

**AN ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR CHARLES O. ESIMONE, FAS,
VICE-CHANCELLOR, NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AT THE
UNIVERSITY-WIDE INTERACTION WITH THE VICE-
CHANCELLOR HOLDING AT GARBA SQUARE ON TUESDAY
11TH JUNE, 2019**

PROTOCOL

Dear friends,

I promised you during my inaugural speech that I will be meeting with you in no distant time to further expose my work plan to you and to give you an idea of where we are headed. Today is that day. This meeting is important because according to Prophet Amos, “two cannot work together, except they agree” (Amos 3:3). I want us to work together; therefore I want us to agree in advance on the direction we are heading.

As we already know, our goal is to move this great University from position 4047 to at least 200th position in the world. This is an ambitious goal that can only be achieved if all hands will be on deck. However, we know that it is only an insane man that will be doing the same thing repeatedly and expect different results. There is a reason why we are ranked number 4047 in the world. The work habit and mindset of people who get first positions in their classes are different from the work habit and mindset of those ranked from 25th down to those who fail to pass. This means that we have to get rid of the mindset, work habit and attitude which has kept us in position 4047 in exchange for the attitude, mindset and work habit of those ranked in the first 200 in the world. This is sacrosanct! This is not negotiable!

Today, I will present to you the attributes of what I call Project200 which are the attributes of universities that are ranked in the top 200. **Project200 will be our hash tag for the actualization of top 200 ranking.**

The attributes of top 200 universities are as follows:

1. They are efficient:

- a. They use man power efficiently. There is no room for redundancy. Data showed that we have over 1,800 non-

teaching staff and over 3,000 academic staff, and we want to take advantage of this huge human capital to achieve our Project200 goal. We believe that with this number of staff, processes will be almost seamless if everyone is at his/her duty post, performs his/her duties with dedication without regards to who benefits and clears his/her tables before leaving for the day. In response to this, we reward productivity and dedication with productivity bonuses.

We will give room for one hour break throughout the whole day that will comprise 15 minutes of tea break to be taken any time between 11:00 and 11:30 am and 45 minutes lunch break to be taken anytime between 1 and 2 pm.

In a few months time, you will have to fingerprint into your office and fingerprint out at the end of the day. Unscheduled supervisory visits to your offices will be carried out during work hours.

- b. Nothing that can be done today is left for the following day. Mail are to be treated and dispatched immediately. Mail trails will be tracked using computer and any staff that delays any mail will be punished.
- c. Every Department/Unit will produce its standard operating procedure with the detail of all processes and the average time required to carry out any task. Again, computerization of processes will also help to reduce the average time required to produce documents such as transcripts and certificates.
- d. Every Faculty/Department/Directorate/Unit must have functional e-mail address where they can be reached from within and outside of the University. Response time to mail sent to units must not be more than 24 hours when it is not immediate.
- e. Urgent information will be passed through these mail and this will reduce the amount of money spent on paper procurement which will in turn protect the environment.

NB: It is the highest form of error to think that a university job gives you time to do whatever you like. On the contrary, it is as intense as any private sector job you can think about. It is a public institution with a private enterprise attitude.

2. They utilize their resources efficiently:

Top 200 universities utilize their resources efficiently. It is unfortunate that it seems that many people working for the government or other enterprise that is not theirs seem to look for avenues to perpetrate fraud. We shall change this attitude. This is an institution where new things are created and faulty ones repaired.

- a. Those who use fuel from our fuel dump must only collect what they need to run errand for the University.
- b. University vehicles must be used for what they are approved for.
- c. We will put measures in place to prevent people from short changing the University. Anyone caught stealing from the University in any guise will be punished in accordance with the University regulations. There will be no sacred cows.
- d. Treat the University business the way you will like your enterprise treated. Do not steal from the University.
- e. Contractors are known to do bad jobs in Nigeria because of the number of people they have to 'settle' before they can access the funds needed to carry out their jobs. **There will be zero tolerance to fleecing of contractors.** Contract implementations will be strictly monitored from the day approval is given. Sources of delays will be eliminated and only top-quality projects will be commissioned.

We will block all loopholes that allow the funds that could be used for the development of the University to disappear into individual bank accounts.

3. Top 200 ranked universities treat their students as the king:

Our customers are the students and we are here because of them. Some of them are passing through the adolescence years. Treat them like your sons and daughters. Treat them the way you expect other staff both non-teaching and academic to treat your kids. Go out of your way to solve their problems and help them to excel. They are your products that you export to the world. Treat them well because they are the reason why you are paid. Their success speaks to your dedication.

