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### *Convocation Speech*

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I am honored to be the 2019 convocation speaker of this great university. The value of an honour depends on who bestows it on you. This is a great honour because it comes from a great university. The Nnamdi Azikiwe University is great even if for the singular reason that it is named after one of Africa's greatest leaders and statesmen, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the great 'Zik of Africa'. Zik was a pioneer Pan-Africanist and Nationalist who labored with the likes of Herbert Macaulay, Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere to free the continent of colonial rule. ZIK embodied the spirit of national unity and integration. He was born in northern Nigeria of Igbo parentage and started his professional and political career in Western Nigeria. It is most appropriate to name a reputable federal university after the intellectual politician who showed the light so that the people will find the way.

#### ***Education as a National Integrator***

The great Zik of Africa believed in the power of education to shape the future of an individual as well as that of a nation.



He worked extremely hard to attain an excellent education, garnering degrees from prestigious universities such as the Howard University and the University of Pennsylvania both in the United States. Zik believed in the transformative value of education which made him to facilitate overseas education of many smart easterners through such groups like the Igbo State Union. It was largely due to these efforts that the Igbo, according to Chinua Achebe in his classic, ***'There Was A Country'***, in one dash closed down decade-old gap between them and the Yoruba. Education was the source of Igbo renaissance in Nigeria. So, we should thank Zik for both his inspirational leadership and exemplary lifestyle that inspired earlier Nigerian leaders to embrace quality education.

Education matters for national growth and development in more than one way. It shapes the pattern of economic and socio - political development. We should never forget the reason the First Republic leaders invested resources in establishing top tertiary institutions like the University of Lagos, the University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. These institutions were focused on



human capital development which is fundamental to economic development. It was no accident that our founding fathers focused so much attention on boosting our country's human capital. These leaders recognized that the nation needs transformative leaders in order to transform its problematic institutions. We can argue on authority that the collapse of quality higher education in Nigeria is one of the causes of national leadership deficit which ultimately contributes to the stunted national development. In his book of essays, ***The Education of the British Protected Child***, Chinua Achebe argues persuasively that the dearth of idea of the university in Nigeria parallels the dearth of idea of leadership in Nigeria. This may be slightly exaggerated, but it conveys the insight that education is critical to national development.

The central importance of education in national development is also because of its ability to create the values of civility, excellence and professionalism that defines a democratic society. One of the problems of democracy in Nigeria is the absence of normative foundation for the sustainability of democratic governance.



In western democracies, the social soil is made fertile by a culture of civility and public deliberation that conditions political leadership to legitimacy and accountability. These values are promoted by liberal education. This is why most advanced democracies and prosperous economies have thriving educational systems. Beyond democratic civility, quality education is good for economic development because it engenders critical skills and capabilities required for economic competitiveness. As John Chambers, the Chief Executive Officer of Cisco Systems wisely observed, “The jobs are going to go to where the best-educated workforce is with the most competitive infrastructure and environment for creativity and supportive government. it is inevitable. And by definition those people will have the best standard of living. This may or may not be the country that led the industrial revolution”.

Our faith is that Nnamdi Azikiwe University will be one core institution that will help Nigeria develop the critical human resources and research insights that will lead to our actual technological takeoff and sustainable economic development. So far, this university has proved itself



worthy of the great name it bears. It is Azikiwe's university. Like its namesake, it will lead Nigeria towards its manifest destiny.

Let me say something about another important work of a university like NAU in the context of national development. The university is a nursery bed of national unity and integration. We know from the wisdom of the renowned Anthropologist, Benedict Anderson in his great book, ***'Imagined Communities'*** that every society or nation is a product of imagination. We construct our nationalities in line with the ideas, the norms and the lore we create as a knowledge community. In the early days of nationalism, our institutions, including the university, were consciously involved in creating ideas and values that unite rather than divide the people. These universities did not focus only on their geographical zones in their research. They took the whole country as their area of research. Of course, there was never a question of state of origin or religious affiliation in the choice of scholars and researchers. We were more concerned with solving the foundational problems of economic and social development more than with the



politics of domination. We were then nation builders.

