

ACCELERATING OUR PROGRESS TO GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS AND WORLD-CLASS STATUS – A FIRST YEAR ASSESSMENT

STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY ADDRESS TO THE 2ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNIVERSITY ON 22ND SEPTEMBER, 2022.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is with gratitude to God Almighty and a deep sense of responsibility that I welcome you all to the 2nd General Assembly convened for the State of the University Address of our young but rapidly growing university, Kingsley Ozumba (K.O.) Mbadiwe University (KOMU).

In a special and most respectfully manner, I welcome once again **His Excellency, Senator Hope Uzodimma**, The Governor of Imo State and Our dear Visitor to the University. I thank you Sir for always finding time out of your very busy schedule to visit the university. Your Excellency's kind disposition continues to reassure us of your love for KOMU and the special premium you place on education in general. Furthermore, I welcome all the top government officials in the entourage of His Excellency, The Governor of Imo State.

On a special day like this marking the one-year in office of our administration, it is only natural to thank His Excellency once again for finding me worthy and appointed me the pioneer Vice-Chancellor of KO Mbadiwe University. It is because of this special privilege and honour accorded to me by our dear Governor, who did not know me from Adam, that has made it possible for me to address this respected audience today as Vice-Chancellor. I thank you too for your generous support to the University which is helping us in no small measure to deal with the teething problems associated with early growth and development.

I wish to reassure Your Excellency of my unalloyed and unflinching loyalty to his administration, particularly in the discharge of my duties as Vice-Chancellor. I remain conscious of the expectations of Your Excellency, that of our people and indeed Nigerians who desire a reputable University that offers good quality education and mentorship. By the special grace of God, coupled with our determination, we shall not disappoint in achieving our collective aspirations for KOMU.

2.0 ACCELERATING OUR PROGRESS TO GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS AND WORLD-CLASS STATUS – A FIRST YEAR ASSESSMENT

The General Assembly of the university is an annual tradition which offers us the opportunity for deep reflection and stock taking by noting our modest achievements, challenges and opportunities for the future.

Before my appointment as Vice-Chancellor on 19th of May 2021, the Imo State government through Imo State of Nigeria Law No. 1 of 2021 had established the Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University. This Law repealed the Imo State of Nigeria Law No. 13 of 2016 which established Eastern Palm University as the 42nd State University and 143rd in the Nigerian University System. Imo State of Nigeria Law No. 1 of 2021 came into effect on 18th of February 2021 with the assent by His Excellency, Senator Hope Uzodinma, The Governor of Imo State and Visitor to Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University.

With my appointment as Vice-Chancellor, I inherited a university in transition whose staff, students and their parents and the public were uncertain about its future. This uncertainty about the future of the university was complicated by a sudden upsurge in insecurity in the state. Despite this cloud of uncertainty, I braced up for the challenge and started the arduous task of re-positioning the university to achieve firstly, her primary mission of teaching, research and community service. Secondly, I gave assurances to His Excellency, The Governor and Our Visitor and the good people of Imo State that we shall strive to achieve the mandate and vision for which Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University was established. I gave similar assurances to our very anxious staff, students and their parents.

The task of transiting from Eastern Palm University to KO Mbadiwe University began with a series of consultations with various stakeholders namely, the apex regulatory agency which is the National Universities Commission (NUC), the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), the Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (CVCNU), State Government agencies and parastatals, the traditional rulers of the host communities, and religious leaders across the state and beyond. By the special grace of God and sheer dint of hard work, the university commenced the 2021/2022 academic session with the return of old students on 4th of October 2021.

In my maiden address to the 1st General Assembly of our University which took place on the 5th of October 2021, I shared with the audience my plans to set the University on the path to achieving global competitiveness and world-class status within the period of my tenure as Vice-Chancellor.

