PROTOCOLS

On behalf of the governing council, management, staff and students I welcome you all to Yaba College of Technology, the cradle of higher education in Nigeria.

I am indeed delighted to play host to my distinguished colleagues from across the country at this 123rd regular meeting of the Council of Heads of Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology in Nigeria (COHEADS).

The last time Yaba College of Technology hosted COHEADS was about 15 years ago. It is therefore a rare privilege for me to have the opportunity to host the Council just two years into my tenure of office.

Chairman Sir, distinguished colleagues, at an occasion such as this, it is customary that I tell you a little bit about your host institution; Yaba College of Technology.

The history of Yaba College of Technology is indeed synonymous with the history of higher education in Nigeria. The journey started in 1934 with the establishment of Yaba Higher College to provide final stage training, leading to the production of assistants in the medical and engineering fields and some other vocations. In 1945, the Elliot Commission on higher education in West Africa recommended the conversion of Yaba Higher College into a Technical Institute. Following the acceptance of the commission’s report by the government, Yaba Higher College was closed down, and in its place, Yaba Technical Institute was established in 1947. The students of
the higher college were transferred to Ibadan to become the pioneer students of the University College which took off in 1948. Thus, Yaba technical institute, Nigeria’s first higher education institution, charged with the responsibility of providing higher level skills, commenced in the 1947/48 session. In September 1963, the Yaba Technical Institute was renamed Yaba College of Technology by the Rt. Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe, the then Governor-General of Nigeria.

For over 60 years, the college has maintained very high standards, and this has served as a platform for its growth and development. These standards are founded on its vision, mission, objectives and core values which have indeed become well rooted in its abiding traditions and culture.

Yaba College of Technology is structured into 8 Schools and 34 academic departments with a total of about 64 accredited programmes. The college also runs degree courses and Post Graduate Diploma in Engineering, in collaboration with University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Federal University of Technology, Akure respectively.

The college has a second campus at Epe. This is a 55-hectare parcel of land donated to the college by the Lagos State government about 20 years ago. The Department of Agricultural Technology is located at the campus.

We are privileged to welcome you to the center of excellence at a time when the polytechnics are taking the front burner in the promotion of entrepreneurship education as a major step towards the reduction of the legion of unemployed in our society.

Perhaps I should mention that Yaba College of Technology was the first higher institution in Nigeria to establish a full-fledged Centre for Entrepreneurship Development, with strong linkages with the world of commerce and industry. The
centre was established about 8 years ago and offers compulsory courses which must be taken by all students throughout their stay in the college. The rich content of the programme has significantly stimulated entrepreneurial interest in our products.

It is instructive to note that our students eagerly embrace the entrepreneurship curriculum. This is evident in the quality of the goods produced and the strategic marketing techniques employed by the students to dispose their products.

The twin resultant effects of this development are:

1) The development of innovative and creative production skills in the students towards the promotion of homemade goods.

2) The discovery of future job creators who will assist in the growth and development of our economy.

My fellow Rectors, let us brace-up to the challenge of making a meaningful impact on the nation’s drive to the actualization of vision 20-2020. We can achieve this by encouraging scholarship among the staff and students and establishing academic fellowships with established institutions and research centers across the globe. Similarly, our students should be encouraged to aspire for academic excellence by adequately rewarding outstanding performance. They can also be more creative and innovative through the sponsorship of their entrepreneurial initiatives by corporate bodies.
My distinguished colleagues, as we confront the challenges of the 21st century, I want to assure you that Yaba College of Technology is well positioned to provide compency based, entrepreneurial education for the production of graduates relevant to the needs of the economy and the technological development of our nation.

Yaba College of Technology is known for its traditional hospitality. We have a few events lined up to make your stay memorable, part of which are courtesy visits to the Oba of Lagos and the Oniru of Iru land. We shall also visit a few development projects in the college. Unfortunately time will not permit us to visit the Epe campus which is indeed the future of Yaba College of Technology. A cocktail party has also been arranged for the evening of Thursday, 22nd at the college hall.
As we converge at the Center of Excellence where the history of tertiary education in Nigeria is domiciled, may we have a rewarding interactive session. It is my prayer that our efforts would impact significantly in reshaping the face of technical education in Nigeria in our quest for technological and industrial emancipation as a nation.

I thank you all for listening and wish you a pleasant stay at Yaba College of Technology, the cradle of higher learning in Nigeria. I invite you also to enjoy the warmth and vibrancy of Lagos, the centre of excellence.

Once again I welcome you.

Thank you and God bless.

DR. M.K. LADIPO