invention or a solution you have proffered and someone either willing or interested in financing it. I mean not only balancing the equation but you have to march the equation. Let me give an example, when a minister died almost two years ago in a road accident, the FRSC said they were looking for somebody to device a speed limiter that will prevent death on our roads due to excessive speed. The Vice Chancellor, Prof. AbdulGaniyu Ambali, challenged us and we thank God, University of Ilorin has two speed limiting devices that are patented now. The FRSC is in the fore-front and some other individuals have shown interest and are ready to finance it. But until that match is made it is still a prototype on our table. But the good thing is that it is a ready prototype. All we need is somebody who has enough interest and money to push it forward and it can be a reality but you don't always have all the licks on your side. That other side of financing must come before your product can be something to be marketed or marketable.

Q: Looking at your mission and the environment we work where some people's works are not commensurate with their pay. What will you advise to change this mentality?

A: My plea is that our work attitude must change. We must take this plea serious. Serious in all as if our life depends on it. What I learnt from my predecessors is that there are only two universities, the good and the bad, not state, private or federal. And by our own description, we don't want to be part of the bad ones. We want to be among the good universities and the only way to get that is to make sure that everything you are doing is in line with the strategic plans, vision and mission of the University. If at the end of five years, we are able to achieve the first two things mentioned above, we will be able to stand on a good pedestal. That is to improve on the IGR and making sure that everybody is comfortably, gainfully and supportively involve in

research. Let me say here that to get to the level of good University I am ready to beg for it but we all have to change our attitude for better. I will try as much as possible to let all realize that there is gain in hard work. There will be a situation that you will be able to carry a sizeable number of the majority along but there will still remain some that will want everything to turn upside down. Those ones if I need to beg, I will beg because the last thing I want to do is fight. In a work place you cannot choose your co-worker we have to all realize that. I am coming from a country after over twenty years where there is transparent prejudice but at work you cannot see division and that is why I am in love with the statement **“the membership of Team Unilorin”**. We are in this and we all must assist each other to stay afloat to get better on daily and continuous basis.

If example is enough I may not have problem and willing to beg everybody but if begging would not help team membership one may take another step. Because your prayer is to increase in strength and you won't want your team members to go.

We don't want to fight anyone and unless we all work hard this University cannot move at the speed or even get to stop where we expect to get to with the five years earmarked for us. I have only five years for God's sake. So, within those five years we all realize that we can lay the foundation of the next 20 years by doing things right now and pray that those who come subsequently imbibe the culture, work hard and continue to push the University forward.

Q: What will be your relationship with the media in your effort to move the University forward?

A: Whatever the media needs I will be willing to line up behind you. I am also interested in media reports in and around the University regularly and positively to showcase the development of the University. So, we are going to relate well with the media and I'm assuring you that within the limit of my power, ability and resources we are going to make sure that the media play a major role by being a major tool in improving on our existing status and development.

Q: Where will you like to see the University of Ilorin in the next five years?

A: As rapidly as we can get to be number one position as a result of our meaningful researches and meaningful solutions and praying that we stay there forever. For not just the University's master and strategic plans or vision and mission of the University, we have a Council that is rooting for a

Nobel laureate and if we don't get there we should be eyeing it in the nearest future. I believe that all we need is the push to get to that point. My prayer is that behind me everybody will imbibe this new challenge of culture being introduced by this Council. Again, we must have it in mind that our problems are solved as they come regularly and once we do that we shall be waxing stronger and in no distant time we shall remain in our number one position.

We all must be thinking of what will make our tomorrow to be better for the development of the University. Here let me tell you the first challenge I got from Prof. AbdulGaniyu Ambali (OON), the Vice Chancellor, is the drone, and out of the six people that made up that team, only three have university degrees and the contribution of the other three was very, very significant in the success story. So, what I want everybody to have in their minds is until a problem is solved we don't let go but the support must be there to keep the spirit going.

Q: The successes recorded in the University are because we are able to have stability and these laudable objectives you enumerated may not be achieved if we don't have stability. How do you intend to sustain this legendary stability in the face of frequent external threats?

A: We have to go to the very bottom of the problem. There is a language in medicine called *euthanasia*, where you negotiate your own death. If human beings can negotiate death, and the choice of exit he or she wants, I believe there is no problem human beings should not be able to sit down and negotiate. It is a matter of knowing what make people to be aggrieved and knowing what can be done to appease all parties as much as possible. But I have a feeling that it has to go beyond that and my plea first and foremost is to realize that membership in Unilorin is more important than any other membership and my prayer is that what is important to us all is the internal stability, security and harmony. We will sit down and discuss that. And my prayer is that rather than allowing outside to dictate the peace in our house or *the team* it is the team members that must dictate, work and pray for the peace.

Q: What is your advice to members of staff and students of the University as you take over the mantle of leadership?

A: Humbly speaking, I am coming to this post with a very clean hand and I want equity in the way people relate to me and I swear by God that I will deal with every member of this University with equity.

****Culled from UNILORIN STAR, 2017 Edition***

Chapter 3

FOOTPRINTS OF A GIANT



Introduction

In his maiden address to the University's Congregation barely 10 days after his assumption of duties as the 10th Vice Chancellor, Professor Sulyman Abdulkareem made a pledge to the staff of the University. He promised to reward the efforts and dedication of every staff member that showed exemplary commitment to the growth and sustenance of excellence of the University. He said, "If we are to seize this moment together, we must enjoy it together".

In the address, the Vice Chancellor noted that aside staff welfare, his administration would place emphasis on infrastructural development, service excellence, research and innovation, as well as increasing the institution's internally generated revenue.

Describing the efforts of his immediate predecessor in infrastructural development as "astonishing, monumental and impressive", Professor Abdulkareem said, "It is my desire to sustain the tempo of physical and infrastructural development in order to push it in my own way to attaining the world best environment for learning, research, and community service".

Professor Abdulkareem stated that the vision of the University was to become an International Centre of Excellence and as such, his administration would pursue the vision "vigorously", particularly in the areas of teaching and research because "it is our agenda to fundamentally drive this University on a course of becoming more reputable for research outputs that can change the world".

At the end of his tenure, despite some intervening circumstances beyond his control, such as the two prolonged strikes in 2020 and 2022 by university workers' unions and the 2020 national lock-down occasioned by

the COVID-19 pandemic, Professor Abdulkareem evidently discharged his duties creditably, having fulfilled most of his promises. Several landmark achievements were recorded in all spheres of the University's core mandates of teaching, research and community service.

Staff welfare

In line with his promise to “reward the efforts and dedication of every staff member that shows exemplary commitment to the growth and sustenance of excellence of the University”, Professor Abdulkareem sustained the tradition of heavy investment in human capital development through the massive sponsorship of deserving academic and even non-teaching staff members to Learned Conferences within and outside the country. Several staff members were also sponsored or encouraged and supported to acquire higher degrees between 2017 and 2022.

Also, the Professor Abdulkareem Administration ensured adequate motivation of workers through regular promotion as and when due as well as massive approval of cadre conversion for deserving staff.

No fewer than 3, 326 staff members, comprising academic and non-teaching, junior and senior, were promoted during the first four years of Professor Abdulkareem's five-year tenure. A breakdown of this figure shows that 1,019 were promoted in 2018, 863 in 2019, 632 in 2020, and 812 in 2021. Of the 1, 019 promoted staff in 2018, Two hundred and forty-eight (248) were academic, four hundred and forty-five (445) were senior non-teaching staff and Three hundred and twenty-six (326) were junior staff. The 2019 promotion exercise lifted Two hundred and seventy-one (271) academic staff, Four hundred and fourteen (414) senior non-teaching staff and One hundred and seventy-eight (178) junior staff. Also, one hundred and eighty-three (183) of the Six hundred and thirty-two (632) promoted staff in 2020 were academic staff, Three hundred and nineteen (319) senior non-teaching staff and One hundred and thirty (130) junior staff. Of the Eight hundred and twelve (812) promoted staff in 2021, One hundred and forty-eight (148) were academic staff, Four hundred and fifty-four (454) senior non-teaching staff, and Two hundred and ten (210) junior staff. *(THE 2022 PROMOTION EXERCISE YET TO BE CONDUCTED DUE TO THE PROLONGED UNIVERSITY WORKERS' STRIKE THAT WAS STILL ON AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS)

Also, no fewer than **2, 441** staff members, academic, and non-teaching, junior and senior, benefited from the various staff development awards (SDA) tenable in local and foreign institutions. Of this figure, **1, 349** academic staff benefited from TETFund sponsorship for local and international Learned Conferences; **877** non-teaching staff also got similar

sponsorship for local and international Learned Conferences; while 215 junior staff were granted staff development awards (SDA).

Liberalisation of access to TETFund/NEEDS awards

Access to TETFund and NEEDS II awards for academic and non-teaching staff was liberalised such that the awards were based on merit and totally open to many researchers without any sentiment. Therefore, a large number of deserving staff benefited from the funds.

Impactful researches and patents

A major hallmark of the Professor Abdulkareem-led administration was its relentless commitment to and pursuit of excellence in research endeavours. In his first media interview on assumption of office, Professor Abdulkareem, who was the Director of Unilorin Laboratory to Product Centre (LABTOP), told the *UNILORIN STAR* that his focus would be on aggressive “research generally across board”. He said that when he assumed office as the LABTOP Director in 2015, he met only five patented researches on ground but just two years into his directorship, these had increased to 21. He then gave a commitment that all researchers would be enabled to do their work, “so that more of these innovative and first-class researches would give us more patents for this University”.

True to his words, the University now proudly boasts of eight patented researches within the five-year administration of this veritable research buff. Indeed, the University’s untiring research efforts were duly recognised in 2021 by the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology’s National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) as the institution with the highest number of Patent Certificates for its various researches, innovations and inventions.

It is noteworthy that two out of the eight researches from the stable of the University of Ilorin that got the NOTAP’s patent certification, were the handiworks of Professor Abdulkareem. The eight patented research works are:

| SN | PATENT TITLE | INVENTOR | PATENT NUMBER |
|----|--|--|---------------|
| 1 | Wood Plastic Composite Binded by Polystyrene Based Resin | Prof. S. A. Abdulkareem & Dr A. G. Adeniyi | NG/P/2019/259 |
| 2 | Production of Fibrillated Hybrid Polystyrene | Prof. S. A. Abdulkareem & Dr A. G. Adeniyi | NG/P/2019/258 |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---------------|
| | Composite for Ballistic Protection | | |
| 3 | Maximum Demand Controller With Integrated Web Server | Dr M. F Akorede & Engr T. A. Olalekan | NG/P/2019/268 |
| 4 | Device and Apparatus for Milk Pasteurization | M. O. Sunmonu, M. M. Odewole, M. S. Sanusi | NG/P/2020/185 |
| 5 | Process for Making Bio-Composite Abrasive Grinding Wheel | H.A. Ajimotokan & A. A. Samuel | NG/P/2020/186 |
| 6 | Method and Apparatus for Conditioning Dough and Inoculated Milk | M. S. Sanusi & M. O. Sunmonu | NG/P/2020/199 |
| 7 | Method and Device for Making Pencils from Waste Paper | H. A. Ajimotokan, A. Adebisi, A. Adegoke, A. B. Kareem, A. Bello, & I. J. Towoju | NG/P/2020/202 |
| 8 | An Orthogonal Power-Transmission Lawn Mowing Cum Slashing Machine | Prof. S. M. Adedayo | NG/P/2020/203 |

Other research works awaiting the patent certification include:

9. Two-way Transilluminator Viewing Documentation System

Prof. Olatunji Matthew Kolawole, Muhammed Mustapha Suleiman, and Jeremiah Ogah

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| | |
| 10. Deep Fat Fryer Equipped with Cooking Oil Recyclable Mechanism | Dr M. O. Sunmonu, Engr M. M. Odewole and Engr M. S. Sanusi |
| 11. A Push-Type Twin-Bladed Internal Combustion Engine Powered Shrub/Lawn Mowing Machine | Prof. Segun M. Adedayo and Mr Olufemi Olutayo Jolayemi |
| 12. Akinlolu-Raji Image Processing Algorithm for Forensic Analyses | Dr Abdulazeez Adelaja Akinlolu and Prof. Abdulganiyu Olayinka Raji |
| 13. System for electricity theft detection and prevention with remote control | Dr Akorede, M. F., Olalekan, T. A., Adepoju, R. B., Itodo, D. O. and Dickson, M. O. |
| 14. Unilorin Automobile Speed Limiter | Aye Taiwo Ajiboye, Ganiyu Adeyemi, Adedokun Olasanmi, Adekunle Adewuyi, Sulyman Abdulkareem, Abdulrahman Olalekan Hafeez, Owolabi Mahmud |
| 15. Tool kit and Workflow for Processing Cross Well Seismic Data (XW-Geopro) | Dr Raji Wasiu Olanrewaju |
| 16. Maximum Demand Controller with Integrated Web Server | Dr M. F. Akorede and Engr T. A. Olalekan |

MoU with the Nigerian Army

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Nigerian Army and the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) for the development of Polymer composite by the University for strategic and protective defence. As part of the implementation of the MoU, the University, under Prof. Abdulkareem, invented bullet-proof vest, which was tested and accepted by the Nigerian Army for use by soldiers

University Library extension

Upon Professor Abdulkareem's assumption of duty, a new library extension was one of the approved projects awaiting funding. Within a year into his tenure, the administration was able to access the fund and the Library extension was constructed and handed over in 2020.

In July 2020, the e-library was relocated to the new library extension to create an avenue for wider outreach and usage for all the members of the community. A total of 110 new computers were installed in addition to over 100 old ones, for smooth access to subscribed databases. The Law Library, College Library Faculty of Veterinary Library and senior staff offices also benefited from the distribution of the computer systems for their online operations.

With all these, the University Library has been acknowledged as “a reference point in the country, considering the available resources and the organization of the reading environment”

Establishment of a Molecular Lab

The administration of Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem raised the bar in public healthcare delivery in the country with the establishment of the ultra-modern Molecular Diagnostic and Research Laboratory. It has already secured the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control’s (NCDC) certification as a Public Health Laboratory for diagnosis of COVID-19 and the surveillance of other infectious diseases like poliomyelitis, Lassa fever and other viral haemorrhagic fevers. A multi-million-naira Sequencer was procured for the laboratory, making it the first Molecular Laboratory in a public university to acquire one.

The novel diagnostic and research laboratory will go a long way in strengthening the nation’s health emergency response.

Proactive headlong tackling of the Coronavirus challenge

With the sudden outbreak of the dreaded Coronavirus pandemic in 2020, Professor Sulyman Abdulkareem promptly took a proactive measure to prevent the spread of the deadly virus on the University campus. This he did by setting up the COVID-19 Prevention Committee headed by Dr Idayat A. Durotoye of the Department of Haematology, College of Health Sciences. Among the preventive measures taken by the Committee that ensured the control of Coronavirus at the University were the construction of about 60 wash-up points around the campuses to encourage the practice of regular hand hygiene, procurement and distribution of face masks and hand sanitizers to staff and students of the University, and regular enlightenment of members of the University community through hand bills and regular radio jingles and discussion programmes.

Out-maneuvering COVID-19 disruption to academic activities

The unfortunate pandemic that ravaged the world in most part of 2020 – Coronavirus – wreaked a lot of havoc on the entire humanity. Not

only did it constitute a major health hazard, it also disrupted many human activities, as the entire globe was literally shut down.

The education sector is one of the worst hit. The inevitable lock-down of schools, to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, caused far-reaching disruption to academic activities. In Nigeria, especially, academic calendars were redrawn in many tertiary education institutions, with some universities either outrightly cancelling the 2019/2020 academic session or merging it with the ongoing 2020/2021 session.

However, in its characteristic pursuit of excellence and sustained determination to protect the interest of our students and their parents, the management of the University of Ilorin, under the leadership of Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, refused to join the bandwagon of institutions that scrapped or merged academic sessions. It was resolved that the Unilorin would not lose the 2019/2020 academic session for whatever reason!

This uncommon feat made it possible for the Better-by-Far citadel to seamlessly sustain its scheduled academic calendar despite all odds.

Pioneering virtual teaching/learning

One of the unforgettable innovations taught by the prolonged closure of schools in the wake of the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic was the visibility of virtual learning. The University of Ilorin, ever so ingenious and innovative, quickly adapted to the new global reality with the shutdown of virtually every human activity because of the raging COVID-19 in the first quarter of 2020.

Under the leadership of Professor Abdulkareem, the University commenced the virtual learning system on January 11, 2021. To make the system seamless, the University increased its bandwidth subscription from 620Mbps to over 1.2Gbps for the main campus and additional 620Mbps for the mini campus. The University also expanded network access to over 70 per cent of its main campus and the College of Health Sciences through its Campus Connectivity Project.