In the history of political philosophy there have been writers who believe that the answer to the problem of political stability in the midst of religious and social pluralism is to forge what they call 'civil religion'. The chief proponent of this worldview was Jean Jacques Rousseau. In his book, ***The Social Contract***, he argues that stability will need the promulgation of a civil religion that constitutes "sentiments of sociability, without which, it is impossible to be a good citizen or a faithful subject". American philosopher, Martha Nussbaum, in her book, ***Rawls's Political Liberalism***, has interpreted 'civil religion' to require "patriotic beliefs and sentiments that hold the state together and create unanimity amongst citizens. In political economics we refer to these sentiments and beliefs as 'social capital'. It is being reckoned that social capital is as important as human and physical capitals in determining the character of social and economic development in a society. Harvard's Robert Putnam in his book, ***Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy***, has shown us the difference that social capital makes in development by contrasting the



politics of southern and northern Italy. In his study of democracy in the United States, French Philosopher, Alexis Tocqueville, in his book, ***Democracy in America***, argues that the secret of United States' greatness is not in its compendious buildings but in the culture of civility in its town halls, where through virtuous conducts, citizens determine the future of their republic.

I would like to believe that the Nnamdi Azikiwe University has implanted in the class of 2019 the 'patriotic beliefs and sentiments' that will make them think of themselves as Nigerians rather than merely as members of one ethnic and religious community or the other. Even in today's world of digital technology and intensified interconnection we need a sense of belonging in a state to be able to flourish as humans. Therefore, we should promote the social health of the Nigerian state if we want to promote civilization in this part of the world. The universities have a responsibility to engage with the articulation of patriotic beliefs and sentiments that will promote commitment to national unity and development in the next generation of Nigerian leaders and scholars. We cannot lose the opportunity of framing the



minds and shaping the sentiments of next generation of leaders in Nigeria.

Our past leaders realized the importance of early formation in the development of national integration hence they established the National Youth Service Corp Scheme. Unfortunately, this programme is now not delivering its mandate partly because before students graduate from our universities, they are already socialized in divisive politics stemming from religious and ethnic fundamentalism. Instead of being socialized through education to look joyfully to serving their fatherlands, some students work hard to avoid postings to some parts of the country. This undermines the strategic vision of the NYSC programme and weakens national integration.

The university as an idea includes the fact of moral education. I want to challenge university administrators, starting from this great university, to revisit the issue of curriculum development. We know from histories of advanced democracies that they design their university education to answer to their strategic national needs at different historic moments. For example, the United States





borrowed its graduate education system from the Germans because of the attraction of German technological expertise. This system has helped to make the United States the modern global empire. We need a review of university curriculum to refocus on the threatening failure of the states in Africa and the need to recreate beliefs and moral sentiments in young Africans who will lead the vanguard of resurgence of nationalism and patriotism.

***Politics of National Unity and Integration:***

Nigeria follows the train of African states that failed to rise to the expectation post-colonial rule. On October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1960 the Time Magazine profiled Nigeria on its cover page and hailed the emergence of an African superpower. The reputable magazine believed that Nigeria would represent Africa at the table of developed countries shortly and herald the emergence of an African economic power. But the rest is history. We know that Nigeria did not emerge. It wasn't ready for the prime time. It shrunk instead. Part of the reason for failure of Nigeria to rise to its manifest destiny is the political mismanagement. Former Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah once counseled African leaders to first



seek the political kingdom and every other thing will be added. But this was not to be true. We got flag independence but did not have actual economic and social independence. Economists and development scholars, Ann Seidman and Bob Seidman, argued whilst African countries won the war of independence, they lost the 'Fatal Race'. For them, after independence African leaders needed to transform the dysfunctional institutions inherited from colonial rule. Instead of transforming these institutions of tyranny and disunity, African leaders reinforced them. Sooner or later, these institutions led to failure of their well-intentioned governments. Nkrumah was toppled in a coup for being dictatorial. Nigeria also had its first civilian government overthrown in a military coup. Sets of macabre events finally led to a civil war that destroyed the foundation of national unity and sustainable development in Nigeria.

The simple lesson from this history is that politics matters. The quality of politics determines the development trajectory of a country. The politics of our founding fathers was not suitable for the challenges of post-colonialism.



Instead of abandoning the 'divide-and-rule' strategies of colonial administration, they amplified it and created a sense in which we did not see ourselves as first and foremost Nigerians. They exaggerated and exploited the cultural and religious differences of the Nigerian people instead of weaving the tapestry of national unity from these splendid diversities. Why did Nigerian founding leaders fail to lay strong institutions for national unity?