I have articulated these ambitious plans into an 11-point Strategic Goals of Action (SGA) as follows:

- i. Promoting Qualitative Teaching and Learning and Mentorship to achieve First Class Education and Graduate Output at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- ii. Cultivating a Culture of Sustainable Innovative and Cutting-edge Research and Entrepreneurship Education to address societal problems.
- iii. Mainstreaming Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for Digital Transformation and Efficient Service Delivery
- iv. Expanding Access through Initiation of New Innovative Programmes and Sustaining Existing Academic Programmes as well as Strengthening Academic Support Units for Guaranteed Excellence.
- v. Providing Clean, Reliable and Steady Electricity and Strengthening other Municipal Services for Institutional Development.
- vi. Improving Physical and Security Infrastructure and Promoting a Healthy, Safe and Aesthetic Environment for Conducive Education.
- vii. Building Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations for Improved University Ranking and Overall Global Outlook
- viii. Creating Excellent Relationships with Staff and Student Unions, Alumni, Host Communities and various Stakeholders (State Government Agencies, NUC, JAMB, TETFund, NCC, CVC, NDDC etc) for University Advancement
- ix. Creating Strategic Businesses Units/Commercial Ventures and Consultancy Services for improved Revenue Generation
- x. Improving Institutional Governance and Financial Management Systems as well as University Internal Control Mechanisms for Sustainable Growth.
- xi. Improving Human Resource Development and Management for Greater Efficiency and Overall University Development.

To the glory of God, it is gratifying to know that one year has now passed. In keeping faith, therefore, with my promise to convoke the General Assembly each year for the State of the University Address, I am delighted to share with the audience our activities or score sheet in the past one year.

2.0 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Our administration has made remarkable impacts in the following areas:

2.1 Stakeholder Engagements Resulting in Successful Transition from Eastern Palm University to Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University:

Several engagements/interactions with various stakeholders especially the National Universities Commission (NUC) and Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) within the months of May and November 2021 aided the successful transition to Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University (KOMU). The NUC certificate of recognition as Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University was handed over to the Governor and Visitor to KOMU by the Executive Secretary of NUC, Professor Rasheed Abubakar on 8th of December 2021. Similarly, JAMB approved the change of name of the University from Eastern Palm University to Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University on JAMB Central Admissions Processing System (CAPS) which aided the successful completion of the 2021/2022 admission exercise.

2.2 Courtesy call on the traditional rulers of the host communities

The Vice-Chancellor paid a courtesy call on the traditional rulers of the host communities on 29th July, 2021. The aim was to meet them formally, seek their prayers, blessings and cooperation before commencement of the onerous task of the day-to-day administration of the university

2.3 Unconditional absorption of willing former staff of Eastern Palm University into the KOMU workforce:

This was authorized by the Governor of Imo State and Visitor to the University, Senator Hope Uzodimma, out of sheer large-heartedness and humane consideration of the uncertain fate of the affected staff. This decision was conveyed to the affected staff by the Vice-Chancellor on his first visit to the university on 29th of July, 2021. The significance of this gesture is enormous: unconditional absorption from a private institution into a public University, with all its attendant enhancement, benefits and windows of opportunity

2.4 Approval of KOMU Domain name by the Nigerian Internet Registration Association (NIRA):

Our administration sought and obtained the domain name for the university (i.e. komu.edu.ng) from the Nigerian Internet Registration Association (NIRA). The domain name was a necessary prelude to setting up the University website and associated on-line activities.

2.5 Commencement of the 2021/2022 Academic Session:

The University commenced the 2021/2022 academic year on 4th October 2021. The 2021/2022 academic session for old students ended on 19th August 2022, while that of the 100 level students will end before the 30th of September 2022. It is worthy of note that the university maintained her academic calendar for the 2021/2022 session without any interruption.

2.6 Regular Payment of Staff Salaries and other entitlements:

Payment of staff salaries and other entitlements are from the coffers of Imo State Government. This development has had very positive effect on staff morale and commitment to work.

2.7 Release of the Promotion of Pioneer Staff which Appraisals had been completed:

A total of Seventeen (17) staff comprising six (6) academic staff and eleven (11) of their non-teaching colleagues benefitted from the exercise. The current session's staff appraisals are due and outstanding.