Also, the University management purchased 2000 zoom licenses at the cost of \$66,700 to ensure that lecturers taught seamlessly on the online platform. The estimation is aside other infrastructures put in place to ensure the success of the virtual learning initiative. The massive license purchase was to ensure that each of the institution's 1, 450 lecturers had the licence to facilitate their teaching on the online platform.

CODL's final accreditation

As a result of Professor Abdulkareem's passion, the University's Centre for Open and Distance Learning (CODL) that was initiated in 2007 was formally accredited by the National Universities Commission (NUC) in

October 2021. He made resources available for the Centre to meet up with the required standard of typical open and distance learning institution in the country.

A major input by the Abdulkareem-led management was the establishment of a multimillion-naira state-of-the-art studio, which can compete favourably with that of any university in the world. Also, the buildings in the Centre were furnished and restructured.

The centre has also been accredited by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) as a licensed CBT Examination Centre, and it actually participated in the 2022 Mock and JAMB UTME examinations held on the 9th of April, 2022 and 6th - 10th May, 2022 respectively.

MoU with Oriental Farms on mechanised farming

On December 5, 2019, the University took another giant leap in its sustained effort to contribute positively to the country's socio-economic development with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with OER Farms Ltd for the use of 10,000-hectares of the University's vast land for mechanised farming.

The 21-year Land Lease Agreement climaxed a series of consultations between the University and OER Farms, a member of the Oriental Group, which began on September 4, 2019. The Lease agreement, under which improved crop varieties with high yield of cash crops such as maize, soya beans and cashew will be massively cultivated, underscores the Federal Government's progress towards food security nationwide.

It is one of the hallmarks of Professor Sulyman Abdulkareem's sustained commitment to community service and sterling contribution to the resolution of the nagging unemployment and food scarcity problems in the country. When it eventually comes on stream, the mechanised agricultural project will not only boost food production, it will also enhance employment generation for some of the teeming unemployed youths in the country.

The N1b BUA Group's infrastructural development grant

The administration of Professor Abdulkareem, in 2021, facilitated a whopping N1 billion grant from the Abdul Samad Rabiu African Initiative (ASR AFRICA), an initiative of the BUA Group, for the development of critical infrastructure in the University. The donation was committed to the building of a massive 3,500 – capacity multi-purpose Amphitheatre plan.

The Founder and Chairman of BUA Group, Alhaji Abdul Samad Isyaku Rabiu (CON), said that the grant was made to the University of Ilorin in recognition of its quality services and the pedigree of its graduates nationally and internationally.

The BUA Chairman, who was represented by BUA Group's Director of Government Relations, Dr Aliyu Idi Hong, explained that the University of Ilorin is among the six universities from the country's six geopolitical zones that were nominated to benefit in the first phase of the education grant.

Massive campus roads rehabilitation

Professor Abdulkareem carried out massive rehabilitation of campus road networks through the N184 million grant by the Federal Ministry of Works and the N150 million prize money the University won from the 2019 edition of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) moderated National Tertiary Admissions Performance Merit Award.

While the N184 million Federal Government grant was expended on resurfacing and expanding the Main Campus – UITH road, the N150 million JAMB's prize money was used in constructing the Engineering Faculty – Law Faculty road.

There is also considerable motorability improvement in the Main Campus – Fufu road, while the Main Campus Staff Quarters road enjoined constant rehabilitation.

The road rehabilitation/construction projects had further boosted the environmental aesthetics of the University campus and also enhanced smooth movement of staff and students as well as visitors to the campus.

The N600m Integrated Poultry Farm initiative

Under the leadership of Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, the University established, with a loan of N600, 000, 000 from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), an Integrated Commercial Poultry Farm, the UNILORIN GgMax Poultry Farm to boost the production of eggs and chicken in the country.

Arguably the mother of all Abdulkareem's achievements, this project, which was facilitated under the Central Bank's Tertiary Institutions Poultry Revival Scheme (TIPRES), is the administration's flagship legacy of all times.

To date, Unilorin remains the only tertiary institution in Nigeria to have actualised this vision of the CBN Governor. The project was officially commissioned on 21st July, 2022 and it is set to play a key role in the agro-based business in the country towards the revival of the poultry subsector to reduce importation and close the existing demand and supply gap of eggs and allied poultry products. It will also generate direct and indirect employment for some of the teeming army of unemployed youths in the country.

The Farm would not only place the University of Ilorin on the map of institutions with such projects but would also serve as a training ground for the students of the University pursuing different programmes such as Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture.

Sustenance of ‘Most Subscribed University’ status

By dint of hard work and commitment to institutional goals, the administration of Professor Sulyman Abdulkareem ensured that the University of Ilorin sustained the status of the ‘Most Sought-after University’ status. It is on record that since the past eight years, the University has consistently been the toast of university admission seekers. But specifically during the administration of Professor Abdulkareem, the University maintained the tempo: In **2018**, 86, 401 candidates chose to study at Unilorin, 105, 058 in 2019, 103, 582 in 2020, 78, 466 in 2021, and 96, 741 in 2022.

Consecutive winner of the JAMB Merit Awards

Professor Abdulkareem also led the University to win, for two consecutive years, 2018 and 2019, the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board’s (JAMB) National Tertiary Admissions Performance Merit Award.

For the 2018 awards, the University won the “Most Subscribed institution” Award worth N25 million prize money. With a total candidates’ enrolment of 86, 401, Unilorin beat the University of Benin to the second place.

In the 2019 edition, the University of Ilorin won two awards -- the Most Subscribed institution” by candidates and the “Institution with the Highest Number of Admitted International Students” with a total cash prize of N150 million at N75 million per category.

Also, in the 2020 edition of the award held in July 2022, the University won the award for Institution of First Choice by admission seekers with a cash prize of N75 million.

Unilorin – ASUU rapprochement

Probably the biggest breakthrough of the Better by Far citadel in 2019 was the final resolution of the cat-and-mouse feud between the University's Chapter of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the union's national body. The crisis had festered for nearly two decades with its attendant casualties on both sides.

Even though the resolution was not initiated by him, Professor Abdulkareem fervently supported the move when it was brought to his attention. In a *UNILORIN FM* radio interview, Professor Abdulkareem said that his administration got involved in the reconciliatory process because “the two-decade long polarisation of the Union at the local level had brought a lot of discomfort to the innocent academic staff and students of the University, who have been needlessly harassed by their colleagues from other universities in the country”.

The resolution of the ASUU crisis was a testament to the pacifist disposition of Professor Abdulkareem.

A harvest of high-calibre personnel exports

With no fewer than 10 high calibre personnel export to other universities as vice chancellors, registrars, bursars and librarians, the Professor Abdulkareem's tenure witnessed the University of Ilorin becoming a fertile stable for head-hunters looking for best brains to poach either to pioneer the establishment of new universities or to assist in consolidating on the achievements of going citadels or even to help in retrieving flailing institutions from a certain abyss of decline in fortunes into which they might have been pushed by past administrative inadequacies.

Among the proud personnel exports from the stable of the University of Ilorin during the tenure of Professor Abdulkareem are Professor Luke Ayorinde, Vice Chancellor of Kola Daisi University, Ibadan (2018), and Thomas Adewumi University, Oko-Irese, Kwara State, (2020); Professor Muhammad Mustapha Akanbi (SAN), Vice-Chancellor, Kwara State University, Malete (2020); Professor Musa Isyaku Ahmed, Vice Chancellor, Federal University of Agriculture, Zuru (2020); Professor Noah Yusuf, Vice Chancellor, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin (2020); Professor Mahfouz Adedimeji, Vice Chancellor, Ahman Pategi University, Pategi, Kwara State (2021); Professor Bayo Lawal, Vice-Chancellor, University of Offa (2021); and Professor Temidayo Oladiji, Vice Chancellor, Federal University of Technology, Akure (2022). Also, Professor Yusuf Da-Silva was appointed the Chief Medical Director of the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital (UITH) (2018) while Professor Baba Awoye Issa of the Department of Behavioural Sciences was appointed the pioneer Chief Medical Director of the newly established Federal Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital, Budo-Egba in Asa Local Government area of Kwara State.

It should be noted that the University of Ilorin's fecund contribution of quality personnel to the nation's education sector during Professor Abdulkareem's tenure did not end in the vice chancellorship of universities around the country. Many of the University's academic and non-teaching staff members have also secured appointments as universities' Governing Council Chairmen and members, Principal Officers of universities as well as Provosts and Principal Officers of sundry tertiary education institutions. Among these are Professor Sulyman Kuranga, Pro-Chancellor and Chairman, Governing Council of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka; Professor R. I. Adebayo, Provost of the newly established Federal College of Education, Iwo; Professor. Mukaila Aremu, Provost, Kwara State College of Education, Oro; Mr Kazeem Kayode Babamale, Registrar, Federal University of Health Sciences, Ila-Orangun; Ms Funke Hudson, Registrar, Confluence University of Science of Science and Technology, Lokoja; Dr Kikelomo Salle, Registrar,

Kwara State University, Malete; Dr Rebecca Okojie, Registrar, Federal University, Lokoja; and Mr. Aransiola, Bursar, IVTEC, Ajase-Ipo

Digitisation of academic transcripts' issuance

To facilitate the request and issuance of academic transcripts to former students, the University, under the leadership of Prof. Abdulkareem, resolved to promote efficient service delivery with the institutionalisation of online application for transcripts as against the old delay-laden manual application. The Registry Department was, therefore, empowered to digitise all records and migrate to digital application and processing of transcripts.

The task was carried out in record time and with effect from June 2021, all applications for academic transcripts are now done online.

Resettlement of Fulani Herdsmen

Professor Abdulkareem's concern for the security of lives of the University staff and students as well as safety of the University's property prompted him, in 2019, to relocate the Fulani herdsmen taking abode on the University land to a land in Opolo community.

The land, located in the Ilorin South Local Government, was donated by the Emir of Ilorin. This was possible through the implementation of the relocation plan of 2011 involving the construction of a school building, drilling of borehole, provision of hygienic toilet and financial support to the herdsmen by the University. This helped in no small way to douse tensions between the University community and the Fulani settlers.

Resuscitation of the Emeritus Professorship scheme

In order to encourage qualified retired professors to continue to contribute their expertise to the training and development of highly skilled manpower, the University, under the leadership of Professor Abdulkareem, resuscitated the Emeritus Professorship scheme

The first set of five deserving retired professors was approved by the University Council and they were conferred with the emeritus honour during the 2021 University Convocation ceremonies.

Sports Development

Under the administration of Professor Abdulkareem, the University of Ilorin sustained its sporting excellence. Not only did the University continue to host the popular National Youth Games (NYG) back-to-back on yearly basis throughout his tenure, it also continued to achieve remarkable feats at several national sporting championships.

He provided the enabling environment for sport to thrive. He improved funding that allowed the University to take part in all sporting activities it was invited to.

Prof. Abdulkareem also instituted better and more prompt reward system for sportsmen and officials. To boost the morale of Unilorin sportsmen, the Vice Chancellor facilitated the acquisition of a brand new 14-seater Toyota Hiace bus for the exclusive use of the Sports Unit.

It is on record that the University hosted the NYG four times during Professor Abdulkareem's tenure -- 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021. The 2020 edition was skipped due to the then ravaging COVID-19 pandemic. Also, during Professor Abdulkareem's tenure, the University hosted the Nigerian Higher Institutions Football League several times.

Other landmark achievements of Professor Abdulkareem in the area of Sports include the rehabilitation of the second football pitch (aka Maracana); fencing and regressing of the main football pitch; completion of the Squash Court with provision of glass back wall, wooden floors and air-conditioners for all the four courts; and hosting of several other competitions.

The University's contingent performed wonders at the 26th edition of the Nigerian Universities Game (NUGA), hosted by the University of Lagos. At the end of the games, Unilorin, with a total of 39 medals, emerged the 4th best team out of 73 universities listed on the medals table. The University also picked the most coveted football gold.

All these were the practical manifestation of Professor Abdulkareem's huge investment in sports facilities and the welfare of the institution's sports men and women.

Endowment of annual prize for academic excellence

In line with his love for and penchant for encouraging academic excellence, Professor Abdulkareem personally instituted an annual prize award for the best graduating student of the Department of Chemical Engineering.

Known as "Prof. S. A. Abdulkareem's Award for the Best Graduating Student in Chemical Engineering", the award, in the sum of N50, 000, is to run for 10 years.

Chapter 4

FOOTPRINTS CHECKLIST



INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

- (a) OFFICES, CLASSROOMS AND LECTURE THEATRES
- Construction and movement to the permanent sites of the College of Health Sciences housing the faculties of Clinical Sciences, Basic Medical Sciences and Basic Clinical Sciences.
 - Completion of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences buildings.
 - Construction of (3 Nos) of 500-seater capacity lecture theatres for the Faculty of Engineering and Technology funded by TETFund.
 - Construction of Lecture Rooms and Laboratory for Institute of Education.
 - Construction of 400-seat capacity Lecture Theatre for Faculty of Arts.
 - Construction of 400-seat capacity Lecture Theatre for Faculty of Agriculture.
 - Construction and furnishing of the Seminar Board Room Building for the Faculty of Arts
 - Construction of Poultry Pen Yoghurt Feed Mill and Toilet for the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.
 - Construction of the Department of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education.
 - Construction and equipping the Laboratory for Nursing Sciences, Faculty of Clinical Sciences.
 - Provision of toilets for the Departments of Statistics and Chemical Engineering.
 - Ongoing construction of the Chemical Engineering Building and Engineering Studio.

- Building to completion of a new Generator House for the College of Health Sciences.
- Construction to completion and furnishing of GNS Building using Internally Generated Revenue.
- Building to completion of Molecular Diagnostic and Research Laboratory at the College of Health Sciences.
- Establishment of Institute of Medical Research and Training (IMRAT) at the General Hospital, Mini Campus.
- Construction to completion of a Community Centre at the Main Campus.
- Building to completion of Advancement Unit building.
- Renovation of Lagos and Abuja liaison offices.

(b) LABORATORY DEVELOPMENTS

- Expenditure of over N498, 000,000.00 for the procurement of furniture and laboratory equipment and fittings for various Faculties and Departments in the University, funded by NEEDS Assessment.
- Laboratory for Nursing Sciences.
- Laboratory for College of Health Sciences.
- Provision of two hundred thousand naira (N200, 000:00) only to address the challenges of running water in the Pharmaceutical Sciences Laboratories.
- Provision of Dissecting tables (10) for the Department of Veterinary Anatomy.
- Provision of substantial financial support (2018) for consumables to the Departments of Veterinary Pathology and Veterinary Physiology and Biochemistry.

(c) ROAD DEVELOPMENTS AND REHABILITATION

- Established link road from the Main Campus to the School of Preliminary Studies, Fufu.
- Completed asphalt overlay of the existing surface dressed to the College of Health Sciences (Phase II).
- Landscaping of the College of Health Sciences Road and facelift of the area.
- Asphalt overlaying of roads from Pears Hostel to the Faculty of Pharmacy.
- Construction of the Roads linking the Faculty of Arts
- Construction of the Road linking the College of Health Sciences.
- Construction of the Road to the University Primary School.

- (d) INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE
- The University invested \$66,700.00 on ZOOM licenses for online lectures and content delivery in addition to upgrading the internet bandwidth of 620Mbps in 2017 to 2Gbps in 2021.
 - Upgrade of internet Bandwidth to (1Ggps) from 620Mbps (Glo).
 - Acquisition of additional 1Ggps internet Bandwidth from NgREN. The internet bandwidth distributed to Mini-campus, Fufu and to augment Main Campus internet access.
 - Extension of Internet access to open sit-out areas for students leading to deployment of internet access at the Stadium, CBT sit-out, Student Affairs' quadrangle and Multipurpose hall.
 - A computer laboratory consisting of 450 computers and computer controlled smart boards will be provided in designated places to cater for indigent students who may not be able to afford PDA devices for their online classes.
 - Website upgrade and redesign- a major objective, amongst others, is to boost our web ranking.
 - Migration of web resources to ICTP and Activation of Unilorin Based web resources for local broadcast.
 - Ongoing local development of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Software to integrate, University Portal, Registry, Bursary and Academic Planning Unit records.
 - To ease students' access to online contents, the University provided a wireless coverage of about 80% of the entire University.
 - Expansion of internet access to the College of Health Sciences' Library, Blocks A and B in the new College Site, faculties of Veterinary Medicine, Pharmaceutical Sciences and Education.
 - Deployment of Programme-wide online teaching and Learning using LMS: Moodle, Google Classroom, Microsoft Team and Zoom delivery systems.
 - Apart from training grants from TETFund, the University has trained a lot of its staff both locally and internationally. In May 2019, 3 members of COMSIT staff were sponsored to Italy for a workshop on High Performing Computers, with the intention of upgrading the University NOC to a Data Centre.
- (e) EQUIPMENT
- Procurement of Laboratory Equipment worth N355M for Faculties and Departments to enhance effective teaching.
 - Massive Procurement of computer wares to meet various needs of the University community.