Why have succeeding leaders failed in the politics of national unity and integration? I needed to consult US Environmental Science Professor and MacArthur Foundation Fellowship Winner, Jared Diamond. In his international bestseller, ***Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive***, ask this "why do some societies make disastrous decisions?". To answer this question, Jared Diamond points to one important cause of disastrous failure: "The first stop on my roadmap is that groups may do disastrous things because they failed to anticipate a problem before it arrived, for any of the several reasons. One may be that they may have had no prior experience of such problems, and so may not have been sensitized to the



possibility”. The second reason he gave which I will also use as a working tool in this analysis goes thus: “The second stop on my roadmap, after a society hasn’t anticipated a problem before it arrives, involves its perceiving or failing to perceive a problem that has actually arrived”. He gave three reasons why leaders may fail to perceive a problem that has arrived. One is that the origin of the problem may be imperceptible, in which case these leaders cannot notice these problems until they are too late. Another reason for failure to perceive a problem that has arrived is ‘distant management’. This is a problem of large bureaucracies where complexity places those who ought to pay attention far removed from the problem. The final reason for failure to perceive problems when they arrive is what could be called ‘creeping normalcy’, the trend is slow but keeps increasing in a manner that does not raise eyebrow until it becomes pandemic. At that point it becomes ungovernable.

I believe that the world of public policy owes Jared Diamond a debt of gratitude for these enormous insights about the rise and fall of societies. Little wonder he was honored with



the 'genius award', MacArthur Foundation Fellowship. Now, let us map Jared Diamond's insights onto the crisis of national unity and integration in Nigeria. Take his first Roadmap: failure to anticipate the arrival of a problem. From hindsight, the development of political parties along ethnic lines during the struggle for independence was a mistake. We could have rather developed strong national platforms to fight colonial rule so that afterwards we will not feel the gravitational pull towards ethnocentric politics. We did not anticipate the arrival of the day when dangerous ethnic and religious demagogues will steer public sentiments towards ethnic and religious political behavior. Let me also concede that after independence some Nigerian political leaders made great efforts to play national politics. But it looked like the virus of ethnocentrism had already eaten deep into political consciousness.

The second roadmap of failure according to Jared Diamond is that leaders fail to perceive a problem that has already arrived. After independence Nigerians were already leaving with the reality of the ugliness of ethnic politics. By 1948



there has been ethnic violence in some parts of northern Nigeria. Ethnic violence escalated after independence as ethnic leaders jostle for control of the new Nigerian republic. Instead of pushing back against ethnic politics and the violence it occasioned, the new Nigerian leader manipulated ethnic sentiments for strategic personal political goals. This enthroned the 'politics of fear of marginalization and mutual distrust'. The politics of fear of marginalization and mutual distrust almost stopped Nigeria's independence in 1960 as minorities agitated against a united Nigeria because of fear of oppression by the majority ethnic groups. This led to the establishment of a special commission- the Willink Commission- to examine the fears of the minorities and propose responses. The commission issued its report in 1958 and argued for the incorporation of a fundamental human rights clause in the new Nigerian constitution and special representation for the minorities in the new parliament. However, this innovative proposal did not save Nigeria from the disaster of ethnic politics. The Nigerian politicians did not care much to see the festering wound of disoriented politics that needs



healing.

Eugene Uwalaka in his book, **Ethics of Political Leadership**, aptly captures this failure: *“The use of stereotypes to win political and economic advantages in the relationship management process amongst dominant tribes is one of the causes of disunity. The psychological effect of consistently telling ourselves that we are different even when we are not has led to disunity. Our leaders were too inexperienced howbeit educated to govern in a complex interdependence, they took a contingency approach to the exclusion of a systematic approach to the problem of disunity. They mistook the tree for the whole forest and thought that the end justifies the means. They played up our differences, they harped on the things that could divide us rather than the ones that could unite us in their election manifestos, slogans, pre-election campaigns and banners”*. Does this not sound like today’s Nigeria?

The reason for the collapse of the First Republic is sowed in the failure of national politics. The military took advantage of chaos in some part of the country arising from failure of electoral democracy to take over power. The failure of



national politics subjected Nigeria to decades of ruinous military rule which submerged our political institutions, especially the legislative branch into authoritarian culture. These decades of ruin strangely replicated across other African countries and similarly damaged their democratic institutions even decades after military rule. No wonder the United Nation Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in its 2005 report described African parliaments as underdeveloped in both facilities, norms and procedures of parliamentary practice.