2.8 Unbundling of the University Catalogue into Individual Departmental Handbooks:

This was followed up with the revision and updating of programme philosophy, contents and regulations, in tandem with the stipulations of the NUC Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS). This also helped the rating of the University at the NUC accreditation visit earlier in the year.

2.9 Appointment of New Principal Officers:

The Visitor graciously approved the appointment of new Principal Officers for the University namely, Professor Aloysius Onyeka as pioneer Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Dr. Ngozi Nwaohiri as the University Librarian. It is notable that Dr. Ngozi Nwaohiri replaced Professor Chinwe Veronica Anunobi who had received approval for appointment as University Librarian

by His Excellency and the Visitor but was appointed Director/National Librarian within the same period by President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR.

2.10 Institution of the 1st General Assembly of the University:

The 1st General Assembly was convened on 5th October 2021 at which occasion the Vice-Chancellor delivered his inaugural address entitled, ***“Accelerating our Progress to Global Competitiveness and World-Class Status.”***

2.11 The 4th Matriculation Ceremony:

The 4th Matriculation Ceremony of the University successfully held on Friday 17th June 2022. At the ceremony, a total of 112 registered 100-level students were formally admitted into full membership of the University. Through the instrumentality of an Ad-Hoc Ceremonials Committee constituted by the Vice-Chancellor, the ceremony was delivered without hitches.

2.12 Retooling of Principal Officers Offices:

Within the period of this report, the Vice Chancellor directed the procurement of essential office equipment (computers, printers and accessories) for the offices of the Principal Officers.

2.13 Procurement of Vehicles for Principal Officers:

Similarly, the Vice-Chancellor also approved the procurement of four (4) nos. fairly used Toyota Corolla vehicles for Principal Officers of the University; the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Acting Bursar and University Librarian. All these have obviously made the offices and officers more effective on their schedule.

2.14 Recruitment Exercise for Teaching Staff

Management got approval from His Excellency, The Governor and The Visitor to issue advertisement in some National and Local Newspapers for staff recruitment exercise in November 2021. The interviews were conducted in the months of March and April 2022. The list of successful candidates has been recommended to His Excellency for further necessary action.

2.15 Inauguration of the Organization for Women in Science, KOMU Chapter

Our administration successfully inaugurated the Organization for Women in Science, KOMU Chapter on 7th April, 2022 at the University campus

3.0 2021/2022 ADMISSION ACTIVITIES

3.1 JAMB Policy Meeting:

The JAMB Policy meeting (Virtual) which started the 2021/2022 admission exercise took place on 31st August 2021. Management approved 120 marks and 30 marks as institutional cut-off mark and programme cut-off mark respectively. The Central Admissions Processing System (CAPS) portal was opened on 30th September 2021 for implementation of the 2021/2022 admission exercise.

3.2 2021/2022 Admission Exercise:

Following the successful admission using the JAMB CAPS, a total of one hundred and twenty-six (126) students across fourteen (14) programmes in four (4) faculties of the University received admission for the 2021/2022 admission cycle as follows:

Faculty of Science:

☐ Biochemistry	16
☐ Computer science	18
☐ Mathematics	1
☐ Microbiology	23

Faculty of Social & Management Sciences

☐ Accounting	12
☐ Banking & Finance	3
☐ Business Administration	6
☐ Economics	7
☐ Political Science	16
☐ Psychology	2
☐ Sociology	3

Faculty of Arts

☐ English and Literary Studies	10
☐ History and International Studies	4

3.3 Regularization of Undisclosed Admission:

Management has successfully regularized undisclosed admissions for the 2017, 2018 and 2019 admissions cycles on JAMB CAPS aimed at JAMB issuing Admissions letters to the affected students.

4.0 ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 New Academic Programmes:

To further enhance the academic development of the University, our administration introduced three (3) new programmes which were already resource verified by NUC bringing the total number of active programmes in the University to 24.