- N15M Grant for equipment, refurbishment and facelift of the University's Radio (UNILORIN 89.3FM) courtesy JAMB.
- Purchase of furniture and equipment for the University's Radio (UNILORIN 89.3FM).
- Purchase of equipment for the faculties of BMS, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Bursary Department, Veterinary Medicine, CIE.
- Procurement, Supply and Installation of Surface Meteorological Station for the Department of Geography and Faculty of Environmental Sciences, funded by NiMET.
- 500KVA generator to the new College Site.
- Sets of equipment and furnishings supplied to the College of Health Sciences through the NEEDS assessments fund.
- Procurement of Paint Mixer and some other equipment for the Technical and Entrepreneurial Centre (TEC).
- Award of contract for the Carpentry Workshop at the Technical and Entrepreneurial Centre (TEC).
- Award of contract for the procurement of equipment for the Department of Optometry of the Faculty of Physical Sciences.
- Procurement of generators for the School Clinic.
- NNPC Installation of Solar Farm Power (2.5MW-10MW). – Ongoing.

(f) HOUSING/OFFICE FACILITIES

- Construction of 6 additional chalets at the Researcher's Lodge and provision of furniture.
- Construction of Offices for the Department of Educational Technology.
- Construction of Workshop for the Technical and Entrepreneurship Centre.
- Renovation of the old Stem Cell building at the Mini Campus.
- Provision of furniture for various Faculties, Departments and Units.
- Procurement and supply and installation of furniture for 3 Nos of 500-seater capacity lecture theatres for the Faculty of Engineering and Technology by TETFund.
- Reclaimed the Shao COBES Building.
- Procurement, supply of furniture and office equipment for the Department of Chemical Engineering by TETFund.
- Refurbishment of the old Faculty of Health Sciences building.
- Prompt maintenance of University buildings from the internally generated revenue.

(g) **ELECTRICITY/WATER FACILITIES**

- Provision of 500 Cubic Meter Elevated Pressed Steel Braithwaite Type Water Tank.
- Piping and pumping of water from the Dam through the processing Unit to overhead tank (Expanded supply).
- Electrification Projects for Faculties of Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture.
- Provision of additional water treatment plant to cater for the growing population.
- Procurement of additional vehicle (Toyota Dyna) for Unilorin Water Factory.
- Procurement of monoblock and reverse osmosis for Unilorin Water Factory to increase production capacity.

(h) **HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION**

- Nine Private Hostels built through Public Private Partnership (PPP):
 - (1) Bethany Hostel- A 412- bed space
 - (2) Arafims II - A 720- bed space
 - (3) Health Care - A 200- bed space
 - (4) Prime Rose - A 281- bed space
 - (5) Sanusi Hostel - A 360- bed space
 - (6) Easy & Quiet - A 680- bed space
 - (7) Zapel – A 264- bed space
 - (8) Taklema - A 256- bed space
 - (9) Markafi - Ongoing

ENVIRONMENT

- Building of two fuel dump sites; a 5,500 litres and 11,000 litres-dump sites at the College of Health Sciences.
- Procurement of new working equipment for grounds men, i.e., mowers and some other modern equipment for efficiency in their duties.
- Building to completion of six public hygienic toilets at strategic places on the Main Campus.

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

NUC and Professional Bodies Accreditation

The University presented 42 programmes for NUC accreditation in 2019, 34 were fully accredited and 8 were Interim due mainly to

issues of space for the programmes. This is the first time that no programme of the University was denied accreditation.

In addition, the University has 100% in all her programmes by the accrediting professional bodies.

MOUs were signed with several institutions both locally and internationally.

(a) **INNOVATIONS IN ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES**

- The prompt release of funds and commitment of the VC was mainly responsible for the success of the accreditation exercise. The University had 100% accreditation of her programmes. 42 programmes across various faculties were presented, 34 or 81% had full and 8 or 19% had Interim accreditation status respectively. This has been the best result since 2005.
- For the first time in the University, there was a firm commitment to the implementation of the University Strategic Plan (2019-2024). So far, the plan has achieved about 25% implementation.
- Creation of a new Faculty (Faculty of Basic Clinical Sciences) from the Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences.
- Successful resource verification and commencement of B. Physiotherapy and B. Medical Programme.
- Approval of B. Radiography Programme.
- A new prospectus for the College of Health Sciences (2019-2024).

(b) **ACCESS OPENING TO EDUCATION Laboratory Science**

(c) **ACADEMIC AWARDS**

(d) **STUDENTS' PROFILE**

| Competition and Year | Outcome |
|--|----------------|
| 3rd Accra Open debate championship, University of Ghana, Accra 2017 | Winner |
| Maiden Trans City Cup, Kumasi 2017 | Winner |
| Chancellor's Cup, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi 2017 | Winner |
| 5th All Nigeria Universities Debate | Finalist |

| | |
|--|---|
| Championship, University of Port Harcourt 2017 | |
| 5th All Nigeria Universities Debate Championship, University of Port Harcourt 2017 | Semi-finalist |
| 6th All Nigeria Universities Debate Championship, University of Ilorin 2018 | 2nd runner up Best speaker |
| North Central Bounce Corruption Public Integrity Debate, University of Jos 2018 | Winner |
| Emirate Word War Intervarsity Debate Championship- Ilorin 2018 | Winner Mainstream Best speaker Winner novice category Winner women stream |
| Federal university of Technology Akure invitational 2018. 2018 | Winners Novice categories Winners' Mainstream. Best speaker |
| 5th Masters' Round Debate Championship- University of Calabar March, 2019 | Winner |
| Covenant University Invitational Debate Championship- Otta June 2019 | Semi-finalist |
| Emirate Word War Intervarsity Debate Championship- Ilorin. August 2019 | - Finalist - Best speaker - Best adjudicator - 3rd best adjudicator - 5th best adjudicator - Winners of the novice stream - Winners of the Women stream |
| All-Nigeria Universities Debating Championship- Calabar | Quarterfinalist |

| | |
|---|--|
| September 2019 | |
| <p>Exordium Pre-PANS debate tournament, 2019</p> <p>This was a tournament that had over 50 participants, hosted by Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Kumasi Ghana</p> <p>December 2019</p> | <p>Finalist</p> <p>- best speaker</p> |
| <p>12th Pan African University Debate Championship- Kumasi, Ghana.</p> <p>This was tournament that had over 100 participants from different universities and countries (the biggest tournament in Africa). Hosted by KNUST</p> <p>December 2019</p> | <p>Semi-finalist</p> <p>DEBATE (Speaking)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overall Best Speaker in Africa 2. Overall 2nd Best Speaker in Africa 3. Best Speaker in West Africa 4. Best Speaker in Nigeria <p>DEBATE (Adjudicating)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 7th Best Adjudicator in Africa - 2. 3rd Best New Judge in Africa - <p>PUBLIC SPEAKING (Speaking)</p> <p>5th Best Public Speaker in Africa</p> <p>PUBLIC SPEAKING (Judging)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3rd Best Public Speaking Judge in Africa |
| <p>Genesis debate championship</p> <p>Hosted by the university of Ghana with over 70 participants.</p> | <p>- Winners of the Main stream</p> <p>- Best speaker</p> <p>- Winner of the</p> |

| | | |
|---|--------------------|--|
| 2019 | | novice stream |
| Covenant University Invitational Debate Championship- Otta Jan 2020 | | Winner debating category Winner public speaking category |
| | | |
| Black Unika South Africa Debate Open This is a tournament that had above 50 teams and 100 participants from different universities and countries and was organised by the university of South Africa debate union | Online debate 2020 | -Winner -Best speaker |
| West Africa Women's debate open This is a tournament that had above 70 teams and 140 participants from different universities and countries and was organised by the West African debate union.(WADC) | Online debate 2020 | Finalist - 7th best speaker - 6th best speaker |
| African Inter-varsities Debating Championship 2020 This is a tournament that had about 100 teams and 200 participants from different universities and countries and was organised by the RPDA AND ZODL (South Africa and Zimbabwe debate unions respectively | Online debate 2020 | 1st runner up -4th best speaker 6th best speaker, -3rd best adjudicator 8th best adjudicator |
| The west African VIRAGO 2020 This is a tournament that was organised by unions in West Africa | Online debate 2020 | Winners 3rd best speaker 5th best speaker |

| | | |
|--|--------------------|---|
| 1914 debate open This is a tournament that had 95 participants. it was organised by university of Ghana | Online debate 2020 | -best adjudicator - 3rd best adjudicator - 9th best speaker - Finalist |
| East Africa Jumuiya Debate Open This was tournament hosted by East Africa Debating Union. | Online debate 2020 | Best Adjudicator |

(e) **RANKING**

- Currently, NUC 2020 ranking placed University of Ilorin as the second best after University of Lagos.
- The best in the country in terms of international student enrolment.

ADMINISTRATIVE INNOVATIONS

- Faculties were given freedom to recruit their teaching staff as demonstrated in the last recruitment exercise.
- Notable improvement in the Internally Generated Revenue, IGR.
- Provision of safe and furnished accommodation for both international students and staff that could not travel to their home countries during the pandemic at no extra cost.
- Procurement of 3,240 pieces of arm contour chairs for convocation.
- Procurement of Pool Vehicles for Principal Officers from the Internally Generated Revenue, IGR.
- Clearing the cooperative debt owed by the past administration.
- Provision of prompt feedback mechanism.
- Conversion scheme for interested and qualified staff.
- Promotion of staff as and when due.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND ENHANCEMENTS

- The College of Health Sciences, through the Department of Epidemiology and Community Health in the Faculty of Clinical Sciences, has reached out to communities through the field postings of the Master of Public Health, MPH. The MPH students were posted to communities across the three Senatorial Districts in Kwara State. The students facilitated the construction of wells, provision of drugs in hospitals and constructions of hygienic toilets in communities such as Agbana, Oko-Ode, Gaa-Osibi etc.

- Distribution of COVID-19 palliatives (e.g., Hand sanitisers and nose masks) to the neighbouring communities through the COVID-19 Committee.

UNIVERSITY LINKAGES AND COLLABORATIONS

The Vice Chancellor encouraged and actively facilitated international academics to different Departments. This is evident from the visits of:

- a. Dr Arinola Adebayo of Virginia State University USA, a Carnegie African Diaspora Fellow to the Dept. of Accounting in 2019.
 - b. Prof. Ramar Krishnamurthy of Uka Tarsadia University, India's periodic visit to the Dept. of Plant Biology
 - c. Prof. Aderibigbe Ibigbolade of University of Georgia, USA to the Dept. of Religions.
 - d. Dr James Titiloye from Swansea University, UK to the Dept. of Chemical Engineering.
 - e. The Vice Chancellor approved Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship for Prof. Zaccheus Ogunnika of Virginia State University in the Dept. of Criminology.
- The Department of Otorhinolaryngology has linkages with St. Georges Hospital London and Erasmus University Teaching Hospital, Rotterdam, Netherlands on manpower development and supply of equipment.
 - Successful implementation of existing agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) between the University of Ilorin, other institutions of higher learning and research institutions locally and internationally.

CENTRE FOR OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING (CODL)

The CODL received intervention supports to take the Centre to approval status with the NUC during Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem's administration in the following areas:

1. Renovation of 5 Blocks of Buildings on the Mini Campus for the use of the CODL;
2. Relocation of the CODL from its temporary location at the former Education Technology Department on the Main Campus to the Mini Campus;
3. The construction of perimeter fence separating the University Secondary School from other structures, including the CODL, on the Mini Campus;

4. Procurement of the following items:
 - i. Twelve (12) Air Conditioners (4 standing and 8 split);
 - ii. Five hundred and four (504) computers;
 - iii. Four hundred and twenty-four (424) cubicle workstations;
 - iv. A 3.5KVA inverter;
 - v. Studio equipment and furniture;
5. Provision of office furniture for staff use;
6. Courseware development for BSc Computer Science;
7. Support for participation in local and international workshops and conferences for some staff members of CODL;
8. Posting of a Deputy Registrar as the Centre Secretary;
9. Constitution of CODL Board and appointment of the two Deputy Directors; and
10. Provision of internet facilities in CBT Halls C & D.

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

1. Construction of a New Library Extension.
2. Provision of Water Borehole at the New Library Extension.
3. Financial and moral support and cooperation towards successful accreditation exercises since 2017.
4. Continuation and sustenance of 24-hour service during examinations.
5. Prompt payment of the 24-hour service honoraria to deserving staff members.
6. Repair and conversion of damaged toilets in the Library basement into offices.
7. Refurbishing of the University Librarian's Office.
8. Refurbishing of the Carrel rooms in the Library.
9. General Overhauling of the Bindery Unit of the Library.
10. Refurbishing of the extension of Serials section for the use of Faculty and Postgraduate students.
11. Solving the age-long problems of the Library electrical wiring and toilet systems.
12. Renovation of the Mini Campus Library and procurement of books for use by the Institute of Education and JUPEB students.
13. Renovation of School of Preliminary Studies Library and procurement of books.
14. Face-lifting of the entire Library floors in 2019.
15. Staff development opportunities for academic, non-academic, junior and senior staff members of the Library.
16. Staff members benefited from the recent conversion exercise under this administration.

17. At the E-Library end,
 - i. replacement of batteries for the 10KVA Inverter
 - ii. Repair of the Desktop Computers
 - iii. Provision of Water storage facilities.
18. At the College Library, provision of the E-Library with 40 Laptops, 15 Desktops and Internet service since 2019. This facilitated full accreditation of most courses in the College and students' access to current information.
19. Provision of hand-washing facilities at the Library entrance as a measure of hygiene against the spread of COVID-19.

AGRICULTURE

- Poultry outgrower project domiciled at the Department of Animal Production of the Faculty of Agriculture.
- Central Bank of Nigeria Poultry revival programme.
- Department of Aquaculture & Fisheries Indoor Fish Hatchery & Associated Equipment.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Yearly approval of Grants Writing Workshop for Academic Staff across the Faculties organised by CREDIT which has tremendously assisted the University's staff to win both National and International grants. Examples of these include various Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) Institution-Based Research (IBR) & National Research Fund Interventions, and National Institutes of Health (USA) grants to staff across different faculties.
- Training of COMSIT staff, Improvement of learning environment through additional subscription for STM-4 Bandwidth and procurement of Core-Equipment for seamless internet access necessary for kick-starting online lectures after COVID-19; etc.
- Timely approval of monthly Seminar/Training for Administrative/Secretarial staff of the Registry in collaboration with CREDIT. This has improved the skills of the non-teaching members of staff who attended such training.
- Improvement of Staff capacity through the provision of Staff Development Awards to staff of Bursary Department to pursue their professional accounting training.
- Sponsoring of Bursary Department Staff to the Mandatory Continuing Professional Development (MCPD) Programme of both the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) and Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) with a view

to renewing their professional skills and competence for effective service delivery.

- Conversion of Non-Professional Staff who have acquired Professional Qualifications to become Professional Staff.
- Department of Veterinary Physiology and Biochemistry benefitted from Senate Research Grant (IBR) TETFund).
- TETFund research grant for two (2) staff of the Departments of Veterinary Pharmacology & Toxicology; and Veterinary Pathology.
- Training and retraining of Technologists in the Faculty.
- Prompt promotion of teaching and non-teaching staff, across faculties, departments and units, as and when due.
- Award of contract for training of staff on International Computer and Driving Licence (Training and Certification) funded by TETFund.
- Some Sport Coaches were sent on refresher courses to update in their different fields of sport (i.e., ABU basketball coaching training, FIVB Beach volleyball coaching course, HIFL coaching clinic, Badminton refresher course and so on)

SPORTING FACILITIES

- Successful yearly hosting of the National Youth Games, NYG (2017-Till Date).
- Successful hosting of the 2018 NIMSA Games by the CoHS.
- Successful hosting of the 2019 edition of the JAMB Tertiary Institution Games where the University team won the tournament.
- Hosting of the 2019 National Volleyball zonal league playoffs on the University facility.
- Construction of additional two Squash Courts as funded by TETFund.
- Procurement of two World-Class Standard Table Tennis Boards.
- Procurement of Various Sports Kits.
- Procurement of 18 seater capacity High Roof Bus for the University Sports Unit.
- Procurement of furniture and fittings for Sports Offices.
- Sponsored the Sport team to the 12th African Games held in Rabat, Morocco.
- Refurbishing (levelling and grassing) of the other two football pitches (Maracanna II and III).
- Approval of the phase 2 Sports centre which is proposed to accommodate all other sporting facilities that the University presently does not have like the Rugby pitch, Swimming pool and so on.

