

PROTOCOLS



INTRODUCTION

It is with great honour and humility that I welcome you to my inauguration as the 18th President and Chairman of Council of this great institution - the Nigerian Institute of Management [Chartered].

This Institute is an establishment founded on positive values, built on professionalism, laden with excellence, and coated in ideals. This is an institute one is proud to be associated with as we work towards a vision of becoming “... *the source and symbol of management excellence*”.

I use this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude and regard to all the Past Presidents, Council Members and Officers, who worked tirelessly - and some still do - to sustain what NIM stands for and what NIM visions itself to become and achieve. Without your selfless contribution and dedication, we will not be where we are today. My prayer is that God will replenish and bless you in all your ways.

I owe a special gratitude to the guest of honour of today - Dr Michael Omolayole [FNIM, CNIM] - the current Chairman of the Council of Past Presidents of our great Institute. His committee facilitated my return to the Institute after a break of about seven years. Having shadowed Dr Omolayole at Lever Brothers [now Unilever], his sage qualities, and eminent display of integrity and consistent exhibition of professionalism, contentment and honour had really robbed on me in my practice as a manager.

I need to express my appreciation to a good friend and brother of over 30 years - Chief L.E.A. Aimiwu [OON, FNIM, CNIM] and my mother Mrs. M.R.A. Adeleke [FNIM, CNIM], a woman of substance, character and indelible values. I appreciate your positive roles in facilitating my return to the Council of this great Institute. I also recognise the strategic steer and support given by Sir Edeoghon and Chief Adenubi. Your support and trust in me, has yielded fruit, the good outcome of which is my becoming the 18th President and Chair of Council of this notable Institute. I solemnly and humbly affirm that I will anchor your legacy. I do promise that I will not let you down.

To my sister - Dr Sally Adukwu-Bolujoko - the outgoing President and Chair of Council, I thank and acknowledge you for all your effort, support and drive in the last two years. The work that you have done have made today's event possible.

To become the 18th President and Chairman of Council of NIM is therefore a huge responsibility and indeed a great privilege. It is with the grace of God that I stand before you today, to pledge my energy and capacity to serving this Institute. With

God on one's side and with the unwavering support of the Council, Past Presidents and of course the dedication and hard work of the entire staff of NIM, I am fully assured that this tenure will be blessed with success.

A renewed definition of purpose

Let me just remind you, your Excellencies and distinguished guests, that the hallmark of a 21st Century compliant professional Institute, is to act and be seen as the purveyor of excellence in practice - moving beyond the current parlance of 'good practice'. In NIM, just being good is not good enough. We see ourselves as the influencer and informer of national and international thoughts and policy. We are working towards ensuring that new thinking permeates our operating environment. We will reinforce the ethos of professionalism, as we continuously aim for the ideal, addressing issues from the lens of professional managers.

We situate all these on the meaningful engagement of our members, creating the space for them to become the best of professionals in their work environment and personal lives. We will strengthen ourselves as the platform that hosts their views and thoughts, providing them an outlet for their professional voices, as they contribute to the development of their various organizations and our dear nation Nigeria.

Those are our fundamental roles as a professional body of practice, if we want to be relevant in a new and dynamic world.

As a professional institute, established in 1961, we must claim our rightful position to assist in repositioning and transforming our nation Nigeria. When we make a success story of Nigeria, we will graduate our relevance and influence in the world of management to our continent Africa. We aspire to lead in Africa, as we have hope in this continent that has so much going for it. We will steer our continent Africa to wake up from its slumber, as we work with others to transform it to a bolder environment for all.

A new notion on purpose

In my view, there is a new part for professional managers to play, a new script for us to read from, a new theatre of practice for us to stage our act. I would argue, that our professional and practice playground has now been extended to the boundaries of the global environment as we are part of this modern world.

