

PILOTING UNILORIN



Text of a Press Briefing by Prof. Wahab Olasupo Egbewole, SAN, the 11th Vice-Chancellor, University of Ilorin, on Wednesday, 1st February, 2023 at the University Auditorium

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Protocol

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic),
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Management Services),
The Registrar,
The Bursar,
The University Librarian,
The Provost of the College of Health Sciences,
Deans of Faculties, Postgraduate School and Student Affairs,
Directors of Centres and Directorates,
Heads of Departments and Units,
Distinguished members of the Senate,
Gentlemen of the press and great members of the fourth estate of the realm,
Members of staff and stakeholders
Our dear students – Great UNILORITES!
Ladies and Gentlemen!

A New Chapter

Like the speed of a meteor shooting through the space, the clock ticked so fast on Saturday, 15th October, 2022 and the day ended well to herald a new day. I assumed duty as the 11th Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin on Sunday, 16th October, 2022 opening a new chapter in the *magnum opus* that the University of Ilorin has become. I woke up that day brimming with ideas, burning with renewed energy, eager to locate challenges and prepared to tackle them headlong being aware that time is short.

However, I did not prepare for an easy fix for our decayed infrastructure, dying university culture, abandoned academic traditions, intergenerational disconnect among staff and palpable feeling of disenchantment arising from a long and punitive strike. Doing so would make me wear a hypocritical tag of a man who wanted to build a castle in the air. I am also not mistaken about my inability to do it alone. That is why right from the start, I identified the imperative of teamwork, stressing that Together, Everyone Achieves More. As the University of Ilorin is work in progress, not a mission accomplished, I am certain that we shall continue to build magnificently on the solid foundation laid by our founding fathers.

UNILORIN Greatness Team

I have since set to work and put a team, Unilorin Greatness Team, together, prominent among whom are the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Prof. Abayomi Omoteso and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Management Services), Prof. Sulaiman Ambali. We have also had the Provost of the College of Health Sciences and Chairmen of important committees and organs of the University. The Administration is already fledgling and the engine is revving in the sky for a decisive flight. Ours is a shuttle to the space, as I told the Senate in my inaugural address on October 21, 2022.

Distinguished members of the fourth estate of the realm, ladies and gentlemen, there is no standstill or cessation of activities; there is no frustration or discouragement for my team in Unilorin as we have all resolved to take the University to where it deserves. It is either success or nothing else for all of us in this better-by-far University.

Days of Velvet Revolution

Today, marks my 109 days in office as the 11th Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin. These Days are days of commitment and intense hard work, no lazy days. They are characterised by the pleasurable rigour of policy formulations and intellectual engagements with critical stakeholders without any hindrance. They are innovative, super, awesome and unique days that lay the foundation for the turbo-charged Unilorin's mission to greatness.

I am fortunate because the Unilorin Greatness Team is taking shape with great men and women of courage, commitment, vision and value. I believe in reforming the mind and Velvet Revolution is my model. Thus, I have engaged all members of staff through the various organs of the University on attitudinal change and positive disposition to work. I can also testify that the tension within has reduced drastically and our harmony is great.

Catalogue of Catalysts

Perhaps it may be too early to be counting achievements but the catalysts that herald them are. Permit me, therefore, to briefly highlight some of the major catalysts that others may call achievements that yours truly has recorded since this team started work:

1. MOU signed with Tunil University in Italy
2. Another MOU being consummated with the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
3. KU8 established to create Synergy in University Education in Kwara State
4. MOU with Summit University, Offa
5. ₦75M award by JAMB paid for tarring GRA Quarters Road

6. Reactivation of active participation in WARIMA and AWAU. The Vice Chancellor is now the Secretary General of AWAU, with the University of Ilorin regaining global visibility
7. Training by CODL, organised by Commonwealth of Learning, Canada
8. TETFund award of ₦500M hostel accommodation for our students
9. TETFund award of N200M zonal intervention
10. Renewed motivation of staff and students
11. Proactive engagements with all the unions on Campus
12. Composition of 11 strategic committees on security, investment and revenue generation, ranking, environmental issues, transportation and so on. The reports of the committees have been submitted and implementation will soon commence any moment from now
13. Revenue Generation drive through strategic repositioning of the IGR Units
14. Engagements of MDAs for synergy, support and collaboration
15. Reactivation of the original model of U6 Developmental Agenda
16. Grant of ₦400M broadband by Ministry of Communication
17. Re-engagement with the Association of Commonwealth Universities
18. Siting of battery charging station by National Automotive Design and Development Council

Excellent Staff, Excellent University

Within the past 109 days, many great things have happened for which one can only be grateful to God. The excellence of our staff has impacted on the university and the excellence of the university has also impacted on the staff. The elevation of 31 new Professors and 38 Readers in various Departments has brought joy to many families and reassured the staff that hard work pays. Besides, that 11 academic staff of the University were announced within the period as among the top 500 authors by the internationally acclaimed Elsevier is an indication of the standard that the University has.

The University of Ilorin has also lived to its bidding as one of the most prolific producers of Vice Chancellors in Nigeria. While the University is known to have produced pioneer Vice Chancellors of many universities, it has also been recording Vice Chancellors and Heads of tertiary institutions in recent years. Within the past days of my tenure, in addition to those already on ground, the University has produced the Vice Chancellors of Fountain University, Osogbo, and Crown-Hill University, Ilorin, in persons of Prof. Ramota Karim and Prof.

Jeel Ojuade respectively. It is serendipitous that while Prof. Ojuade officially resumed work on 22rd January, Prof. Karim resumes work next month.

Prayer Point

Whatever is good requires prayers and whatever is bad also requires prayers as the applies to whatever lies between. It has been good for the University of Ilorin and I pray that the Almighty Allah continue to make it better by far. I supplicate that the Bestower, Al-Wahab, to bestow us good health, abundant energy and divine wisdom to be able to discharge our onerous duties as patriotic Nigerians and world citizens. I commit the University to the hands of the Almighty and pray for His guidance and protection for everyone of us as we shuttle into the space and reposition the university for additional institutional excellence. This University is great and let us continue to pursue this greatness, with malice to none and justice to all.

I want to appreciate you all for being part of this milestone event, distinguished ladies and gentlemen. I want to thank in particular, the gentlemen of the press men (I understand there are no ladies of the press) for you have always been part of Unilorin Greatness Team from the 1st day that I assumed duty. We are just starting and the sky is the beginning for you all.

Thank you and God bless you.