- Refurbishing of the damaged sporting facilities i.e., tartan tracks, the basketball courts, handball courts and construction of drainages around the sporting facilities in the University stadium complex.
- Funded the 2018/ 2019 Academic sports award for outstanding athletes who have done the University proud.
- Participation of the University in the 2019 edition of the Higher Institution Football League where it came 3rd at the finals in Lagos.
- Recent approval by the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development for the construction of Olympic Size Swimming Pool on the Main Campus.
- Sponsored the University teams to competitions where the University athletes won Medals/Laurels like:
 - Alpha athletics championships
 - All Nigerian University Taekwondo Championships
 - 8th edition of the Offa Volleyball Championships
 - Kwara State Helbank Volleyball Championships
 - 5th Collegiate Taekwondo Championships
 - National Division 2 Basketball League

UNIVERSITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Procurement of an 18-seater capacity (Toyota Hiace) Bus for University Primary School from the Internally Generated Revenue.
- Construction of the road leading to the University Primary School.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- TETFund Award of Recognition for Outstanding Performance in the Utilisation of TETFund National Research.
- Award of Outstanding Performance as the Best Corps Employer for the year 2021.
- Credence and Ethical Leadership/Conduct Compliance Award by the Centre for Ethics and Self-Value Orientation.
- Announcement of the University as the Institution with most **Patents** by the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology.

ACADEMIC PLANNING

1. Laboratories and Equipment

Since 2017 on assumption of office the VC made clear his vision to improve the quality of existing laboratories and research in the

University. Largely, this vision is being well implemented. Specifically,

i. **SKILL G laboratories in the Faculty of Engineering and Technology**

Provision of four laboratories including

Mechatronics

Autotronics

Electronics and Communications

Refrigeration and Air-conditioning

These are standard laboratories for training of Engineering and Science students

ii. **Geophysics and Geology Laboratories**

The Department of Applied Geophysics recently took delivery of a state-of the-art 3-D imaging Terameter and Magnetometer. Also, the Department of Geology took delivery of a Hillquist Thin Section machine urgently needed by the Department

iii **Chemistry Laboratories**

The following are awaiting installation in the Department of Chemistry:

Scanning Electron Microscope, SEM

Mass Spectrometry, MS

High Performance Liquid Chromatography, HPLC

iv **Computer Engineering Laboratory**

Technology Enabled Active Learning Studio, **TEAL**

This laboratory fashioned after a similar laboratory at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT, USA, was built by the Staff of the Department with active and financial support by the University Administration.

v. **Molecular Laboratory**

This is a high-end laboratory capable of advanced diagnosis of pathogens for the control of diseases like Ebola, COVID-19, Marburg, etc.

vi **Econometrics Laboratory**

The Econometrics laboratory in the Department of Economics has been provided with state-of-the-art Computers and software.

vii **Physics, Pathology, Biochemistry and Plant Science Laboratories**

Laboratory equipment worth over N250m Naira has been procured for these laboratories to improve the quality of teaching and research.

1. Virtual and Hybrid Learning and Lecture Delivery

The advent of COVID-19 has changed the Social and Educational Learning Space. The University has invested a lot of resources in the control of the disease among its many students. Awareness and training on how to associate responsibly among staff and students are done regularly.

The University invested \$66,700.00 on ZOOM licenses for online lectures and content delivery in addition to upgrading the internet bandwidth of 620Mbps in 2017 to 2Gbps in 2021. To ease students' access to online contents, the University provided a wireless coverage of about 80% of the entire University.

A computer laboratory consisting of 450 computers and computer-controlled smart boards will be provided in designated places to cater for indigent students who may not be able to afford PDA devices for their online classes.

To improve access to virtual lectures, the University procured Computer Controlled Smart Boards operating on Windows 10 and Android 8 for use in large classes. These were installed in various lecture theatres across the University. The Smart Boards serve as White Boards for lecture delivery and as computers for virtual classes.

2. NUC and Professional Bodies Accreditation

The University presented 42 programmes for NUC accreditation in 2019, 34 were fully accredited and 8 were Interim due mainly to issues of space for the programmes. This is the first time that no programme of the University was denied accreditation. In addition, the University had 100% in all her programmes by the accrediting professional bodies.

The Architects Registration Council accredited the Architecture programme of the University, thus enabling graduates of the programme the necessary license to practice after completing the M.Arch. programme.

3. Centre for Open Distance Learning, CODL

To improve access to quality education among the teeming Nigerian population, the University began the establishment of the CODL in 2007. Preliminary assessment by NUC team of experts shows that the Centre of excellent quality.

For the actualisation of the CODL, 2 staff members were sponsored to the UK for ODL workshop and all staff of the Centre

have attended local conferences and/or Workshops. The NUC has granted full license to the CODL to start operation

4. **Human Capital Development**

Apart from training grants from TETFund, the University trained a lot of its staff both locally and internationally. In May 2019, 3 members of COMSIT staff were sponsored to Italy for a workshop on High Performing Computers, with the intention of upgrading the University NOC to a Data Centre

The University Senate has also resuscitated the Senate Research Grant scheme for staff members.

5. **Staff and Students' Welfare**

The welfare of Staff and students has been a priority. With respect to the provision of basic amenities and conducive environment for learning, the University has maintained high standard, and this is evident in the industrial harmony enjoyed by the University.

----- **COMPILED BY OLUWASEGUN ALABI**



The Faculty of Environmental Sciences Complex



Receiving the JAMB Award of Excellence 2020



The University Community Centre



Agric and Biosystems Engineering



During the University Council's visit to GgMAX Poultry Farm



Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences Laboratory Complex



The Department of Educational Technology



500M Cubic Elevated Pressed Steel Braithwaite Type Water Tank





At the commissioning of the Faculty of Education Lecturer Theatre



At the commissioning of the Surface Metereological Station for the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies



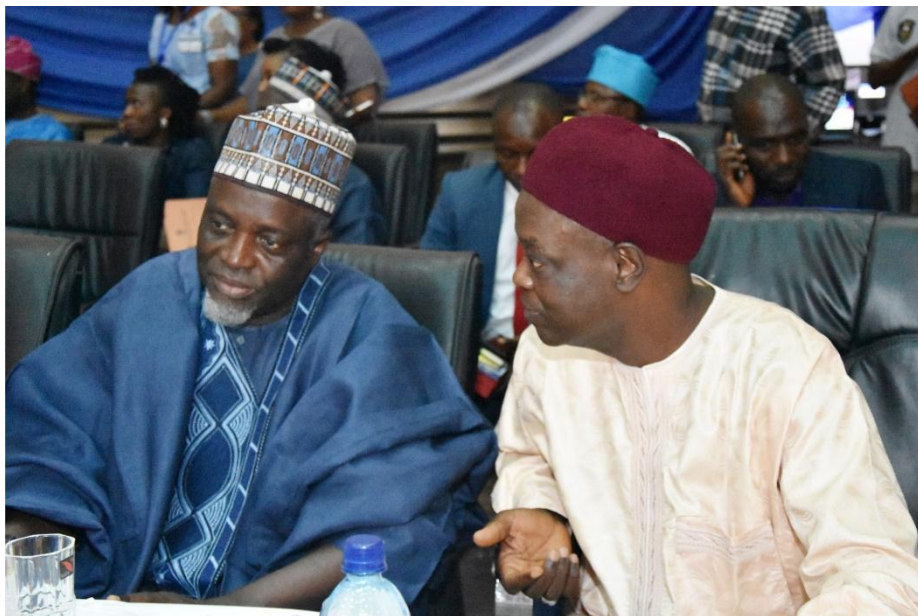
At the MoU signing with the Nigerian Army



During a courtesy visit to the Emir of Ilorin



With former Governor Mimiko of Ondo State during the 4th Kola Olafimihan Lecture



With the JAMB Registrar, Prof. Is'haq Oloyede, during the 10th Anniversary of UNILORIN FM



Inspecting the Main Campus - Fufu road project



With the Kwara State Deputy Governor, Mr Kayode Alabi



The Department of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education





With Prof. Olayinka R. Karim during her Inaugural Lecture



Senate Building Roundabout



UNILORIN Gg. MAX Integrated Poultry Farm



With Mallam Yusuf Olaolu Ali, SAN

Chapter 5

HONOURS AND LAURELS



From Professor T.M. Tamuno, the first Principal of the then University College, Ilorin, to Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, the 10th Vice Chancellor, since the institution became a full-fledged University, the leaders of the University of Ilorin have raised the ivory tower in turns, brick by brick and effort by effort, in tangible and in intangible terms. In terms of structures, edifices and facilities and in terms of leading the academia to teach, to research and to shape the social order and render community services.

For building on this legacy of service and expanding the frontiers of research, Professor Abdulkareem has been recognised by different high-profile governmental and non-governmental bodies and institutions of unassailable repute, with numerous awards and appointments in the last five years. Similarly, the University too has received awards such as the TETFund National Research Fund Utilisation under his stewardship. Notable among the awards, which the Vice Chancellor received in his personal capacity and as an acknowledgement of his distinction as an academic and administrator, are:

1. **Kwara Professors Forum Award**, November 11, 2017
2. **Icon of Educational Transformation** (Garkuwan Mutawassan) awarded by the Northern Youth Council of Nigeria July 6, 2018
3. **Inspirational Leadership Award** given by the University of Ilorin Postgraduate Students Association (POGSASS), October 2, 2018
4. Appointment as **Patron**, Kwara State Chapter of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), June 2019
5. **Hall of Fame Fellowship**, given by the Chattered Institute of Public Resources Management and Politics, Ghana, February 7, 2019
6. **Award of Excellence**, given by the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), February 2019
7. **UNILORIN 89.3 FM Merit Award**, August 20, 2019

8. **Award of Excellence** given by Omo Ibile Igbomina, November 9, 2019
9. **Fellowship of the Nigerian Society of Chemical Engineers (NSChE)**, November 16, 2019
10. **Peace Ambassador**, awarded by the Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies (CPSS), University of Ilorin, December 23, 2019
11. **Fellowship of the Material Science and Technology Society of Nigeria**, December 8, 2020
12. Appointment as **Chairman, Committee of Vice Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (CVCNU)**, March 2021`
13. Appointment as **Representative of Vice Chancellors of Nigerian Universities on National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Board** by the Federal Government, May 2021
14. **Pan African Leadership Prize for Excellence Award** given by the African Student Union Parliament, July 28 2021
15. **Academic Manager of the Year Award**, by the National Education Summit Awards August 8, 2021
16. **Fellowship and Gold Award of Excellence**, given by the Chemical Society of Nigeria (CSN), November 15, 2021
17. **Most Respected CEO Award**, given by the Business Executive Media Group and Federation of West Africa Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FEWACCI), December 3, 2021
18. **Most Outstanding VC Award**, given by the Civil Society Coalition for Transparency (CSCT), August 4, 2022

----- **COMPILED BY MUBARAK OLADOSU**

Chapter 6

A HARVEST OF INAUGURAL LECTURES



As a consummate academic, Professor Abdulkareem sustained the University's culture of excellence in teaching, research and community service. This is manifested in the number of Inaugural Lectures delivered by sundry University Professors during his four-year tenure. These are itemised below:

| S/N | Lecture Number | Lecturer | Title | Date |
|-----|-------------------|--|--|------------------------------|
| 1. | 174 th | Prof. J. S. Omotosho (Dept. of Zoology) | "Fish: Their Prize and Pain" | 2 nd Nov. 2017 |
| 2. | 175 th | Prof. Y. O. Imam (Dept. of Religions) | "In the Service of God and Humanity" | 9 th Nov. 2017 |
| 3. | 176 th | Prof. A. Chijioke (Dept. of Medicine) | "Behaviour of an Amazing Organ, Even at the Expense of our Survival: <i>Nihil Est Mali Apud Nigros</i> " | 30 th Nov. 2017 |
| 5. | 177 th | Prof. H. O. Owolabi (Dept. of Adult and Primary Education) | "Quest for Value and Raising its Worth" | 25 th Jan. 2018 |
| 6. | 178 th | Prof. A. W. O. Olatinwo (Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynaecology) | "Help for the Helpless and Hope for the Hopeless: The Medicine of Reproductive Possibility" | 15 th Feb. 2018 |
| 7. | 179 th | Prof. J. O. Adeniran | "Of Monstrosities in | 15 th March, 2018 |

| | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|
| 8. | 180 th | (Dept. of Surgery) Prof. S. A. Kuranga (Dept. of Surgery) | Children...” “The Experience of a Urological Surgeon in a Tertiary Institution in Sub-Saharan Africa” | 13 th Sept. 2018 |
| 9. | 181 st | Prof. A. E. Oguntoyibo (Dept. of Radiology) | “Delay is not Denial: Invisible made Visible, Giving Hope to the Hopeless through Medical Imaging in Management of Female Infertility” | 27 th Sept. 2018 |
| 10. | 182 nd | Prof. G. K. Osagbemi (Dept. of Epidemiology & Community Health) | “Disasters and Public Health Emergencies: Prior Preparations Prevent Poor Performance” | 27 th June, 2019 |
| 11. | 183 rd | Prof. P. O, Fatoba (Dept. of Plant Biology) | “The Unrecognised are also Important” | 25 th July, 2019 |
| 12. | 184 th | Prof. M. S. Adedayo (Dept. of Mechanical Engineering) | “Optimal Application of Mineral Joining Towards Rapid National Development” | 31 st Oct. 2019 |
| 13. | 185 th | Prof. S. A. Onasanya (Dept. of Educational Technology) | “From the Slate Boards to the Web: Paradigm Shift in Educational Resources Development” | 28 th Nov. 2019 |
| 14. | 186 th | Prof. A. A. Adeoye (Dept. of The Performing Arts) | “Poetics of Legislation and Delegation of Play Directing” | 12 th Dec. 2019 |
| 15. | 187 th | Prof. J. O. Olaoye (Dept. of Agricultural And Biosystems Engineering) | “Gathering the Fragments... that Nothing be Wasted: Advancing Agricultural Mechanization, Energy and Food Sovereignty Catena” | 19 th Dec. 2019 |
| 16. | 188 th | Prof. Y. A. Adediran (Dept. of Electrical and Electronics Engineering) | “In the Realms of Telecommunication, Reliability and Quality Engineering” | 9 th Jan. 2020 |
| 17. | 189 th | Prof. A. A. Oba (Dept. of Jurisprudence And International Law) | “Live and Let Live: Rethinking the Legal Responses to Religious, Cultural and Legal | 16 th Jan. 2020 |

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|-----|-------------------|--|--|------------------------------|
| 18. | 190 th | Prof. M. O. Kolawole (Dept. of Microbiology) | Pluralisms” “Transcending the Viral World: A Tale of Mimicry, Knockdown and Knockout” | 23 rd Jan. 2020 |
| 19. | 191 st | Prof. A. O. Omotosho (Dept. of Islamic Law) | “She has a Lion Share Under the Islamic Law” | 30 th Jan. 2020 |
| 20. | 192 nd | Prof. S. F. Ambali (Fac. of Veterinary Medicine) | “Preventing Pesticides from Poisoning Away our Health and Future: The Oxidative Approach” | 6 th Feb. 2020 |
| 21. | 193 rd | Prof. I. K. Adegun (Dept. of Mechanical Engineering) | “God the Creator, Man the Manipulator: The Journey So Far in Engineering Manipulation of Fluids and Geometrics for Human Life” | 20 th Feb. 2020 |
| 22. | 194 th | Prof. I. O. Taiwo (Dept. of Economics) | “Economic Policy Reset for Nigeria: A Perspective” | 5 th Mar. 2020 |
| 23. | 195 th | Prof. Ramota O. Karim (Dept. of Home Economics and Food Science) | “Good Foods Yesterday Better Today Best Tomorrow” | 12 th Mar. 2020 |
| 24. | 196 th | Prof. A. A. Alaro (Dept. of Islamic Law) | “Islamic Financial Services: The Interplay of Religion, Law and Corporate Social Responsibility” | 22 nd April, 2021 |
| 25. | 197 th | Prof. Nimah M. Abdullaheem (Dept. of Jurisprudence and International Law) | “Genderising the Rights for Partnership not Rivalry, Friendship not Foe, Complementarity not Confrontation” | 29 th April, 2021 |
| 26. | 198 th | Prof. A. B. Alafara (Dept. of Industrial Chemistry) | “Sustainable National Development: Mineral and Material Resources to the Rescue” | 20 th May, 2021 |
| 27. | 199 th | Prof. J. A. Gbadeyan (Dept. of Mathematics) | “God the First and Great Mathematician: Man the Ultimate User” | 15 th July, 2021 |
| 28. | 200 th | Prof. Adetoun O. Idowu (Dept. of Library and Information Science) | “The Convergence of Practice and Teaching: An Exciting World of Library and Information Science” | 22 nd July, 2021 |
| 29. | 201 st | Prof. I. Bariki | “Power Dynamics in | 29 th July, 2021 |