The 3 new programmes are:

- i. B.Sc. Architecture
- ii. B.Sc. Estate Management
- iii. B. Sc. Biology

4.2 Accreditation Exercise

Our administration presented eleven (11) programmes during the October/November 2021 accreditation exercise. Out of the 11 programmes presented, the University scored 100% by securing full accreditation in eight (8) programmes and interim accreditation in three (3) programmes. The programmes with **full accreditation** are:

- B.Sc. Biochemistry
- B.Sc. Microbiology
- B.Sc. Accounting
- B.Sc. Business Administration
- BA English and Literary Studies
- BA History and International Studies
- B.Sc. Political Science and
- B.Sc. Psychology

The validity period for programmes with full accreditation is five (5) years.

The programmes with **interim accreditation** are:

- B.Sc. Computer Science
- B.Sc. Economics
- B.Sc. Sociology

The validity period for programmes with full accreditation is two (2) years.

4.3 Student's Industrial Work Experience (SIWES) Programme

The University has successfully commenced the Student's Industrial Work Experience (SIWES) programme in the 2021/2022 academic session. This was sequel to a request by University Management to the National Universities Commission for inclusion of the university in the Student's Industrial Work Experience (SIWES) programme. It is heart-warming that our 300-level students are currently in various parts of the country on their six (6) months industrial training (IT) programme.

4.4 Publication of the University Academic Brief

The University Management has successfully produced the Academic Brief of the University for the 2021/2022 academic session.

4.5 Preparation of Academic Programmes for October/November 2022 Accreditation Exercise

The University Management has submitted four (4) matured programmes for visitation by the National Universities Commission (NUC) for the forthcoming 2022 October/November Accreditation Exercise. The programmes are:

- B.Sc. Animal & Environmental Biology
- B.Sc. Physics
- B.Sc. Finance and Banking
- BA Linguistics

4.6 Preparation of Academic Programmes for Resource Assessment

The University Management is preparing three (3) programmes for Repeat Resource Assessment and two (2) programmes for new Resource Assessment by NUC. The programmes for Repeat Resource Assessment are:

- LLB Law

- B.Sc. Nursing Science
- B.Sc. Medical Laboratory Science

The programmes for new Resource Assessment are:

- B.Sc. Public Health
- B.Sc. Environmental Health Science

5.0 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) DEVELOPMENT

Our administration has made significant progress in ICT development which was virtually non-existent when we took office in May 2021.

5.1 University Website

The University website with the location address www.komu.edu.ng is fully functional and showcases a lot of on-line activities. The website is responsive with a Quick Load Time comparable to other leading tertiary institutions. In addition, several plugins/services have been added to the university website to enhance administration, teaching, and learning. Chief among them are the staff portal, the student portal, the admission portal, the e-learning portal, and the e-Library. With these, services such as Post-UTME Registration, Transcript Issuance, Course Registration, and Fee Payments are possible. Furthermore, students can gain access to a collection of articles/journals and other academic resources.

5.2 Internet/Student Internet Access Laboratory

Management has deployed unlimited internet access with a download speed of 20 megabits per second (MBPS) that is well regulated and distributed on campus for academic purposes. In addition, about 100 personal computers have been equipped to provide internet access to staff and students.

5.3 Provision of Institutional Email

KOMU institutional email has been made available to staff and students. This has made it possible for staff and students to reap the following products and services from willing companies:

- Easy verification of staff journal articles on Goggle Scholar
- Free access to online educational courses
- Free access to content and streamlining tools
- Free software

- Access to graphic design tools
- Access to premium entertainment services
- Access to discounts on products etc.

5.4 Google Workspace for Education (GWE)

Our administration has signed an MoU with Google aimed at gaining access to its collection of cloud computing, productivity, and collaboration tools. GWE packages include the Google Docs Suite for content creation, Forms, Calendar, Meet and Chat for communication.