We are living today with the legacies of this initial error of perception by our leaders who reinforced the politics of ethnic dominance rather than the politics national unity and development. Can we ever completely estimate how much we have lost as a nation and as a continent as a result of wrong post-colonial politics? Columbia University Professor of Anthropology and Ugandan Africanist, Mahmood Mamdani in his book, ***Citizens and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism***, gives us a clue. He has argued that because African leaders did not reverse the dictatorship of colonial





rule, we now have decentralized dictatorship in Africa rather than democratization of the local. Most of the post-colonial communal conflicts in Nigeria as well as other African countries arose from disputes over chiefdoms that colonial administrators created randomly to serve their own administrative convenience. Post-colonial African leaders did not reverse their colonial contraptions, but rather maintained them because it suited their politics. Today, Nigeria and other African countries are crushed by the multitude of communal conflicts that defeat any strategic development plans.

This failed politics has obvious economic implications: poor economic development and pervasive poverty. We have failed to focus on using political power for development. We have used political power to create the wrong political culture that produced negative development outcomes. Political attention has been misdirected towards ethnic competition for power. The result is that our contemporaries have left us far behind such that even a geological leap may not be enough. Think about Malaysia. In the 1960s people from that country came to eastern



Nigeria to take palm oil seedlings for their proposed palm kernel industry. Today, Malaysia is the world largest exporter of palm oil and its products while Nigeria is a net importer. Professor Samuel F. Huntington of the ***Clash of Civilization*** fame in an introduction to the book, ***Culture Matters***, makes this interesting observation:

*“In the early 1990s, I happened to come across economic data on Ghana and South Korea in the early 1960s and I was astonished to see how similar their economies were then. These two countries had roughly comparable levels of per capita GNP, similar divisions of their economy among primary products, manufacturing and services; and overwhelming primary product export with South Korea producing a few manufactured goods. Also, they were receiving comparable levels of economic aid. Thirty years later, South Korea had become an industrial giant with the fourteenth largest economy in the world, multinational corporations, major exports of automobiles, electronic equipment and other sophisticated manufactures, and a per capita income approximating those of Greece. Moreover, it was on its way to the consolidation of*



*democratic institutions. No such change had occurred in Ghana, whose per capita GNP was now about one-fifteenth that of South Korea. How could this extraordinary difference in development be explained? Undoubtedly, many factors played a role, but it seems to me that culture has to be a large part of the explanation. South Koreans valued thrift, investment, hard work, education, organization, and discipline. Ghanaians had different values. In short, culture matters”.*

You can easily substitute Nigeria for Ghana and the statement will remain true. But what Huntington did not say was how this perverse culture was created. Who made South Korean value thrift, hard work and investment and Ghanaians value negative things? The answer is politics. Political management set the two comparable countries on different trajectories of development by engendering different social culture that adversely or positively impacted on development.

***Restructuring, Political Institutions and National Integration:***

Political culture creates political institutions and these



institutions determine the quality of life of the people. We have learnt from New Institutional Economics (NIE) that the most important determinant of economic development is the quality of institutions. The leading proponent and Nobel Laureate in Economics, Douglas North, in his book, ***Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance***, defines institution as the ‘rules of the game in a society, or more formally... the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction’. North believes that these institutions are the prime determinant of economic development. The World Bank seems to agree with him in its ***2002 World Development Report*** when it argues that “Weak institutions- tangled laws, corrupt courts, deeply biased credit systems, and elaborate business registration requirements- hurt poor people and hinder development ... Countries that systematically deal with such problems and create new institutions suited to local needs can dramatically increase income and reduce poverty”.

Institutions are fate in political and economic development. One of our misfortunes is that we have inherited political



and economic institutions that undercut sustainable political and economic development. Take for instance our state structure. We have created states to the point where many of these states are now economically bankrupt and cannot effectively manage local affairs like education without significant federal bailout. The institution of revenue generation and sharing has reduced every state to a mendicant rushing to Abuja to receive monthly allocation. Our skewed federalism has endangered democracy and development in Nigeria. We have to go back to the true features of federalism so that we have states that will compete in economic development and be able to manage their local affairs. That was the design of federalism before the military distorted it.