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|-----|-------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|
| | | (Dept. of French) | Translation and Allied Issues” | |
| 30. | 202 nd | Prof. K. Rauf (Dept. of Mathematics) | “A Brief Tour into the World of Inequations that Rule our Everyday Lives” | 19 th Aug. 2021 |
| 31. | 203 rd | Prof. S. O. Ikibe (Dept. of The Performing Arts) | “So It’s Sol in Music as Man Uses Science in Communication” | 26 th Aug. 2021 |
| 32. | 204 th | Prof. Omodele A. Eletta (Dept. of Chemical Engineering) | “Bad Yet Good: Rummaging and Combating for Future Water and Land Security” | 2 nd Sept. 2021 |
| 33. | 205 th | Prof. P. A. Osanaiye (Dept. of Statistics) | “Quality Blended Statistics: A Veritable Tool for Universal Breakthrough” | 23 rd Sept. 2021 |
| 34. | 206 th | Prof. A. I. Abikan (Dept. of Islamic Law) | “Not Without the Owner’s Manual: Your Right To A Share of the Global Wealth” | 30 th Sept. 2021 |
| 35. | 207 th | Prof. O. M. Bamigbola (Dept. of Mathematics) | “Making the Best Use of What You Have: The Mathematical Approach” | 4 th Nov. 2021 |
| 36. | 208 th | Prof. J. O. Ojuade (Dept. of The Performing Arts) | “Dance is Life, Life is Dance: A Cyclical Nature of Man on Earth” | 11 th Nov. 2021 |
| 37. | 209 th | Prof. Olufunmilayo L. Dominic (Dept. of Human Kinetics) | “Movement Mechanics: Performance Interlock of Trauma, Morality and Wellness” | 18 th Nov. 2021 |
| 38. | 210 th | Prof. M. K. Mustapha (Dept. of Zoology) | “Man-Made Lakes: A Means of Eradicating Man-Made Poverty” | 25 th Nov. 2021 |
| 39. | 211 th | Prof. B. V. Owoyele (Dept. of Physiology) | “The Balm in Your Backyard: Use it for Your Health Benefits” | 2 nd Dec. 2021 |
| 40. | 212 th | Prof. E. A. O. Afolayan (Dept. of Physiology) | “Cancer! The Sledge Hammer of Death? No, Not a Death Sentence, if ...” | 9 th Dec. 2021 |

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|-----|-------------------|---|--|----------------------------|
| 41. | 213 th | Prof. O. B. Akinola (Dept. of Anatomy) | “Human Anatomy: Beyond Flesh and Bones” | 13 th Jan. 2022 |
| 42. | 214 th | Prof. M. S. Ajao (Dept. of Anatomy) | “The Belly, The Brain and The Environmental Toxins: Balancing The Conflicts Between Necessity and Cost” | 27 th Jan. 2022 |
| 43. | 215 th | Prof. S. T. Babatunde (Dept. of English) | “Dethroning Silence and Installing Meaning: The Burden of Applied Linguistics” | 3 rd Feb. 2022 |
| 44. | 216 th | Prof. P. O. A. Adeoye (Dept. of Surgery) | “Battling To Keep Our Hearts: Who Will Heal The Bleeding Heart” | 10 th Feb. 2022 |



Chapter 7

IN THE EYES OF THE PEOPLE

(What Unilorites said about Prof. Abdulkareem)



Commitment with Integrity

--- Prof. Sylvia O. Malomo, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)

It has been an amazing experience working with Professor Sulyman Agenjolola Abdulkareem, the Vice Chancellor of the University since his assumption of office in October 2017. I was then the Chairperson of the University of Ilorin Committee on the Development and Administration of the Computer-Based Test (CDCBT) and overseeing examinations at the CBT Centre. The students' welfare was very important to him, thus the installation of the canopy over the walkway leading from the street entrance to the halls was accomplished during his tenure. This brought relief to students and staff during examinations since they no longer queued under the scorching sun for long periods before entering the examination halls. Despite the general economic downturn with its resultant impact in the University, needed equipment such as computer systems and inverters were procured and installed for use in the CBT Centre.

On appointment as the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) in July 2018, I became better aware of the sense of commitment and integrity of Prof. S. A. Abdulkareem. Any time he was in town, he was daily at his seat by 7.00 a.m. and was genuinely leading by example and not by coercion or force. He also maintained an open-door policy to all, including staff, students, and visitors.

One of his several achievements resulting from good foresight is the provision of increased bandwidth and access to the internet for academic purposes. When the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of institutions, it became necessary to explore ways of coping with the subsequent new realities. This foresight was an advantage that was built upon.

The Vice Chancellor's investment in Zoom licenses and encouragement of staff to train for online mode of teaching and learning paid off as the University of Ilorin was able to commence academic activities faster than most federal public universities.

As the Chairman of the University School, the Vice Chancellor provided me with the needed support and encouragement in the efforts to carry out repairs, renovations, and procurements. Noted among these are the renovation of the leaking roofs and ceilings of all the school blocks, fixing with asphalt overlay of the access road to the school, provision of furniture and various equipment for staff and students' use, and procurement of 18-seater and 60-seater buses to ease the transport difficulties of pupils that had lingered for a long time among various other achievements.

The Centre for Ilorin Studies is one of the Centres whose Board is chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic). During the tenure of Professor Abdulkareem, the yearly activities of the Centre were fully supported and successfully implemented despite challenges and difficulties arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, and strike actions by university labour unions. In addition, the construction of the Centre's Gallery was commenced, completed, and commissioned through funding by TETFund. The beautiful edifice will go a long way in not only showcasing the Centre's activity but will also be a tourist attraction, thereby being a source of needed revenue for the Centre and the University.

The dream for the Unilorin Centre for Open and Distance Learning (CODL) located at the mini campus was achieved through the doggedness, push, commitment and hard work of the Vice Chancellor and his directors, with the National Universities Commission (NUC) granting the licence in 2021. For the increasing number of youths seeking university education, this development is one that will enable them to achieve their aims and gladden the hearts of many.

The effort of Professor Abdulkareem to ensure easier access through the rehabilitation of the road linking the College of Health Sciences and the University Teaching Hospital to the Main Campus is an achievement worthy of mention. Similarly, the road linking the Unilorin Campus to the School of Preliminary Studies at Fufu was opened up to the joy and relief of staff, students, and the community, making it more conducive for better effective academic activities.

Diligent, Forthright and Resolute

--- *Professor B. F. Sule, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Management Services)*

I first met Professor S. A. Abdulkareem in 2007 when he was Dean of Student Affairs and Chairman, University Admissions Committee. I was then Dean of Engineering and Technology. We met to resolve admission matters into the Faculty of Engineering and Technology. He was forthright and resolute in his approach. Thereafter, he became the Vice Chancellor at Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. I did not have much to do with him until he returned and became staff of Chemical Engineering Department.

After becoming the Vice Chancellor in 2017, he invited me in 2018 to join his administration in moving the University forward. Since then, we have worked together on several issues relating to physical planning, project management and implementations, staff discipline, campus security, staff welfare, etc.

One major achievement of his administration is that the University was able to streamline the procurement process by creating a Procurement Unit in the Vice Chancellor's Office. The University was able to resolve problems with many externally-funded projects to the satisfaction of all parties.

The annual promotion of staff (academic and non-teaching) was handled properly based strictly on the conditions of service. Staff received their promotions when due. When security on campus continued to pose a challenge, the use of CCTV and engagement of local vigilante were adopted to improve the situation.

Physical development during the period covered road network, expansion of water treatment plant, construction of new Faculty buildings, a community centre and an ultra-modern amphi-theatre.

In 2019, the University relocated the Fulani herdsmen to a land donated by the Emir of Ilorin. This was possible through the implementation of the relocation plan of 2011 involving the construction of a school building, drilling of borehole and financial support to the herdsmen by the University.

Professor Abdulkareem has handled the affairs of the University (physical, material, financial, human resources) very diligently and to the best of his ability. I am sure he will be remembered for the giant strides, which have sustained the University in the top five positions in the country.

Simple, Unassuming, Sincere Man of Integrity

--- *Prof. Mikhail O. Buhari, Deputy Vice Chancellor (RTI)*

My only interaction with Prof. Abdulkareem, prior to my nomination and subsequent election as the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research, Technology and Innovation, was in 2007 on the eve of the 1st Post-UTME test of the University. He was to pay us as we submitted our scripts after grading. What struck me was that he must be trustworthy to have been given the task of handling a lot of cash in a society where not many could be trusted with even less. He also came across as very simple, devoid of any air of superiority.

Since my election and subsequent assumption of office, those first impressions have been reinforced. At our first meeting, he was very clear about his expectations, with clear objectives set and targets given. To the glory of the Almighty, we started out as Boss-Subordinate and are ending as father-son and friends.

Prof Abdulkareem's sincerity of purpose made it easy to win me over as a disciple. He never inserted a personal agenda into any discussion, project, or assignment. Personal aggrandizement meant nothing to him and anyone desiring to see his bad side only needed to start praising him. If anything, he was always self-denigrating and ever eager to accept that he had a lot to learn from other people especially outside his core area of Chemical Engineering.

Prof. Abdulkareem is a man of integrity that is incorruptible. All those with business dealings with the University in the period he held sway as the helmsman are better placed to talk on this. I saw first-hand a man who upheld the ethos of truthfulness, integrity and nobleness borne out of, first, his own personal conviction of what is good and what is bad and, second, an upbringing that impressed it upon him at an early age that you do not covet or touch what is not yours.

He made it easy to work with him. He gave us responsibilities and gave us the authority and other resources needed to carry out these responsibilities. He listened and, on several occasions, he was flexible enough to consider other options when faced with superior arguments. He is blunt to a fault, and I quickly learnt, early in our relationship, that it was always better to be upfront with him on all issues.

Prof. Abdulkareem came, saw and in his own way, contributed his own quota. Only a brave administrator who was courageous enough to break a ceiling could have taken certain decisions he took and consequently, count as achievements some of the things we are now endowed with, tangible or intangible. Circumstances have denied us the opportunity of seeing the full extent of what could have been but, time will unravel his full impact on the state of affairs of this University.

It was a privilege to have served under him as a Deputy Vice Chancellor but more importantly, to have had the privilege of counting on him as a friend and father is a gift I will forever cherish.

Man of High Integrity and Stickler to Due Process

--- Dr. Fola M. Olowoleni, Registrar

Working with Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem was, to me, a whole lot of new experience. A man of high integrity and fairness, the Vice Chancellor is a highly disciplined boss who relates with his subordinates strictly on merit devoid of other considerations.

Professor Abdulkareem is a boss who uses the rules and regulations of the University in staff matters, and he often demands and enforces strict compliance with due process among all staff members.

He is a very effective manager of human, financial and material resources, attributes that largely accounted for the giant strides he was able to achieve during his five-year tenure as Vice Chancellor.

The administration of Professor Abdulkareem brought landmark achievements to the University and, in particular the Registry Unit from 2017 to 2022. These include:

- 2018 Staff Conversion from one cadre to another;
- Provision of Office furniture and computers through the NEEDS assessment initiative;
- Steady promotion of Registry staff on annual basis;
- Increased number of sponsorships for International and Local Conferences for Registry staff;
- Digitisation of Students' Transcripts and hosting it on the University website;
- Provision of more office space at the Academic Support Services (Exams & Records);
- Digitisation of Registry Unit documents through the creation of iCloud office at the Registrar's Office;

Centralized purchase of Registry stationeries for easy reconciliation of usage.

Humongous Impact on the University Library

--- Prof. Abdulwahab Issa, *University Librarian*

Staff Promotion

Promotion exercise as we all know is a yearly procedure for members of staff, who must have distinguished themselves during the year under review. In 2018, a total of 22 Library staff members across all cadres (six senior and 16 junior), who put up their application for the exercise got promoted.

This same feat was achieved in 2019, where all the four (4) candidates that applied scaled through to the next ranks.

The records for the year 2020 promotion exercise, in which 20 candidates applied, also yielded yet another complete outcome.

In 2021, 22 staff members were also promoted to various ranks.

New Library Extension

Upon assumption of duty as the University Librarian, a new library extension was one of the approved projects awaiting funding, as presented to me by my predecessor. To the glory of God, we were able to access the fund and the Library extension was constructed and handed over in 2020. To fully utilise the Library extension, a seven-man technical committee was inaugurated by the University Librarian. As part of terms of reference, the committee was to reach out to users with ICT, wherever they were by creating a virtual library environment responsive to user needs and demands. A robust report was turned in by the committee at the end of the exercise, which provided a solid roadmap for an optimal utilisation of the library extension.

Relocation of e-Library

In July 2020, the e-library was relocated to the new library extension, so as to create an avenue for wider outreach and usage for all the members of the community. A total of 110 new computers were installed in addition to over 100 old ones, for smooth access to subscribed databases. The Law Library, College Library, Faculty of Veterinary Library and senior staff offices also benefited from the distribution of the computer systems for their online operations.

Refurbishing of the Library Carrels

In 2019, a total of twenty (20) carrels lockable study rooms, inhabitable for a long period were refurbished for the library users, especially researchers who needed a quiet work space. The 20 reading tables, chairs, fans and electric needs in each of these carrels were rehabilitated and made functional.

Resuscitation of the Library Bindery

The University Library Bindery Unit, which had been moribund, was also resuscitated in 2019, having written to and gotten approval from the Vice Chancellor. All the equipment was resuscitated to achieve a functioning bindery unit. Thus, backlog of newspapers as well as worn-out Library books are now being mended in the unit.

Conference Attendance

From 2018 to 2021, a total of 16 staff members benefited from local conferences sponsorship, seven (7) Academic and nine (9) Senior Non-teaching staff.

Staff Development

A total of eleven staff members from the University Library benefited from staff development programme of the University, comprising three (3) Academic and eight (8) Junior Non-teaching staff.

He provided a conducive environment for optimum service delivery

--- *Sonde H. Olalekan, Bursar*

The Vice Chancellor, Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, has undoubtedly achieved many developmental successes in the areas of provision of required enabling environment, infrastructure and capacity building, which cut across both teaching and non-teaching units of the University. Specifically, the Bursary Department is one of the departments in the University that benefited tremendously from the Magnanimity of this administration. Some of these benefits are:

- Supply of 20-Seater conference table and chairs for the setting up of a Conference/Board Room for the Department, which is coming up for the first time in the history of the Department.
- Supply of befitting furniture items to all the Units within the Department, to replace the old ones.
- Supply of office working tools such as Laptops, Printers, Photocopiers, Air Conditioners and Scanners, so as to enhance the effectiveness of the working condition for staff.
- Improvement of staff capacity through the provision of Staff Development Awards to the staff of the Bursary Department to pursue Professional Accounting Training.
- Sponsorship of Bursary Department staff to the Mandatory Continuing Professional Development (MCPD) programme of both the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) and Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN), with a view to renew their professional skills and competence for effective service delivery.
- Conversion of staff on Executive cadre who have acquired professional qualifications to professional cadre.
- Complete tiling of the floor of the Bursary Department.

- Resuscitating of the Bursary Department's Main Store, where all used documents are kept.
- Conversion from Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) to International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), with up-to-date Audited Financial Statements.
- Staff promotion as and when due. This includes promotion of additional six (6) Chief Accountants to the position of Deputy Bursars, making ten (10) Deputy Bursars in total.
- Significant increase in the University's internally Generated Revenue (IGR) generation.
- Revamping the Bursary Department file room, where all the University Staff Files are kept.

The Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem-led administration has generally provided a conducive environment for staff to enjoy carrying out their duties with peaceful working relationship.

A Righteous Leader

--- *Prof. Olanrewaju Timothy Adedoyin, Provost, CoHS*

Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem is a quintessential leader whose greatest legacy and achievement to my mind was the fact that he gave everyone, irrespective of their ethnicity, tribe or religious persuasion, a level playing ground, sense of dignity, belonging and ownership of the University dream.

He successfully built bridges of love across all artificial boundaries and dared to extend same to the ASUU imbroglio, which hitherto looked like a no-go area. The latter stood him out as a peace-maker, as the resolution of that longstanding crisis remains to his credit.

He took humility to another level by bringing the exalted office of the Vice Chancellor closer to everyone through his extraordinary simplicity. He operated not just an open-door policy but a “no-door policy” and was accessible to and approachable by all.

Professor Abdulkareem meant well and did well for all with many being promoted and converted to other schemes of service during his tenure. He successfully piloted the ship of the University and maintained continuous unbroken session despite the set-back of the COVID-19 pandemic and ASUU Strike; a feat that the students would remain ever grateful for and accordingly compensated all academic staff with letter of commendation and deferment of leave for those who wanted it.

He sustained and increased the tempo of infrastructural development and ensured its even distribution throughout the campus, devoid of

lopsidedness. I am particularly grateful to him as his tenure was a defining, outstanding and glorious moment for the College of Health Sciences in terms of cordiality, inclusiveness and numerous landmark infrastructural development ranging from the 675 bed-space (PPP) hostel, the Molecular Diagnostic and Research Laboratory, the Institute of Medical Research and Training, the COBES Shao Outpost building, the Faculty of Clinical Sciences building, the Department of Anatomy building, furnishing of the Physiology Laboratory, internet connectivity to both old and new College and the icing on the cake, which was the asphalt overlay of the roads from the Faculty of Pharmacy to the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital (UITH).