5.5 KOMU Virtual Classroom

To aid e-learning/online education, one of the Student Internet Access Labs has been upgraded and equipped with videoconferencing equipment and software to create a virtual classroom for online education.

5.6 Provisioning of 100 E-pads for Staff and Students' Use

100 e-pads and associated accessories donated by the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) have been provided for use by staff and students to improve their digital skills and for academic purposes in general.

5.7 Training of Staff in Computer Appreciation in Conjunction with Digital Bridge Institute

100 staff of the institution and 20 graduates drawn from the five (5) host communities were trained on basic ICT office productivity tools, including the intranet, internet, use of Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint etc. The training was aimed at improving the ICT skills of staff. This will enable them to translate the acquired knowledge and skills into improved teaching and for overall work performance.

6.0 STUDENTS' WELFARE

The welfare and well-being of our students is top priority for our administration. Accordingly, we have improved students' welfare in the following areas:

- i. Reduction in school fees from N295,000.00 to N120,000.00 per session for all programmes and N150,000.00 for the professional programmes namely Accountancy, Computer Science, Architecture and Estate Management.
- ii. Change from the 100% Residency Hostel Policy to an optional alternative.

- iii. Procured high quality football kits for the University football team "KOMU ALL-STARs".
- iv. Supporting "KOMU ALL-STARs" to participate in various football competitions such as the Imo State Inter-Campus Football competition also known as the Governor's Cup, the Four-Team Invitational Tournament with the host communities etc.
- v. Installation of solar lights in the male hostel lounge and along the students' hostel driveway.
- vi. Improved counselling services by the Student Affairs Unit.
- vii. Improved municipal services for students' comfort and convenience and better sanitation of the hostels.
- viii. Improved security of the hostels through installation of burglary proofs and replacement of damaged locks in the male and female hostels.
- ix. Partial renovation of the male and female hostels.

7.0 STAFF WELFARE

Similarly, our administration is resolutely committed to enhancing staff welfare and well-being. Within the period under review, we have carried out the following activities

- Training 100 staff members on computer basic appreciation in the areas of ICT office productivity tools, including the intranet, internet, use of Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint. This was done in conjunction with the Digital Bridge Institute.
- Training staff on use of e-pads for digital skills including technology-assisted teaching and learning.
- Training staff on e-learning applications code named "KOMU Virtual Classroom" with emphasis on the use of Google Classroom for teaching and learning and application of KOMU Result Spreadsheet Software (KOMU RSS) template for result processing.
- Participation of Dr. Ngozi Nwokoro in the Bank of Industry/Lagos Business School Entrepreneurship Training for Lecturers in Designated Nigerian Universities held between 30th May and 10th June 2022 in Lagos.
- Sponsorship of Dr. Ngozi Nwokoro and Dr. HCM Akwudike for the SMEDAN Tertiary Institutions Entrepreneurship Development Programme (TINEDEP) between 25th and 29th July 2022 in Lagos.

- Sponsorship of Dr. Mrs. Ngozi Nwaohiri, University Librarian to the Nigerian Library Association's Annual General Meeting/Conference, 3rd to 7th July 2022 in Abuja.
- Sponsorship of Dr. Mrs. Ngozi Nwaohiri to a Short Course entitled, "*Driving competitive advantage through innovative knowledge management*" organized by the Nigerian Library Association, Proquest and US Department of States at the African University of Science and Technology Abuja, 18th – 20th July 2022 in Abuja.
- Sponsorship of Dr. Mrs. Nkiru Kamalu to the 3rd Annual International Conference of the Organization of Women in Science for Developing World, Southeast zone, 10th -13th May 2022.