We face a new and emerging world, with constant and almost daily changes in our economic outlook as its being played out in modern Europe. Europe has now become a continent where economic dynamics are steering the wind of politics - citing Greece, Portugal, Italy and Spain as recent examples. We are also in a new world where social media is changing the way we interact and do business. Social media is now molding a new form of communities and societies, defining the pace and how we communicate. This electronic platform is also determining the form, the

norm and the nature of organizations and indeed governance – as we experienced in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and now Syria. With these developments, the roles and places of professional managers are also begging for redefinition.

In my view, these growing dynamics challenge us and it is asking us to articulate our professional stance louder. It is demanding of us to be the voices of excellence and not noises of ineffectiveness. We need to become champions of policy imperatives that add value and shape the way our dear nation is managed and led – irrespective of political dispensation, ideological colours and philosophical leanings. We must be bold, as citizens we must speak truth to power and as professionals we must speak values to practice.

Nigeria – arise and shine

I will lead this new dispensation by addressing a current major issue facing our country Nigeria. The sectarian terrorism and loss of life must stop!

Our dear nation needs and deserve peace and stability if we are to match the expectation of becoming a global nation of, and for development, following China, India and Brazil. For economic and human development in Nigeria to attain its full potential, a peaceful environment should always be on our existential menu. The Nigerian Institute of Management first of all, call on all the perpetrators to desist from killing innocent people and choose a peaceful route to resolving whatever their disputes and issues are.

The consequences of not strategically addressing this malaise are beyond human and material loses. It is sad and regrettable that we have lost many innocent lives and valuables as a result of the indecent acts by a few non patriots. These damages must stop!

No nation can be among the first 20 in the world by year 2020, if it continues to move and manage in the form currently displayed by our nation Nigeria. The current topmost nations are not waiting nor slumbering, waiting for others to displace them. These nations are perpetually finding ways to sustain their development, as they continuously innovate to move their countries to greater heights. They are not static. Therefore, it will be wishful thinking if we want to be one of them when we appear to be in deep slumber whilst some leading countries are awake and flying high.

For Nigeria to “arise and shine”, the current violence the nation has been experiencing must be called to other. No divided nation can “arise and shine” if violence permeate its existence and social order. No country can achieve economic growth and development in a state of chaos and violence, such as we are experiencing at the moment.

I call on all patriotic Nigerians in the North and South, in the East and West, to rise up to be counted to save Nigeria from itself. We cannot allow the violence by Boko Haram and others to continue to intimidate us. As a nation, we must stand up and find lasting solutions to arrest the threat of Boko Haram before we get consumed by civil war.

I especially call on all notable leaders of the North - General Mohammed Buhari, Alhaji Abubakar Atiku, General Yakubu Gowon, Dr Olusola Saraki, Alhaji Tafida, General Ibrahim Babangida, the Emirs and Sultans of our Northern towns, to intervene in this issue immediately. They should talk to the youth, have dialogues with social sects and engage faith leaders. Your sincere efforts, I believe, can make those attempting to make Nigeria ungovernable to listen and desist from their grievous acts.

We need peace in our nation and in our time. There can be no peace except when we work for it and we work at it. Peace will not come our way by wishing for it, it is by working for it. If the elders and leaders mentioned above, and others in their leagues, across all regions of Nigeria, fail to act now and address our state of violence, Nigeria may end up becoming a failed state.

We cannot just focus on the consequences without giving cognizance to some of the fundamental **root causes** of this national problem. One recognizes the multifaceted factors that trigger this sort of deviancy; therefore it needs more than a monolithic military intervention to address it.

Many Nigerians, especially young ones, have no means of livelihood. Most of our young ones has limited sense of purpose and are devoid of the values of nationhood. Our infrastructures are decaying before our eyes, and this was further reiterated by the ex-British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, at his recent visit to Nigeria in November this year. Without addressing these, our development and growth will be hampered.