Perhaps, it is this sort of failures and problems that fuel the call for restructuring. There is no doubt that we need to comprehensively review the constitutional foundations of democratic governance to sustain national unity. We should go back to the original design of equality of regions to continue to provide stability to the federation. Given this scenario, restructuring makes sense. But I don't subscribe



to restructuring as part of a political gambit to outsmart another geopolitical zone. We have to end this brinkmanship that consists in manipulating fear of domination and stoke mutual distrust. Yes, we need to review the constitution to enthrone justice and equity. A good example is the need of Southeast to have equal states like other zones. We also need to review the constitution to bestow responsibility and resources to the level of government closest to the people. This is in line with the principle of subsidiarity that has defined the success of the European countries. We need to energize the local and state governments to do more and reduce the concentration and attraction of the center. We also need to entrench citizenship rights for all Nigerians and abolish reference to state of origin in our public sector in order to facilitate national unity and integration.

All these will require a sort of constitutional review. But I don't believe in the idolatry of constitutional review. Evidence shows that those countries that have amended their constitution more often have been most politically unstable. We often mask our lack of imagination and



political dexterity by easy resort to constitutional reform. Since 1999 we have had more than four such reforms yet one can argue that the political stability and effectiveness of governance have not significantly improved. No constitution is perfect. Every constitution is a work in progress. As the US Supreme Court Justice Learned Hand rightly observed, constitution-living is more important than constitution-making. Harvard Constitution Law Professor, Lawrence Tribe, has argued that US constitutional democracy is better defined by the wisdom of judicial statemen who have through constitutional interpretations perfected the actual provisions of the constitution. In his view, what we refer together as the principles of US constitutional law are not written in the original US Constitution. There are elaborations and philosophic adumbration of very scholarly and wise judges of the US Supreme Court. I believe that judicial activism at the highest court of the land can help perfect our constitutions. I believe also that creative and imaginative political leaders can further perfect our imperfect constitutional order. More than constitutional review is institution building



through lawmaking. We can use lawmaking to redress some of these institutionalized injustices and inequalities undermining national unity and integration driving the clamour for restructuring. Again as Eugene Uwalaka puts it, “The imbalance existing in the federation was not designed by nature. This skewedness in the distribution of development and standard of living is contrived by men”. Therefore, men and women of goodwill can utilize the ordinary instruments of governance to rectify them. We need to emphasize the building of quality institutions, institutions that will enhance equal creation and fair distribution of goods and services in the federation. In the past we have emphasized institutions of distribution and not the institutions of production. But we are now facing a productivity crisis defined by low productivity. Little wonder we are now the country with the largest number of poor people. This can be an opportunity. As Remy Emmanuel, the Former Chief of Staff to President Obama and Mayor of Chicago once said, “a crisis is a great thing to waste”. We can optimize this crisis by working hard to create those institutions that made South Korea under General Park





under 10 years to change the institutions of underdevelopment and establish new institutions that elevated it into a first world power. We have good examples amongst Botswana and Rwanda, two countries that have become two African success stories. We don't need to reinvent the wheel; we can wisely adapt what has worked elsewhere.

***Essence of Leadership in National Unity and Integration:***

The relationship between political culture, institutions and leadership is a complex one. It is the leader who models the political examples that overtime become political culture and the culture molds institutions that incentivizes present and future political behavior. This is the *virtuous circle* of good leadership. In poor and underdeveloped countries, you will likely encounter a different kind of circle: the *vicious circle*. It is because of the mobilizing force of leadership that the presidency in the United States is often called 'The Bully Pulpit'. Presidents are like evangelists who preach a message. If it is a message of unity then they engender the unity of the country. If it is the message of



disunity, then they engender disunity. This is almost like a self-fulfilling prophecy. It does not apply to only presidents. It applies to governors, it applies to legislators and it applies to every other person holding political office. They are all big influencers on national unity and integration.

The blame for Nigeria's poor record on national unity and integration lies mainly at the door of poor leadership. We need but charismatic and effective leadership to steer the country away from politics of fear and mutual distrust to the politics of hope and inclusiveness; we need transformative leaders like General Park who will engineer structural transformation of the country's economic and social institutions. We need city-builders like the leaders of Dubai, who turned a desert into the world favorite shopping city, leaders like the founding fathers of the United States who turned a rustic agrarian countryside into the greatest economy in human history through breathtaking technological and engineering feat. We need leaders like Barack Obama who will tell his compatriots that "I believe we can seize this future together because we are not as divided as our politics suggests. We are not as cynical as



the pundits believe. We are greater than the sum of our individual ambitions, and we remain more than a collection of red states and blue states. We are and forever will be- the United States of America”.