8.0 HOST COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Within the period under review, our administration has maintained cordial and robust relationship with our host communities with regular consultations and interactions. A few of the activities include:

- Appointment of Rev. Fr. Dr. Nath. Okwara, an indigene as the University/Host Community Liaison Officer.
- The July 29, 2021 Courtesy call on the traditional rulers of the host communities to familiarize with them and seek their support and blessings.
- Regular consultations with traditional rulers and various groups from the immediate and larger neighbouring host communities.
- Allocation of admissions and employment slots to indigenes of the host communities.
- Training 20 graduates from the host communities in conjunction with the Digital Bridge Institute on computer basic appreciation in the areas of ICT office productivity tools, including the intranet, internet, use of Microsoft Word, Excel PowerPoint.
- Participation of KOMU ALL-STARS football team in host community football competitions.

9.0 INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The following projects were undertaken during the period under review

- Partial renovation of the Senate building and the Senate Chamber
- Partial renovation of the Faculties of Science, Arts, and Social & Management Sciences buildings.
- Partial renovation of the Faculty of Science Lecture Theatre

- Partial rehabilitation of the ICT facilities
- Partial renovation of the male and female hostels including installation of burglary proofs on the ground floor windows.
- Reconditioning/Servicing of 3 No. (500KVA, 275KVA & 65KVA) gensets in disuse for a long time
- Partial installation of solar lights around the students' hostels.
- Installation of solar light in the male hostel lounge.

10.0 PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

Our administration has recorded a few evolving partnerships and collaborations with the following institutions and organizations:

- University of Technology, Bloemfontein, South Africa [Department of Built Environment]
- University of Communications and Management, Poznan, Poland
- Imo State University Owerri, Nigeria
- Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria
- National Directorate of Employment [NDE]
- Small & Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria [SMEDAN]
- Nigerian Export Promotion Council [NEPC]

11.0 DONATIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY

Towards supporting the efforts of government in building a reputable institution, we have received the following donations within the period under review:

- 100 e-pads by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC).
- 120 books in various subject areas by Mr. Reginald Ihebuzor.
- 15 books in Estate Management by Professor Eugene Opara.
- N500,000.00 for purchase of books for the University Library by Chief. C.D. Anyakie

12.0 CHALLENGES

Some of the major challenges affecting teaching, research and community service are: funding, power supply, apprehensions of insecurity in some parts of the larger neighbouring host communities, poor enrolment by prospective students, progressive dilapidation of physical infrastructure,

lack of tractor and other machines for maintaining the environment and for allied agricultural purposes.

Management has received assurances from His Excellency and The Visitor to improve the fund situation; resolve/improve the power issues on campus particularly with the connection of the university to the national grid. There is also a consideration by His Excellency to remove the university from Treasury Single Account (TSA) for better management. Our administration on the other hand are exploring innovative ways to assist the government to raise additional funds for overall management of the University. We are also appealing to well-meaning individuals and organizations to complement/support the efforts of government and the University Management with donations and other forms of assistance and support. Management is committed to ensuring that any assistance to KOMU will be appropriately acknowledged and adequately and judiciously utilized.

13.0 A CHARGE TO STAFF

Building and growing our university to a successful venture will depend on our individual and collective commitment to duty. This commitment finds deep expression in our mantra; **KOMU. One Team. One Mission. Selfless Service to Humanity.** We must always see ourselves as a team with one mission, and that is to serve humanity selflessly. To justifiably do so, we must; come to work early and regularly, stay on the job, attend to our schedules, encourage/support one another in our tasks, look out for one another (i.e. being our brothers' keeper), respect one another in our diversity, see/treat our students as our children/wards and honestly assist them to deal with their problems, be polite and courteous to visitors, be good ambassadors of our institution, respect and maintain good relationships with our host communities, bring support to the university etc.

We must never take our eyes off the ball. We must never allow the challenges we face to overwhelm us. We must confront the challenges and defeat them. We must work as if our success depends on our abilities and pray as if our success depends on God. We must always remember that as pioneers, history will judge us, our actions and inactions as we strive to raise the foundation of Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University to be among the great universities of our time. We must not fail in this task.