This is apart from appointments of at least eight Directors and four Chairmen of important University Committees from the College, all of whom are excelling in those assignments. He also facilitated the success of our accreditation visits and established the Faculty of Basic Clinical Sciences, the Departments of Dentistry and Radiography in the College.

Professor Abdulkareem had tremendous respect for the Committee of Provost and Deans (CoPD) under my watch as Chairman. He would painstakingly peruse and consider all our decisions and took all our pieces of advice and observations seriously. Indeed, he saw us as partners in progress and sought our counsels on knotty issues from time to time.

Despite his humility, he was a firm, honest, prudent, straightforward, God-fearing, just and fair-minded person. He was indeed a righteous leader!

May the Almighty God reward him and his entire family beyond his imaginations and give the University a good successor who will carry on and build on his good works.

A Blessing to the PG School

-- Prof. Moji T. Bakare-Odunola, Dean, Postgraduate School

The ground-breaking records of Professor Sulyman Agenjola Abdulkareem as Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin have gone well in the annals of the Postgraduate School.

As one of the beneficiaries of both Academic and Administrative juggernaut, the Postgraduate School has, since Professor Abdulkareem's assumption of office, benefited in many ways, thereby raising the achievement bars of the School. These include but not limited to the following:

Movement to the new PG School Building

In February 2020, shortly before the outbreak of the global pandemic, COVID-19, Professor Abdulkareem gave the School a marching order to move to the new PG School building at the Dam site. The new building, which is an architectural masterpiece, provides enough space for the Dean and other staff members of the School amongst numerous facilities provided therein. The Board Room is spacious and of standard comparable to what is obtainable in any standard University in the world. The building, by its location, is blessed with a serene environment.

Provision of Furniture

Sequel to the marching order, Professor Abdulkareem made available funds to furnish the building with new sets of furniture for staff and the Board Room, curtains for offices and Board Room as well as supply of complete sets of computer systems and accessories.

Prompt Payment of Examiners' Honoraria

Since Professor Abdulkareem's assumption of office as Vice Chancellor, external examiners of the Postgraduate School have been enjoying prompt payments of their honoraria. He promptly approved requests for payment.

Production of Students' Handbook

Records have it that since the inception of the Postgraduate School in the University of Ilorin, there had never been Postgraduate students' Handbook. When the idea of having one was presented to him, Professor Abdulkareem bought into the idea and made available necessary financial assistance to ensure that the project was a success. The production of the Handbook was therefore, to the glory of God and good support of the Vice Chancellor.

He's Simple, Plain, and Down-to-earth

--- *Prof. Ibraheem A. Katibi, Dean, Faculty of Clinical Sciences*

Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem is a simple, plain, down-to-earth, quintessential achiever and university administrator. I have been privileged to work closely with the last five Vice Chancellors of our great University and even closer with the 10th VC, Professor Abdulkareem. His tenure witnessed my emergence as two-term Dean of the Faculty of Clinical Sciences and Chairman and member of several strategic university committees, including the overall chairman of the University Muslim Community (UMC).

Permit me to illustrate my view of this uncommon and dynamic university scholar with what transpired between him as VC and myself as a sitting Dean at the outset of my deanship. The Office of the Dean, Faculty of Clinical sciences relocated to the new college few months before my assumption of office. I was ushered into a well-furnished office but no air-conditioner. I wrote a memo to the VC stating my case and justifying why each of the seven rooms constituting the Deanery should be provided with air-conditioners for optimal performance and productivity.

Professor Abdulkareem minuted back to me that: “Dean, you will get air-conditioners either from your faculty’s vote or somehow but the VC would not need to approve special allocation to your faculty for that”. Later that year, I bought only one unit for the Dean’s office proper but before the end of the year, we got about ten other units through NEEDS Assessment funding and every room in the Deanery, including driver’s and casual staff waiting areas, is now fully air-conditioned. The message is, you only needed to state your case meritoriously and be patient with him.

This aside, the College of Health Sciences witnessed monumental/phenomenal infrastructural and academic development during his tenure as VC. Lots of new buildings, roads, departments, programmes and Faculties were added in the College of Health Sciences.

Even though the VC served the entire University, faculty of clinical sciences benefitted immensely from his pragmatic disposition to welfare of staff culminating in the avoidance of stagnation amongst our staff and promotion to the Professorial grade of over three scores of academic staff in the faculty during the period of his tenure. Similarly, he midwived our successful NUC accreditation in 2019 through generous support and prepared us comfortably for the already due council (MDCN) accreditation. His tenure also witnessed successful accreditation by the Nursing and midwifery council of Nigeria.

Prof. Abdulkareem’s tenure also witnessed the historic carving out of the new Faculty of Basic Clinical sciences in the College of Health Sciences, thereby re-establishing the pre-eminence and large status of the faculty of clinical sciences in the entire University. Similarly, the Department of Dentistry, which ultimately will dove-tail into the Faculty of Dentistry in the College and Open and Distant Learning programmes were also approved during his tenure for the faculty for the first time ever.

As Chairman, University Board of Health, I have been opportune to see telescopically, the humane and kind disposition of Prof. Abdulkareem to all and sundry on campus, irrespective of their background, religion and ideological leaning. To my utmost surprise, the VC was often far more generous and eager to help members of the university community afflicted with diseases, even more than the advisory technical committee of the Board

of Health. I also know that he does a lot at personal level, dolling out assistance out of his own pocket.

As Chairman, Board of Survey of the university for nearly eight years, half of which was during the tenure of Prof. Abdulkareem. The VC gave the Board a free hand and never, at any time, interfered with the decisions of this Board or any other Board or Committee of the University that I chaired throughout his tenure. Nearly 100 per cent of the time, our decisions were upheld and approved by him, thereby emboldening us to do what we believed was right and just.

As Chairman, University of Ilorin Muslim Community (UMC), I am in a position to know and also have privileged information on poor and indigent staff and students of the university, including the widows and orphans. I can categorically say that Prof. Abdulkareem has been a generous and silent giver and problem-solver without fun-fair. He is a clear illustration of the directive in the scripture that what the right hand gives, the left should not know. It was from him that I imbibed the concept of timely arrival at the mosque for the Jumma service every Friday, though reinforced by both Imams AGAS Oladosu and Nasir Abdulsalam. Despite the pressure of office and engagements, Prof. Abdulkareem was always punctual at Jumma service before the last adman (call to prayer) was made, up until COVID-19 pandemic broke out. This was so consistent that he almost had a permanent seat at the outside wing of the university Jumma mosque.

Notwithstanding all that I have said so far, the most significant landmark achievement of Prof. Abdulkareem's five-year tenure is the giant stride in putting the University on the path of financial self-sustenance and stability with two strategic partnerships with Oriental Energy through mechanized farming and CBN through poultry (GgMax Poultry). Should these two projects survive and blossom, his name would have been written in gold in the annals of the university because of the quantum of revenue potentially accruable from both.

Finally, his professionalism, frankness, simplicity, focus and above all, ability to lead the way through the Covid challenge for continuity in university activities are all exemplary and commendable. It is, therefore, my fervent prayer that Almighty God be with him in all his future undertakings. Amen.

Consistent, Reliable, Sincere and Amiable

-- Prof. I. P. Ifabiyi, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences

Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem is indeed God-sent. In the over 20 years of my encounter with him, I found him to be compassionate but firm,

truthful, faithful, dependable, goal-getting, determined, passionate, and focused. These perceptions of him have not changed. He is consistent, reliable and dependable.

In the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS), Professor Abdulkareem is seen as an ‘angel’. Prior to his coming, the FSS felt abandoned in the scheme of events. Our infrastructure was outdated and moribund. His coming restored our hope. Out of the seven classrooms in FSS, five were completely rehabilitated (from floor to roof) by him.

Also, several of our Faculty members, for the first time, featured as Chairpersons/Members in several Senate Committees. Many also came as Chairpersons/Members of University Committees. Indeed, the highly-revered position of Director of Academic Planning (DAP), for the first time, now features an eminent Professor of Economics (Professor G.T. Arosanyin) from FSS. We have never had it this good.

Professor Abdulkareem, you are like no-other, an honest, sincere, amiable, understanding, diligent, passionate VC. We shall continue to celebrate you as our icon. We wish you greater heights and a very promising and prosperous future.

He risked his body and life for the greater good

--- Prof. Adesina L. Azeez, Dean, Faculty of Communication and Information Sciences

Anyone entrusted with power will abuse it if he or she is not also animated with the love of truth and virtue. Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem was animated with the love of truth and virtue, and he thereby did not abuse the power of the office he held for five years. He had the conviction and assurance that he would always do the right thing, and this assurance had always emboldened his strength of purpose, boldness and energy of will in him.

Professor Abdulkareem does not belong to that group of presumptuous perfect people who will not speak because they do not want to speak wrong, or who will not do anything in order not to do wrong. He risked his wellbeing, risked his body, risked his life and risked his good reputation for the greater good and for a great cause. He is not weak in character and purpose.

Prof. Abdulkareem is strangely contented – perhaps because he knows that what God reserves for him in the hereafter is better than worldly things. To know what is right and not to do it is the worst cowardice – Confucius. Abdulkareem is not a coward. He was just doing his duty even

when many were sneering at him. A man's greatness can be measured by his enemies.

"If you have anything really valuable to contribute to the world it will come through the expression of your own personality, that single spark of divinity that sets you off and makes you different from every other living creature" – Sulyman Agenjolola Abdulkareem has that spark of divinity that sets him off and makes him different from many other leaders. He does not seek cheap popularity because he knows that such popularity has its own snares, and no real benefit.

He is more firm, frank and less indulging to the individuals that are closer to him because he loathes injustice. He renders to everyone that which is his or her due. I saw this divine and enduring personality every day in my closest interactions with him and each time I had interactions with Professor Abdulkareem, I pray to God to give me the strength of character, wisdom, courage and virtues he is endowed with.

Professor Abdulkareem rarely utters 'Yes' to any request just to please people or to avoid trouble. His 'Yes' or 'No' is usually from the deepest bottom of his heart; and is often the true reflection of what he means. He says what he means all the time. When he appointed me the Ag Director of the Advancement Centre, I complained to him that the ramshackle building that has been the Centre's office was inappropriate for or not fitting the glamour associated with the Centre. I begged that the building should be renovated to a level that could fit the allure and mandate of the Centre.

The VC had answers to any request any time, and his answers are always frank without any form of deception. His answer to my request was that "I will see what I can do about it". Some weeks after, he asked the Director of Works to evaluate the building and present to him quickly an estimate of what could be used to renovate the building to my taste. After a lot of scrutiny and interrogations of the financial estimate of the proposal presented to him, he approved that the renovation should be awarded to a contractor so that it could be properly done to my taste. The renovated building, close to the Students' Affairs office, now stands distinct in that corridor of the University with a tasteful interior that befits the allure of the Centre.

But not long after the renovation, I went back to him to urge and beg him to give the Centre a more befitting new building that would glorify further the name and attraction of the Centre- just like we have it at the University of Ibadan where the Advancement Centre building is arguably one of the best ultramodern buildings in the University. As usual, he would always put up a debate with anyone that presented a proposal to him to give the person (presenting the proposal) the opportunity to lay bare to him the reasons why he should accept and act on the proposal. He loves logic and

analytical presentation, and you were likely to be one of those he would raise his voice at if you were not sure of what you were presenting to him. Thus, he was very hard on me interrogating me on why the Centre needed a new building after he had spent so much on the renovation of the building that had been known as the Advancement Centre for years. After a lot of sweat in presenting my argument convincingly for the new building, he acceded to my request and said “Azeez, I will see what we should do about that”. Some months after my presentation, a memo was sent to me from the Physical Planning Unit requesting me to present an architectural idea of how I wanted a new building for the Advancement Centre to look like. Unknown to me, the Vice Chancellor was looking out for a TETFund intervention for which he could seek the approval of the Tenders Board for the construction of a new ultramodern building for the Advancement Centre. Not long after he got the approval, I was elected the Dean of my Faculty. In spite of that, the construction was on course because Professor Abdulkareem did not approve the construction for my sake, but for the sake and glory of the Centre and the University. Today, I will say that the building is standing distinct as one of his legacy projects in the University.

The long stretch of unending ASUU strike has limited the story I could tell about Professor Abdulkareem in relation to my Faculty. I became the Dean of the Faculty in August 2021; ASUU strike began in February 2022. Nevertheless, I will never forget how the Vice Chancellor rescued me in my struggle and desire to fix the Faculty Lecture Theatre that had been in a nearly useless condition for more than a year before I was elected. The ground floor of the Lecture Theatre, which housed many lecturers’ offices, was gutted by fire, thereby all electrical installations in the ground floor were disconnected. Even though insurance on the building covered the damage on the electrical installations and on the walls of the north end of the ground floor, the Insurance Company that had the mandate and responsibility was not forthcoming. So, when the accreditation of the Department of Mass Communication was approaching in November 2021, I approached the Vice Chancellor to appeal for approval to fix the damage on the Lecture Theatre without necessarily waiting for the Insurance Company. As we know him, he is a righteous man who will want to follow procedures and rules to the letter. What he did to get the insurance cover and some other contributions from within, which returned the Lecture Theatre quickly back to its full functional capacity, will never be forgotten.

To me, the curses of the malice of detractors, envy and arrogance from malign forces have been turned into blessings for Prof. Abdulkareem. Congratulations Sir. You have done your own best in the most righteous way. The reward of your honest deeds will not be lost. God, in whose fear you did

all what you did for the glory of the University of Ilorin, will reward you abundantly- even if detractors condemn you.

His solid support lifted Agric Faculty to lofty heights

---- Prof. Olayinka R. Karim, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture

Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem encouraged and supported the Faculty of Agriculture tremendously, most especially on setting the pace for cross-cutting research, teaching and community service. His collegial leadership enhanced the excellent achievements of the Faculty during his tenure. Prof. Abdulkareem was always ready to tackle all issues concerning the Faculty energetically, as he stressed at several forums the importance of the Faculty in National Food Production and Food Security. He solidly transformed the physical appearance of the Faculty.

The record of the physical renewal and expansion at the Faculty during his five-year tenure is breathtaking. This facilitated the numerous awards and grants received by many members of the Faculty during his tenure. The full accreditation of all the programmes granted by the National Universities Commission in 2018 and 2021 is a revelation of his commitment to the growth and development of the Faculty. His distinct contributions also earned the University an Award of Excellence for establishing the Best Sasakawa Technology Village in Nigeria. The Award was given during the 35th anniversary celebration of Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA) activities in Nigeria in 2021. The students also won many laurels and awards in national competitions due to the distinct support and encouragement received from the Vice Chancellor. His open administration system facilitated the emergence of the First Female Dean in the Faculty in 2021.

Here are some of his numerous contributions to the Faculty between 2017 and 2022:

1. Teaching and Research Farm

The Vice Chancellor tremendously improved the infrastructure and activities of the farm. He upgraded the status of the farm to facilitate teaching and research activities in the Faculty as follows:

- i. Provision of Borehole for water supply for the livestock.
- ii. Extension of Electricity from the mains to the farm.
- iii. Restocking of livestock population on the T & R Farm viz: poultry (layers), large and small ruminants.
- iv. Construction of 5,000 broiler capacity unit on the T & R Farm.

- v. Construction of the Poultry Unit for undergraduate research projects.
- vi. Restoration of the Screen House.
- vii. Repair of *gari* production equipment.
- viii. Repair of two tractors to aid crop production and research activities.
- ix. Modernisation of the Screen House to accommodate present-day research activities in Agronomy, Forest Resource Management and Crop Protection Departments.
- x. Grant of N5 million for broiler production through the Consultancy Unit.
- xi. Construction of Nursery Fence and Shed for the Department of Forest Resources Management.
- xii. Construction of concretised tank stand and installation of 5000 litres water capacity at the Nursery of Department of Forest Resources Management.
- xiii. Granting of 5ha farm land near the University gate to the Department of Fisheries.
- xiv. Facilitated the donation of a Fish Hatchery Farm by the 1989 Alumni set of the Faculty.
- xv. Provision of borehole at the Fish Hatchery Farm.
- xvi. Electrification of the Fish Hatchery Farm.
- xvii. Installation of aquaponic system at the Green House.
- xviii. Construction of mini fish hatchery with 2000 litres capacity water storage tank at the Faculty green house.
- xix. Construction of a fish processing unit.

2. **Lecture Rooms:**

- i. Building of 250-seater Lecture hall for the undergraduate students.
- ii. Repair of chairs and tables in all the lecture rooms.

3. **Laboratories:**

- i. Renovation of the IR Leo Vande Mierop Biotechnology Laboratory. The laboratory was refurbished to encourage and sustain interest in Molecular Biology Studies in the Faculty and University at large.
- ii. Provision of fund for the construction of Value addition mini factory for the production of Spiced *kulikuli* at the Department of Home Economics and Food Science.
- iii. Acquisition of laboratory equipment for teaching and research.