The current crisis is not just caused by ideological and faith-based stance or belief system; there are other triggers that have contributed to it. The Nigerian social system seems to comfortably co-exist with marginalization. We have a lack of constructive platform for citizens' engagement, whilst social and economic inequalities persist. Our social existence is devoid of tacit values. We daily experience disorientation and vision deficiency. We live with absence of a clear definition of nation hood, as our mindsets are routinely infiltrated with foreign traditions and norms. The upcoming generation is growing up with diluted identity as we see an erosion of our cultures. These factors have made many to be vulnerable to exploitation for material and political gains.

It appears as if our leadership has lost the political will to lead us through this crisis. Our economy is suffering as a result of this, business and foreign investors are now more cautious in engaging with us. Our risk rating in the global indices' is now rated

an unhealthy High. This is compounded with increased fear in the social psych of our people with gradual loss of trust and faith in humanity. This has planted seeds of deceit and mistrust in our cultured minds, birthing the rise of ethnic tensions and suspicions. All these must stop!

Some policy solutions

As we work as a people to address the set back brought to our nation by the Boko Haram unrest, solving this issue is not an end in itself. Some fundamentals have to be addressed by our government for our nation Nigeria to “rise and shine”. Even if there is no violence, our government must lead us meaningfully and in the right direction to avoid any other form of Boko Haram situations emerging.

The Nigerian Institute of Management [Chartered] call on the Nigerian government to;

1. Start working towards ensuring a stable development of the state’s social economy with the right policies and structures in place. The government needs to intervene and break the cycle of poverty in our communal systems and steer us to returning to a more equal socio-economic structure. We need structural changes that prevent high levels of economic inequality from further arising.
2. Develop new tools for community engagement and involvement, one that is genuine, meaningful and is bottom up. We need to look at how to give a more equal voice to those with less economic resources.
3. Diversify our economy with greater emphasis placed on manufacturing, entrepreneurship and agriculture. Our ownership structure needs to give everyone a more equal share in society, the ownership of assets needs to be more equally distributed. To be a mono-product economy is not economically healthy for our nation. Let us use the wealth from our oil and gas resources to develop other sources of resources for our nation.
4. Have a root and branch review of our educational systems with more emphasis on informal and skilled based education that is empowering enough to steer younger people towards self sufficiency and self dependency as supposed to acute focus on employment. The initial conditions that a person is born into are exacerbated in our system by unequal access to good education. Thus, education systems are central to flattening differences at the beginning of life. Tackling the resource differentials in education is key. Vocational training needs to be built into the fabric of businesses, linking them to re-balancing of our economy.
5. Our leadership needs to be more courageous, has it appears that sometimes, constructive dialogue and strong leadership appear to be missing.

6 CONCLUSION

Your Excellencies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen. Our clarion call as a professional institute is of a new nation, supported by excellence in professional practice. As a nation, we have the people and the resources to inform our success, making us a country that we can all be proud of.

As citizens, we need to define new values and what "*Nigerianess*" means. As professionals we need to develop solutions from the perspective of managers – these should become a road map especially for our burgeoning youth population – who are now over 60% of our 167million estimated population.

We need to lead the pursuit of value re-orientation and social reengineering by developing management audit tools that is integrated with corporate social responsibility and embedded in community involvement and human capital development.

All sectors of the economy - private, public, Nongovernmental and indeed professional institutions, such as NIM – need to coalesce with our government to always find lasting solutions to our national issue and challenges, be it security, economic, political, technological and social.

Our new place, as professional managers, therefore, is to set the pace for others to follow. This we can start, if from now on, we speak truth to power and we speak excellence to practice.

I pledge on my honour, God helping me, to lead our Institute in the next 2 years with honour, integrity, transparency, dignity and with the Rotary motto of SERVICE BEFORE SELF, which is one of the values we share at NIM. To do this is to do nothing new. I am only building on the very solid foundation of our founding fathers and mothers and the legacy of all Past Presidents.

Your Excellencies, Royal Highnesses, Past Presidents, Fellows and Members, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, thank you for being here today, and thank you for listening.

I wish you a lovely and wonderful afternoon.

God bless you all.

Chief [Dr] Michael Olawale-Cole, FNIM
President & Chairman of Council
Nigerian Institute of Management