14.0 OUR COMMITMENT AS MANAGEMENT

Our administration remains resolutely committed to growing Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University to be one of the great and reputable institutions of this age. We are committed to changing the narratives and offer a new experience in education and mentorship. Such will include maintenance of stable academic calendar, timely graduation of students, issuance of degree certificates on graduation, issuance of transcripts on demand by graduates and comprehensive education for our students aimed at developing the “total man”. This remains our solemn promise, as God abides with us.

15.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The modest achievements we made in the past one year in laying the foundation to build a world-class institution based on our strategic goals were made possible by the support, assistance and encouragement of the Imo State Government, the Federal and State Ministries of Education, National Universities Commission (NUC), Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Nigerian Internet Registration Association (NIRA), Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Digital Bridge Institute, Bank of Industry, Lagos Business School, other stakeholders and our benefactors. I thank you all for supporting us.

Once again, I am sincerely grateful to His Excellency, Senator Hope Uzodinma, Governor of Imo State for appointing me the pioneer Vice-Chancellor of the Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University Ideato.

My gratitude also goes to His Excellency Professor Placid Njoku, Deputy Governor of Imo State; Chief Cosmas Iwu, Secretary to the Imo State Government; Rt. Hon. Kennedy Ibeh, Speaker of the Imo State House of Assembly; Bar. C.O.C. Akaolisa, Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice; Professor Sylvester Okorundu, Hon. Commissioner for Education, Mrs. Doris Anite, Hon. Commissioner for Finance; Chief. Bar. Nnamdi Anyaehie, Chief of Staff to the Governor; Dr. Mrs. Irene Chima, Principal Secretary to the Governor; other members of Imo State Executive Council, Chairman and members of the House Committee on Education for their support and assistance to our administration. May God bless you all.

I am grateful to the Principal Officers of the University: Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Aloy Onyeka; Registrar, Mr. Ernest Onuoha, Ag. Bursar, Dr. Wilson Agbarakwe; and University Librarian, Dr. Mrs. Ngozi

Nwaohiri for deep sacrifice and commitment. May God continue to bless you all.

I thank the Deans, Directors, Heads of Departments, Coordinators of Units and indeed all academic, senior non-teaching and junior staff for their resilience, determination, and forthrightness in the sustenance of activities as we accelerate our progress to global competitiveness and world class status.

Our duty as teachers will be incomplete without our students. Therefore, I thank our students and their parents for choosing KOMU as their choice institution to receive their education.

I thank the traditional rulers and people of our host communities, immediate and extended for their love, support and encouragement on our steady march to actualize our mission to Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University Ideato.

I remain grateful and very appreciative to the clergy and religious whose prayers are helping us build a university of repute and reckon as envisioned in Psalm 127 verse 1, ***"if the Lord does not build the house, the work of the builder is useless"***.

Finally, I thank my dear wife and friend, a pillar of inestimable value, Dr. Chinomso Dozie and our children & adopted children, my mother, siblings, in-laws, friends and well-wishers for their love, encouragement, support, understanding and prayers as we undertake the arduous task of administering KOMU to greater heights.

16.0 CONCLUSION

Dear colleagues, on my arrival to this university as Vice Chancellor, I saw the zeal, the desire, the enthusiasm and the passion to join hands with me to build this university. That feeling was very palpable. As at today, I doubt if I have this same conviction. Let me remind us again that we have chosen to perform this duty. This decision we have made willingly without any coercion. Given this scenario, I want to see a renewal in our commitment to build KO Mbadiwe University to be one of the best universities in our state and country. But for the modest achievements we have made so far, I sincerely thank you for your resilience, sacrifices and courage.

As we look with optimism into the future to improve on our modest achievements, may we find encouragement and renewed zeal in the words of Franklin Benjamin, "***Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbours, and let each day find you a better man***".

And indeed, let each day find everyone a better man in the service of KOMU, God and humanity.

KOMU. One Team. One Mission. Selfless Service to Humanity!

Thank you and May God bless Us.

Professor Ikechukwu N.S. Dozie
Vice-Chancellor