

## **WELCOME ADDRESS 8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL LECTURE OF THE STEPHEN OLUWOLE AWOKOYA FOUNDATION ON 18<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2003**

A Welcome Address on behalf of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Stephen Oluwole Awokoya Foundation for Science Education.

**Otunba Tade Ismail.**

The Chairman, our distinguished Guest of Honour our Guest Lecturer, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

This is the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration of the lecture which has been dedicated to the memory of our revered teacher, scientist, civil servant, politician and an extraordinary motivator of the young people of his time, the Late Professor Stephen Oluwole Awokoya.

Professor Awokoya was undoubtedly one of the leading Nigerians of his time. His pioneering work in the field of Science Education has been well documented in the archives of our country. Those who are old enough to remember the Emergency Science School of the late 50s & early 60s will remember the very bold and innovative work which Professor Awokoya did in ensuring that in a little while a large number of Nigerian boys and girls could be prepared for admission to Universities both at home and abroad. He informed us of how he improvised and calibrated glasses to make beakers and similar science equipment. We owe our boldness in dealing with many problems which have confronted us as people to his inspiration.

It is important that we must continue to remember great men and women who have inspired us and whose reassurance to us that we are a people equal in all ways to others has been the mainstay of our progress. In remembering them we

express our appreciation and we further embolden ourselves to extend the frontiers of knowledge which they have pioneered.

Our Foundation has focused on Science Education which was the forte of Professor S.O. Awokoya. We have exemplified our commitment through the Annual Lecture for which we have been lucky to achieve the support of very outstanding scholars and the Annual Scholarship Awards.

Our past lecturers have included Professor Babs Fafunwa , Prof. Olumuyiwa Awe the Late Prof. Chimere Ikoku, Prof. Ade Ajayi, Prof. Ogunmola, Prof. Ladipo Akinkugbe and Prof. Sagay. All these men by any standard in the world are eminent and they have ennobled our Foundation. Today we are adding a new feather to our cap. We have an eminent Professor in the Medical Field as our Guest Lecturer. She will be our first female lecturer and we are very grateful that she has accepted our invitation. She will be appropriately introduced later in the programme.

I like to welcome my very good friend Mr. Oba Otudeko who is the Chairman of this occasion. As you can all attest he is an Oba who does not want us to say Kabiyesi to him. Nevertheless he does have a domain which he can say is truly his own. I am sure that you can easily identify him in the domain of Commerce and Industry.

Our guest of honour and the Honourable Minister is also our friend. Chief Dr. Ogunkelu our own Luwabi of Ijebu Land is close to the Awokoya family and he remembers Papa Awokoya with the same affection as the rest of us. May I welcome him to this occasion.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you will be listening very shortly to an interesting lecture on the subject of HIV/AIDS which has devastated the human society to a greater extent than wars in the last twenty years. I therefore do not wish to take any more of time. But permit me to state that this year, we shall award three postgraduate scholarships in the area of Mathematics, Production Engineering and Medicine. All our awardees are in the category of First Class Honours.

I thank you for listening and I am pleased to welcome you all to this year's ceremony on behalf of the Chairman of the Board who is unavoidably absent.