4. Staff Offices:

- i. Provision of modern furniture for staff offices

5. Faculty Environment:

- i. Beautification of the Faculty environment with trees and flowers.
- ii. Supported the provision of solar-powered street lights by the 1994 Alumni set.

Several Positive Impacts on Engineering Faculty

--- Prof. D. S. Ogunniyi, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Technology

The administration of Prof. Sulyman Age Abdulkareem has impacted positively on the Faculty of Engineering and Technology in many areas. Some of these are enumerated as follows:

1. Professor Abdulkareem initiated the policy of giving a grant of N2 million to Departments due for accreditation and it greatly assisted Departments in the Faculty to repair some equipment and to refurbish some buildings. This policy assisted many of our Departments to secure full accreditation status from the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC).
2. Before the administration of Prof. Abdulkareem, the Department of Materials and Metallurgical Engineering had no foundry, which is required for accreditation in the Department. The Faculty made a passionate plea to the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Abdulkareem, who approved fund for the construction of a Foundry. It is noteworthy that he trusted the Faculty enough to allow the Faculty to construct the Foundry through direct labour. Also, his administration approved fund for the construction of a teaching studio in the Department of Computer Engineering.
3. The administration of Prof. Abdulkareem gave free hand to Faculties to recruit their Academic staff as it was demonstrated in the last recruitment exercise. This policy ensures that appropriate Lecturers and Technologists were recruited. Also, the administration must be commended for respecting the recommendations of the Faculty in the recruitment of staff and in other matters.
4. Support was given to implement the TETFund Intervention in Special Science and Engineering and Technology Project, which resulted in the establishment of the following laboratories in the Faculty of

- Engineering: Autotronics, Electronics, Mechatronics, and Refrigeration and Air conditioning.
5. Using his influence, Professor Abdulkareem facilitated the construction of two 400-seater lecture theatres, one 300-seater drawing studio for the Faculty and a building complex for the Department of Chemical Engineering.
 6. The Faculty appreciates the transparency of Prof. Abdulkareem's administration and his prompt treatment of memos and letters.
 7. Also, the Faculty enjoyed the open-door policy of Professor Abdulkareem.

A Courageous Leader with Listening Ears

--- Prof. O. B. Akinola, Dean, Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences

Preamble

History would not forget in a hurry the amiable and exemplary personality, remarkable contributions, and enviable achievements of the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, Prof. Sulyman Agenjolola Abdulkareem (2017-2022). I worked closely with Prof. Abdulkareem in my capacity as the Dean of the Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences (FBMS) from 1st of August 2021 following the splitting of the 'old' Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences (FBMS) into two in 2020 to create the Faculties of Basic Clinical Sciences and Basic Medical Sciences. The creation of the Faculty of Basic Clinical Sciences in itself was an answer to prayer and was one of the many contributions of Prof. Abdulkareem to the growth of the College of Health Sciences (COHS).

Professor Abdulkareem is a man with a courageous spirit and listening ears. His relationship with his subordinates was cordial, including his official relationship with the Deans. I particularly admire his style of administration, which was fair, transparent and patriotic. Hardly was any major decision taken on my Faculty by the Administration without the VC getting me involved as Dean. During his tenure, the human, technical and infrastructural development of the FBMS in particular and the COHS in general, was unprecedented.

Procurement of Laboratory Equipment

The laboratories in the Faculty were all renovated, furnished and adequately equipped, thanks to the magnanimity of Professor Abdulkareem. Among others, several new air conditioners and desktop computers were procured for the Anatomy Gross and Histology labs to make teaching and learning more conducive; while automatic tissue processor and microtome

were procured for the Anatomy preparatory room. The Physiology Department got a number of new equipment worth millions of naira, including the multipurpose PowerLab. Owing to the latter, the BSc Physiology degree programme received full NUC accreditation in 2021.

Infrastructural Development of the Faculty

Currently, work is nearly completed on the construction of a new office complex for the Department of Anatomy at the College of Health Sciences, which the Vice Chancellor promised to deliver before his tenure ends. The staff of the College and UITH would also be eternally grateful to Prof. Abdulkareem for the asphalt overlay of the link road between the University permanent site and the UITH, which was certainly capital-intensive. In addition, the Vice Chancellor also generously approved the re-furbishing of the Biochemistry lab; and commissioned the elegantly re-furnished Pharmacology lab on 22nd October, 2021 as part of the activities marking the 2021 Convocation Ceremonies of Unilorin.

Human Resource Development

Professor Abdulkareem was known to be transparent, thorough and impartial with respect to staff capacity development and promotions. A number of junior academic staff of the Faculty completed their doctoral degree programme. Similarly, some academic staff members were approved to enjoy postdoctoral training in overseas lab in the USA and Canada to enhance their research competencies. Deserving senior academic staff were also promoted to the rank of full professors, while qualified non-teaching staff were also promoted without fear or favour.

Furthermore, owing to the conducive atmosphere created by the Vice Chancellor, a number of staff in the Faculty were either appointed or elected into positions of responsibilities in the University.

Conclusion

There is, therefore, no doubt that Prof. Abdulkareem had left his indelible footprints on the sand of time as the 10th Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin. He would, therefore, not be forgotten in a hurry by those who witnessed his giant strides.

He had special interest in Management Sciences

--- Prof. Umar Gunu, Dean, Faculty of Management Sciences

The Faculty of Management Sciences is barely a decade old, yet, it is a force to reckon with, in the scheme of things in the University. This claim is rooted

in the special interest the administration of Prof. Sulyman Age Abdulkareem has in the Faculty. Specifically, within his tenure as Vice Chancellor, the Faculty recorded several ground-breaking achievements, significant among which were the successful accreditation of several undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the Departments of Accounting, Finance, Business Administration, Industrial Relations and Personnel Management and that of Public Administration.

In relation to capacity building, several members of the Faculty also secured TETFund scholarship for their PhD programmes in both local and foreign institutions. In augmenting the staff capacity of the Departments that are short of hands, adjunct staff members were recruited. Aside these, many members of the Faculty gained promotion to the ranks of Professors, Readers and Senior Lecturers.

In relation to appointments within the span of five years, the Faculty produced Prof. M. A. Ijaiya as the Director of Unilorin Petrol and Prof. M. Aremu as the Directors of Unilorin Petrol and Unilorin Water consecutively. The solid support of the Vice Chancellor was equally felt in the appointment of the same Prof. Aremu of Marketing Department to the exalted position of Rector at the Kwara State College of Education, Oro. Significantly, the current Dean of the Faculty also occupies the prestigious position of Chairman of the University Admissions Committee. While all these were in motion, the Vice Chancellor also overhauled key critical infrastructure in the Faculty. Additional office spaces and Classrooms were allocated to the Faculty with top-notch furniture to match.

He Left Indelible Marks in Basic Clinical Sciences

--- Prof. A.A. Akanbi II, Dean, Faculty of Basic Clinical Sciences

We thank the Almighty God for everything. I know we will all come to appreciate you even more than we try to fill the vacuum you are leaving behind.

In your five years of leadership, the Faculty of Basic Clinical Sciences came in to being after so many years of promises and this facilitates our accreditation by the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria. You did not only create the Faculty, you gave special attention to our needs. Within a year of our establishment, the Faculty Building at the new College began. You ameliorate our suffering by the asphalt-laying on the road linking the University permanent site and the Teaching Hospital.

All these achievements will remain indelible in our minds. May the Almighty Allah help you to accomplish your other endeavours in life.

Very Supportive to Pharmacy

--- Dr Mohammed O. Amali, Ag. Dean, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences

My numerous encounters with Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkarim can be traced back to over a decade ago while he was the Director of the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) and later the Dean of Student Affairs. As a recognised and astute academic, his qualities as an administrator were brought to the fore in those capacities. These virtues ensured he was appointed first as the Vice Chancellor of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin before being given the mandate to mount the saddle of leadership at the University of Ilorin in 2017.

Following in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessors he has definitely left his mark in the sands of time at the University of Ilorin as our Vice Chancellor within this period. He appointed me as the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences in August 2020, which came to me as a surprise to say the least. I thus resolved to make sure I was not found wanting in any way. Throughout this period he has been extremely supportive of the Faculty, ensuring that we never lacked any essential material.

Notable events that have endeared the outgoing Vice Chancellor to our hearts are numerous, and I will go ahead to mention a few. His support ensured the successful staging of the Pharmacist induction ceremonies in 2021 to guarantee that our Pharmacy graduates proceeded on their internship on time. During this period, the University administration assisted us in no small measure to ensure the proper hosting of guests from the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria. The VC operated an open door policy throughout, which contributed to the ease with which the Faculty was able to recruit essential sabbatical and visiting lecturers to cover critical areas of instruction. The upgrading of the Drug Information Unit and supply of over sixty electronic tablets for use by the students of the Faculty was made possible during his tenure as the Vice Chancellor. The repair of critical infrastructure also did not escape his attention even when faced with paucity of funds. Most importantly was the massive support received by the Faculty for the conduct of the accreditation exercise by the National Universities Commission (NUC) following which the Faculty was granted full accreditation status.

Through all this, Professor Sulyman Abdulkarim has always been humane and forthright in expressing his desire to make the University of Ilorin a pace setter locally and also globally. Thus, spurring all those around him myself inclusive, to set targets that will make these desires achievable. I would definitely miss these attributes even though they have been ingrained in my psyche for which I am eternally grateful.

Gave Environmental Sciences an Identity of its Own

--- Dr. Abdullateef Bako, Ag. Dean, Faculty of Environmental Sciences

New Faculty Building

In November 2021, under the leadership of Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, the Faculty of Environmental Sciences moved into the new Faculty building with three other Departments (Estate Management, Quantity Surveying, Surveying, and Geoinformatics). These four buildings represent the first phase of the two-phased project for the Faculty.

Departmental Accreditations

Under his leadership, all the four Departments scheduled for accreditation exercises from 2020-2022 flourished and were handed full Accreditation.

Technical Infrastructural Development

The Faculty progressed tremendously in the area of technical infrastructure as the ₦30, 000,000 NEEDS Assessment fund was used to secure high-power desktop computers and Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS). The Faculty received an interactive board from the University during the dispensation.

The Faculty won six Institutional-Based Research grants between 2020 and 2022. The Department of Urban and Regional Planning won three, the Department of Surveying and Geoinformatics won two, and the Department of Estate Management won one.

The Department of Urban and Regional Planning was awarded the Best Planning School for the 2021/2022 academic session by its regulatory body, the Town Planners Registration Council of Nigeria (TOPREC). The award presentation was received on the 21st of July 2022 in Abuja.

In addition, the Faculty witnessed progress, measured by the number of staff on postgraduate training outside and within Nigeria. Specifically, two of our staff members got TETFund grants to study outside Nigeria. At least five staff members benefitted from either the TETFund local training fund or Staff Development Award. All these are pointers to the Faculty's growth during the tenure of Professor Abdulkareem. Under his leadership, a Faculty member from the Department of Urban and Regional Planning received a fully-funded Commonwealth Scholarship Award tenable in the United Kingdom.

Dogged, Diligent and Unrelenting

--- Prof. B. A. Ompidan, Director, Centre for Open and Distance Learning

Without any reasonable doubt, Professor Sulyman Abdulkareem is a “Messiah” sent to deliver us from a decayed education system, especially in this part of the country. From the life of our indefatigable Vice Chancellor, I have learned that leadership is not to lord-over but to be practically involved; leadership is not only to give instruction but to participate effectively in the actualisation process.

Our dear Vice Chancellor’s doggedness, diligence, and unrelenting attribute have brought about all these evident and numerous achievements. The sacrifices he made, which ensured the accreditation of the Centre for Open and Distance Learning in this great institution cannot be over-emphasised. Before his coming on board as the Vice Chancellor, we had longed to have “a better by far” Open and Distance Learning programme, as the system of education in this dispensation requires it.

Thus, due to his passion for open and distance learning, the centre that was established in 2007 was formally accredited by the National Universities Commission (NUC) in October 2021. Under the approval of the Vice-Chancellor, the institution made resources available for us to meet up with the required standard to setting up CODL in any Nigerian University. The establishment of a multimillion Naira state-of-the-art studio which can compete favourably with that of any university in the world is one of the numerous projects made available in the Centre. Also, the buildings in the Centre were restructured and furnished.

The centre has also been accredited by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board [JAMB] as a licensed CBT Examination Centre, in fact, the centre for the first time participated in the 2022 Mock and JAMB TUME examinations held on the 9th of April, 2022 and 6-10th May, 2022 respectively.

The Vice Chancellor provided a borehole in the Centre. His administration also made available many computers that hundreds of students could use simultaneously. Not only did he do that, he also ensured that quality books were made available in the library of the Centre which equally housed the e-library.

The achievements recorded point to an undeniable fact that the tenure of Professor Sulyman Abdulkareem as the Vice Chancellor of the better by far university cannot be forgotten as generations to come will keep referencing these accomplishments. So once again, we celebrate our leader. May Allah continually soar him higher, Aameen. We wish you the best of God throughout your life.

A Blessing to Unilorin JUPEB Foundation School

---- Prof. L. A. Usman, Director, Unilorin JUPEB

The Joint Universities Preliminary Examinations Board (JUPEB) is a national examination body approved by the Federal Government of Nigeria, with the responsibility of conducting common and standard examinations for the candidates, who have been exposed to a minimum of one-year approved learning in the universities and are seeking Direct Entry admissions into university courses at the 200 level in Nigerian and partnering foreign universities.

The University of Ilorin, as one of the partnering universities for JUPEB, has its JUPEB unit under a Directorate. The present Director of University of Ilorin JUPEB is Professor Lamidi Ajao Usman. The unit, which commenced in 2017/2018 academic session, is given the responsibility of training candidates for JUPEB examination. Successful candidates under this programme are eligible for Direct Entry admission into 200 level in the University of Ilorin and other participating Universities through JAMB.

Remarkably, the University of Ilorin JUPEB Foundation School witnessed administrative and structural transformation under the Vice Chancellorship of Prof. Sulyman Age Abdulkareem, which positioned it for more effectiveness, efficiency and overall performance in the discharge of the statutory mandate of the School.

The milestones achieved under Professor Abdulkareem's administration include the following:

Granting autonomy to the JUPEB, which used to be under the School of Preliminary Studies. The Unilorin JUPEB became a Directorate in 2018 with the appointment of Prof. Elizabeth Ore Omosewo as its pioneer Director.

With the excision, the following University units were replicated at the JUPEB Foundation School: Bursary Unit, Registry Unit, Counselling Center, Works and Security for effective day-to-day running of the school.

For his love for a conducive working and learning environment, Professor Abdulkareem ensured that the Administrative Block, the Hostel, Library, Laboratories and Clinic were given befitting renovations with adequate furniture and equipment to make them habitable and comfortable for both staff and students.

Restocking of the Library with modern books for all subjects offered at Unilorin JUPEB Foundation School was also achieved during Professor Abdulkareem's tenure.

Realising the need that medical officers have to be available at all times to attend to the students of Unilorin JUPEB Foundation School, the Vice-Chancellor ensured that accommodation was provided for medical personnel to ensure the provision of 24 hours medical services.

In his quest for great learning experience, Prof. Abdulkareem ensured that nothing should prevent the students from adequately preparing for their

examinations. As a result, he provided a generating set for the Unilorin JUPEB students' hostel.

Prof. Abdulkareem also made his word his bond by strictly adhering to both JAMB and JUPEB admission policies. This has in turn ensured that more of our students gain admission into the University of Ilorin and, by extension, it has endeared our University to more students.

A Resilient Leader and Great Sport Lover

--- Prof. Olufunmilola L. Dominic, Director of Sport

Professor Sulyman Age Abdulkareem is an erudite leadership-mentor under whom I was privileged to serve as the Director of Sports of the University. He is an exemplary and assertive leader whose resoluteness and commitment to peak performance was not deterred by the challenges during his tenure. His five-year tenure experienced interruptions due to COVID – 19 pandemic, two-time strikes by ASUU and other unions in the University. However, all these did not deter the achievement of the strategic goals set for sports development in the University “aimed at increasing recreational facilities and participation in Sports”. Our Work Plan to achieve the set goals was duly acknowledged and backed with the necessary resources and support, making my directorship most successful.