The leadership crisis in Nigeria is compounding the institutional crisis in the country. The former US President, Barack Obama while visiting Ghana on July 11, 2009, counselled African leaders to build strong institutions instead of looking for the “big man”. It is true that institutions are very critical for development, but it is strong leadership that builds these durable institutions. We must find a way to generate great leaders who can engineer structural reform of the country. The problem is that our political culture and our electoral system often fail to produce such leaders. We have leaders recruitment problem. Our most important challenge is to create a process that recruits transformative and problem-solving leaders imbued with patriotic zeal. Such leaders will create those institutions of efficient production and fair distribution. They will inspire faith in the Nigerian project by telling stories of national unity and integration. They will



communicate with words and symbols. But above all, they will communicate with deeds, decisive and coherent actions that align to strategic vision of national greatness. The leaders who will lead Nigeria towards national unity, integration and development are most likely to have certain attributes. Foremost is integrity. Without integrity it is difficult for a leader to inspire the degree of consensus we need amongst different ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria. David Gergen, advisor to three US presidents and a professor of leadership at Harvard, in his book, ***Eyewitness to Power: The Essence of Leadership Nixon to Clinton***, argues that “integrity is the most important for a president”. As former senator, Alan Simpson said in introducing Gerald Ford at Harvard a year ago, ‘if you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don’t have integrity, nothing else matters”. We need not just credible leaders but credible leadership. Another factor for good leadership is ability to create and communicate a compelling purpose. Credible leadership must focus on articulating a core value which will reorient the citizenry and guide the nation towards achieving its manifest destiny. This is the foundation of



visionary leadership.

We need effective leaders who will inspire hope and execute the tasks of national unity, integration and development. That is what Dean Williams in his book, ***Real Leadership: Helping People and Organizations Face Their Toughest Challenges***, calls ‘real leadership’, which “orchestrate social learning in regard to complex problems and demanding challenges. People must learn why they are in a particular condition in order to invent pathways forward that produce genuine progress, as opposed to hollow and temporary gains. If the people refuse to face hard truths, are weak at learning or learn the wrong things, then their problem-solving capacity will suffer, and their group or enterprise may eventually wither and die”. Real leadership is problem solving leadership.

### ***Back to the Beginning: The University Matters:***

Let us end where we started: on the importance of the university. What does the university contribute towards national integration and development? I think the university has contributed and should continue to contribute immensely towards national integration and



development. First, we start with values and norms. If culture matters for economic and social development, then the university should focus on engendering the appropriate culture for national development. Huntington argued that South Korean exhibited the values of hard work, excellence, thrift and investment hence they achieved so much in so little time. The university should then focus on modeling these values in their academic research and scholarship. University education is not just about technological inventions. It is also about shaping the human mind, transforming the human spirit and enriching the human imagination. It is the responsibility of our universities with the support of the government and non-profit organizations to produce great Nigerians who will venture forward and build the Nigeria of our dream.

I also think this is the time to make the historic connection between the town and gown. The university in Nigeria should not be a rarified ivory tower sitting in isolation of the crisis of nationhood. Rather, it should be the catalysts of solutions to the social and economic challenges of nationhood. The university should lead the way in the



formation of next generation of transformative, effective and purposive leaders for Nigeria for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

***Conclusion:***

I will like to end this conversation by referring to a book that documents how a group of explorers, inventors and mavericks built the United States of America. The book is titled “The Men Who United the States: Amazing Stories of the Explorers, Inventors and Mavericks Who Made America” by Simon Winchester. After narrating the stories of wonderful story of US emergence from the rural to industrial power he ended on a lyrical praise of leadership of ordinary Americans who believed in themselves and built a united nation:

“But as we know, this all changed. The United States was born and was slowly suffered into existence. What eventually set this new America apart from original America is that, through all of the republic’s years, there existed agencies that were deliberately bent on the task of creating community, creating the practical means, for the forging of alliance for the common good of all... some of the agencies were individuals, men with great vision, men like George



Washington, Theodore Judah, Isham Randolph, Samuel Morse, and Thomas MacDavid, whose ideas and inventions, driven by the prospect of personal fortune, in most cases, similarly helped bind ever more tightly the peoples of the country together”.

We can be like the United States. We all- agencies, universities and individuals, can generate ideas and inventions that bind the people of Nigeria tightly together. Let us all go out there, mostly the Nnamdi Azikiwe University Class of 2019 and work for national integration, peace and development.

Thank you for listening.