Some striking qualities of Professor Abdulkareem which made impression on me during my privileged time serving in his tenure include:

1. **Objectivity:** He was unbiased in decision making. He gave unrelenting and selfless support to visionary efforts at development without sentiments of personalities, gender, ethnic or religious affiliations. He knows his onions well and will stand with people who know what they are doing and wants to get it done- an experience I enjoyed as Director of Sports. As a matter of fact, my far-off impression before I worked with him of his being a man who does not smile or relate warmly with people was also proven wrong after all.
2. **Commitment to Excellence:** Professor Abdulkareem believes in and demands excellence. This was proven by sponsorship for capacity development and training of Coaches and Director of Sports; appointment of Associate Coaches to cover gaps -- hence its impact on Athletics and Football. His commitment to evolving students’ participation and sponsorship of athletes to National Competitions cum all teams and athletes who qualified at the 26th pre-NUGA led to mass participation. The athletes, moved by the administration’s commitment went the extra mile in making sacrifices in training all year-round and this has become a standing lifestyle of both student-athletes and even staff of the University.
3. **Supportiveness:** The Sports Unit and its associate members enjoyed the administration’s unrelenting support thereby leading to commitment of all connected to sports within and outside the University. The sport list for admission was honoured with some

athletes in new sports like Karate, Cricket, and Beach Volleyball. Some of these new sport intakes made the University proud in recent games.

The objectivity, supportiveness and commitment of the Vice Chancellor towards sports excellence were major factors that motivated the athletes and Recreational participants and Sports Unit as a whole, to be selflessly dedicated to move sports in the University to excellence, and this was crowned by the performance of Unilorin Team at the 26th NUGA that took place in UNILAG between 18th to 27th of March 2022. The University came 4th overall with 11gold, 13silver and 9bronze medals (winning the Football gold). Some of the achievements could be highlighted thus;

- * **Building/ Maintenance of Facilities and Purchase of Equipment:** During the tenure of Prof. Abdulkareem, the two Squash courts during the COVID time were completed and the building fully equipped with well-secured air conditioners. Others are renovation and lighting of the Indoor Sports Hall; repair of Maracana I Tartan track; reconstruction, re-grassing, drainage control and perimeter fencing of two-football pitches (Maracana II &III); rehabilitation of the handball court/ maintenance of all the sports facilities; purchase of brand new Toyota Hiace Bus and quality equipment for all sports.
- * **Hosting:** Professor Abdulkareem supported hosting of National events including the National Youth Games, the National Volleyball League Championships, the 3rd Nigeria University Karate Championships, Pre-NUGA competitions, JAMB, HiFL Football competitions, among others. Awards were also received by the University, Vice Chancellor and Director of Sports and our Athletes based on hosting.

In conclusion, Professor Abdulkareem's strategic development drive that led to the signing of an MoU with the International Sports Association for Baseball Sports Academy, Phase II Sports Complex and approval of College of Health Sciences Sports Facilities are laudable. Also, his Annual Sports Awards endeared his administration to the University Sports Community, as it became an impetus for inclusive participation and its residual effect of reduction in violence, cultism and other vices.

He Moved the Health Services to an Enviably Height

---- *Dr Rasheed A. Odunola, Director, Unilorin Health Services*

The University of Ilorin Health services (UHS) benefited immensely from the University management under the leadership of Prof. Sulyman Age Abdulkareem. Immediately he assumed office, he was bombarded with lots of requests and within a short time he started responding to them.

The partitioning of the Medical Record Unit and the Nursing Station at the Sick Bay were immediately done. The construction plan of the clinic made it impossible for consultation, dressing/injection to be administered without closure of the rooms, hence the need for air conditioners. The Vice Chancellor approved the purchase of eight new split air conditioners and the repair of six others. A dedicated heavy-duty generator that was allocated to the UHS by the previous administration was refurbished by the Abdulkareem administration. Prompt fuelling and servicing of this generator was ensured as instructed by the Vice Chancellor.

When I came on board as the Director, many of the junior staff were not promoted because there were no vacancies. These staff members were promoted along with the senior staff by approval of the Vice Chancellor through the Registrar who also shared the view that salary increment of junior staff is so meagre that their promotion should not be delayed.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the much-needed Personnel Protective Equipment, (PPE) and COVID-19 infection routine medications were promptly approved for procurement. Availability of these supplies in no small measure encouraged the UHS staff to attend to and manage students/staff during the pandemic period.

The management also collaborated with Kwara State Ministry of Health (KMOH) and the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) to train Health workers of the UHS. It is the aftermath of the training that made University Clinic to be the first Health facility in Kwara State to be granted the permission to start administering COVID-19 vaccine.

When the University Health services (UHS) started experiencing inadequate water supplies, the Vice Chancellor approved our request to sink a bore hole, hence water inadequacy has become a thing of the past in UHS.

The Mini Campus of the University has three centres namely the Centre for Open and Distance Learning (CODL), the Joint Universities Preliminary Examinations Board (JUPEB) and the Institute of Education (IOE). To ensure that students in these centres receive adequate and prompt medical attention, a building was renovated and equipped as University Clinic annex. In February 2022, the long overdue extension of the University

Clinic was approved, construction work commenced immediately and has reached advance stage.

Thus, the Abdulkareem administration contributed in no small measure in moving UHS to an enviable height.

A Great Benefactor to UNILORIN FM

---- Idris Aloomo, Station Manager, UNILORIN FM

In its untiring strive to sustain its esteemed position among universities across the globe, the University of Ilorin joined the league of higher institutions operating radio stations on August 13, 2009, when the signal of its 89.3 station first hit the air waves.

It was officially commissioned on October 22, 2011. The station was furnished with state-of-the-art equipment: two powerful transmitters, modern editing facilities, attractive studio, back up facilities and all that combine to make a campus radio transmit to its audience without violation of the ethics.

A proof of that is in the fact that UNILORIN FM has never been sanctioned by the regulatory body for electronic media in Nigeria, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). As expected, the station has been transmitting to both the internal and external publics of the University and connecting town and gown as a socially responsible media outfit with highly motivated professional staff.

The journey was smooth until July 2018 when rainstorm damaged the station's equipment and forced a halt in transmission for a few days. It was an anxious moment at the UNILORIN 89.3 FM at a time Professor Abdulkareem was settling down in office as the new Vice-Chancellor. The approaching tenth anniversary of the station and the annual convocation ceremonies of the University soon provided an impetus to procure new equipment with greater urgency in 2019.

The Vice Chancellor, in his way of bringing the station back to its rightful position, procured equipment worth millions of Naira for the station. In addition to this, he approved the purchase of other materials and tools such as furniture, computers, air conditioners, voice recorders among others for the station.

Before Professor Abdulkareem's appointment, the UNILORIN FM station depended largely on public power supply by IBEDC for broadcast such that the radio would go off air anytime there was power outage. However, the story changed with the procurement of an Inverter and a 55kva diesel-powered generator for the station through the efforts of the Vice Chancellor.

His administration also ensured the prompt and adequate supply of diesel to the generating set. A Generator House was also erected to stem the noise from the Generator and also provide additional security for the set. Today, we are always on air without worry whenever there is power outage.

In the area of training and retraining of the management staff and the general workforce of the radio station, the Professor Abdulkareem-led administration did so much for Unilorin FM station that made the NBC to hold its North Central / Abuja Zonal meeting at the University of Ilorin as a mark of recognition of the station's all-time standard and professionalism of its staff.

The process of implementing the proposed Unilorin FM Specialised Hybrid Library has begun. Through the support of the University Librarian, Professor Abdulwahab Issa, the library has been supplied with specialised furniture and books. The Director of Works, Engr Mudathir Abisoye, also facilitated the necessary inspection such that very soon, the library will be commissioned. This will not only enhance the performance of staff, it is intended to be a model for other campus radio stations and a hub for researchers.

Chapter 8

POSTSCRIPT

I came, I served, and I made my mark



*In this interview with **Kunle Akogun** and **Oluwasegun Alabi**, Professor Sulyman Abdulkareem reviews his five-year tenure, giving glory to Almighty Allah for what he was able to achieve*

Sir, gradually your tenure is rounding off, how far, so far?

Well, I have nothing but praise for Almighty God because everything I wished for I was able to do. I wanted to be just to everybody, to a great extent I was able to do that; I wanted the University to utilise the fallow land that we have in abundance, we've been able to do that; I promised to encourage research and development, we have done wonderfully well. So, I can't ask for more. My only headache, if there is any, is the Unions generally. It is not that I wasn't aware that we had unions at the University of Ilorin but the fact that the pain of seeing talents, time and energies wasted because of strike saddens me but I understand having trained totally abroad that it's a reality in Nigeria. It's quite unfortunate, but the management of the universities or institutions should be better handled so that workers would take education, for example, as a specialized assignment that you cannot afford to go on strike for if you want to do a good job because when it is continuous, it is more meaningful than when it is disjointed.

The COVID-19 pandemic broke out during your tenure; how would you describe its effect on your tenure?

Actually, if it were not for COVID-19, a lot of networking, computer related achievements that we were able to do wouldn't have come by. Even if we had attempted to provide something, it would not have come anywhere close to where we are now because at one point, the National Universities

Commission (NUC) had to say at a Committee of Vice Chancellors meeting that we are the farthest ahead in trying to adapt or cope with the headache of COVID-19 because of the fact that, with the approval of Council, we were able to provide general bandwidth and so many other things were provided in sufficiency in order for us to be able to offer virtual along with physical classes. Luckily for us as a University, we did not lose any member of the University (staff or student) to the dreaded disease; neither did we lose any academic calendar to it.

At the inception of your tenure, you laid so much emphasis on research development for the University, how far would you say you have realised this?

We did excellently well. Because apart from being in office and being able to contribute to further patenting of inventions for the University, I saw that a lot more people started getting patents in the name of the University and we are easily the leader and way above even the person next to us on the ranking by the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion, NOTAP, the body responsible for patenting of inventions.

Having said that, I also noticed that because the venue was left open, more people are able to benefit from several other funding and scholarships, I don't know whether to say more than before but I know as many as we put in. I just had an interview with somebody now who said that he was one of the four people that got Commonwealth scholarships, I don't know whether we have had that kind of luck in the past. The issue is that people are given level playing ground to win awards, get scholarships and get encouraged to even do inventions. I believe, by far, we are ahead of other universities and I want to thank God for that.

You have been working with people at every point of your life, but working with different characters of people that made up the University with you as the CEO, what is your perception of them, and what is your advice for them to move the University forward?

How to pass through it, well, I don't know...I believe it could have been a misfortune for me being totally foreign trained, at least in the university setting, because my opinion about university setting is a place where people come in and contribute their very best. You won't find that to be the case in Nigeria. There is always concern about pecuniary gains and people are not as dedicated as I expected with their work. I am not just talking about the junior ones but even my colleagues. I am discouraged at the level at which participation is dictated by gains individuals can make. It's been a shock to me but I don't think it's the way anyone should go into university business; you must be ready to put in a lot of sacrifice, in the end,

there might be little given to you but you let it satisfy you. I am not sure that my Lecturers were the best paid in the USA, I can use myself as an example: By the time I was leaving the University with PhD, I was already working with 3M being offered a job by 3M, earning more than my own Professor but it doesn't make him any sadder that somebody was going to earn more than him, you will still see him in the dead of the night working in his laboratory with us - graduate students but how many of us will do that here? I agree the pay is so poor, but I'm just saying that some elements of sacrifice must come into this job at any level, even beyond that of the VC, as Lecturers even as Sweepers. The idea is, to let nothing go wrong if you can help it but I don't see that spirit in most of us; it is very lacking. But other than that, I believe Nigerians are very brilliant people but they must use that brilliance to evoke or evolve something outstanding for the nation and for themselves by so doing.

One of the most talked about issue during your tenure is the reabsorption of Unilorin into National ASUU, which has caused so much misunderstanding amongst the people. How do you feel as your intention seemed to have been misunderstood?

I am going to start by saying that I am glad that you use the word "reabsorption" because if you ask me, I swear to God, I have nothing in my mind for or against unionism. I have been making my contributions since I joined the University in 1996, I make the monthly contribution or subscription that they get for the Union but I have zero interest in what the Union people do because no Union hired me into this University and like I said coming from abroad, Union means nothing to me. You can't even have Unions on the campus because they count education as essential service. So, if you now ask me when those guys from the national executive body came to me, and said they were ready to reabsorb the University, I told them I had no problem with them they should go and talk to the local union, which they did. So, the forgiveness from the national to the local is what the nation should recall. I have nothing to gain from joining the national neither did I benefit from being a member of the local. The issue is, sadly, we took Union to be the paramount guide on campus. They are just a subset of development on campus! We are all here to do one thing or the other, what we should all do is to do our assignment to the best of our ability. Saying that, I have nothing to gain from the Unions getting along, that is what I did not prevent. If I'm to be blamed for that, it is too bad because the University was paying too much price for being given pariah status when dealing with the other unions. As I mentioned before, twice I almost lost my life in the airplane trying to get allowances that were blocked by the National ASUU. If we look at it, why should the Federal Government allow the local member that had not been on

strike to be punished by a National Executive that was willingly going on strike, how does that make sense? But if I'd died in a plane crash, it would have been a forgotten history by now, I know, this is Nigeria. I believe their making peace was good for our University, I want to thank God for it, I am not regretting that. But the intended outcome is not what we are observing because if the only good the Union can do is strike, then the Union is no good as far as I am concerned.

There are insinuations from some quarters that you solely forced the reabsorption of Unilorin Chapter of ASUU into the national body of the Union. What is your take on this?

Well, that is entirely untrue because not only was I to discover that in the years past, close to 19 years that the University of Ilorin was suspended, University administration and local ASUU made several attempts to reconcile the differences between the national body and the local chapter, and they met in several locations all over Nigeria, I understand on more than 15 times over the period. The first time that the national body came to do something in Ilorin and badged on me uninvited, I remember telling them that they had to eventually sit down with the local chapter members that they have problem with. As fate would have it, two days after that surprise visit, we had a Senate meeting at which similar matter was brought up by members of the Senate and so many people contributed to the point that when I told them that the team promised to come back to discuss with the local chapter Exco, unanimously, everybody in Senate said it was the right thing to do. They gave the go ahead. And again, in the same week we had the Council meeting at which the matter was brought up to discuss and again, unanimously, the suggestion was for us to welcome any chance that would make peace between the warring local and the national bodies. So, the decision I took was only to welcome them when they came for the second visit and allow for the local and the national teams to sit down together. I did not as a person participate in any of the meetings held between the national and the local union bodies.

How do you think the incessant strikes by university workers can be curbed?

I am an employee, the solution must come from the employers and they need to think seriously on it. Everything I'm saying about people and contributions, you may think I'm attacking people...no! The government must make things better because if you don't look at anything, over the four and a half years that I've been VC, I know of people who have left this University to either go to Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Canada or somewhere else to offer their talents. So, if you're training people in these many numbers and you cannot keep them here, you have to have a rethink about whether you are

wasting your resources or not, because why are we training for people to work in the UK or US or Canada or Saudi Arabia or somewhere else for that matter? When you can make provision for them here to stay and work with you if they are that good! So, more must be invested in this business of ours called education by the Federal Government to let us succeed.

What is your advice for your successor?

My prayer is that the person has good intention, dedication, and commitment to perform well in the office because the person will need all that.

As a veteran university administrator that you have become, how do you think that the country's education sector be better focused to achieve its global objective?

Well, summed up, what the government needs to do is to commit more funds to education in Nigeria. Beyond that, there must be higher attention, dedication and focusing on performance in our institutions. The idea of bringing incompetent people to lecture should be seriously phased out not only by the Federal Government who is the employer of all of us but by those who must recruit because I have said this many times that the greatest sin an institution can commit is to put an incompetent lecturer in front of students and ask him to impart knowledge. It is the greatest sin any institution can commit. But having said that, this University system in Nigeria is not as bad as I told you few minutes ago that people would train here and joyfully, people in Canada, in UK, in US would want them to come and work for them. Even though there is insufficiency in the provision, this nation is still blessed by the very best of brains. Though we are not given the best education provision wise but people are able to evolve; they are able to develop into something that the whole world cherishes. Because even those I'll call my own trained children, they are getting offered five, ten times my own salary in Saudi, in UK, in Canada, so this Nigeria education must be doing something right otherwise why would foreign countries be looking for our products? The issue though is that we need to harvest our own produce, that is what I want the federal government to do, make it worthwhile for people to not only work dedicatedly but let them be glad to stay home not head for where they'll be treated as second class citizens because that is what you get anytime you step out of your own country. Look, as good as I was in the US, you can say that almost on regular basis I was making inventions but every day of my life somebody will still ask me "Kareem when are you going home?". Yes, I was damn good as the Americans would say but they want you to go and be damn good for your people. It isn't that if you leave your job they can take it

over...they are not qualified, but they just feel if you're damn good, why don't you go home to show your goodness. In the same vein, government needs to be taken that way too. How do you keep people behind to work and develop this nation rather than run away to some other places to be of use to other economies?

What's your advice to the generality of the community members?

If you're given a chance, do your very best the first time you were given a chance because if you do less than your best, your judge (your conscience) is going around with you and you'll not like yourself later on when you have a reflection.

What is next for Prof. Abdulkareem after office as the VC?

Well, I am a teacher; teaching is what I consider as my calling and I love doing it. Insha Allah, AbdulKareem is going back to class for knowledge impartation.



EPILOGUE: The Successor



Prof. Wahab Olasupo Egbewole, SAN