4. Academic staff and indeed, all University staff are known to be mentors, coaches and counsellors:

I will expect nothing less from our own teaching staff. Before you victimize a female student because of sex, stop and think, 'what if this is my daughter or my sister?' Before you fail any student that should have passed for whatever reason, think about your own children. Let me stress this again. **ANY FORM OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT, SEX FOR MARK, MONEY FOR MARK OR ANY TYPE OF INDUCEMENT MUST STOP.**

- a. Students will be expected to give feedback on your attitude to teaching at the end of every semester. We will use the feedback to select lecturers that need help to upgrade their teaching methods. We will also use it to find out lecturers that prey on our students and play the role of God in the classroom. The outcome of this feedback will be considered in your dealings with the University including promotion.
- b. **Again, teaching in the University in conjunction with meaningful research is time consuming. It gives little or no time for other things when one is engrossed in it. It is however very rewarding.**
- c. We will restrict the number of adjunct positions that our staff apply for a maximum of one so that they will have time to attend to their students. A good lecturer should teach in class and be available and accessible outside the classroom. A good lecturer looks for new methods of teaching that resonates with the students. A good lecturer is bothered if students fail his/her course. S/he does not boast about it. A good lecturer knows that no

student is a dunce. They practice inclusive learning and constructivism. S/he looks for a way to carry every student along. A good lecturer coaches, mentors, and counsels students aright.

- d. We will implement conference marking in all Departments because we want results released one month after examinations are concluded.
- e. There will be zero tolerance to academic fraud by students and by teachers. We will install CCTV cameras in examination halls in all our Departments. We will also subscribe to anti-plagiarism software to help lecturers check plagiarism in dissertations, projects, seminars and as well as publications.

5. Top 200 universities admit based on merit:

Admission racketeering will be dealt with decisively. We shall attract the best brains in the country, Africa and the world with scholarships especially for the bright students who cannot afford to train themselves. We shall give preference to biological children when they qualify for premium programme. However, we shall distribute available positions equitably considering who has benefited before. Information about biological children shall be updated to make sure that we treat only biological children preferentially.

6. The top performing universities give priority to research:

Research output dissemination for the purpose of translation and commercialization.

- a. *We will support research for researchers.* TETFund and IGR releases for research will be coordinated. Peer reviewed proposals with high potential for solving problems will be selected and the components broken into segments. Suitable members from the group will apply for segments from the proposal. The outcomes will be aggregated and published in impact factored journals. This will encourage multidisciplinary research.

- b. Publications in impact factored journals will be rewarded. The University will publish a list of top ranking journals including open access journals in various disciplines in which the University will pay for the publication fee if a staff gets accepted to publish in them.
- c. We will encourage Departments to establish complementary linkages with universities abroad to enable their staff carry out research procedures that we lack the capacity to carry out and also to expand our frontiers in science and technology, engineering and arts.
- d. Appointments as directors and coordinators will also be based on merit which will be determined based on your research productivity, publication in impact factored journals and the number of junior academics and students you have set up for success among other considerations.
- e. We shall build one state-of-the-art lab at Nnewi and Awka campuses respectively. This will enable us attract foreign postdoctoral fellows from Europe, America and Asia into our soon-to-be established postdoctoral fellowship programmes. We will also upgrade and equip existing laboratories.
- f. We will make it almost compulsory that our junior academic staff must go for postdoctoral training in partner institutions abroad. We will try to provide funding for cases where the host institution will have no funding for our staff.
- g. We shall upgrade our University website to enable us disseminate our research prowess. We shall therefore expect every academic staff to prepare a brief bio of himself or herself that will highlight the following: awards, honours, inventions, grants [current and past], publications, research interest and ongoing research. **This will be collected from all academic staff on the 1st of July, 2019. Please get yours ready.**

7. To enable you work effectively, we will carry out a lot of infrastructural upgrades:

Priority will be given to the construction of the following: Faculty Building for Social Sciences; Faculty Building for Environmental Sciences; and a Senate Building. The Faculty of Agriculture will begin relocation in the current academic year to the Ifite-Ogwari premises as sufficient infrastructure for a take-off has been provided there.

As I stated earlier, your genuine entitlements will be paid in full. Promotion will come on time and external assessments will be processed within the shortest timeline possible. We will retrieve your papers from any external assessor after twelve (12) weeks maximum if s/he does not return the result of the assessment.

We will make sure that there is electric power in every Department from 9.00am to 5.00pm daily.

We will provide you with the necessary training required for you to adapt to the new shift in processes and the resources you will need to perform optimally. **We will also issue queries.**

To boost the efficiency and effectiveness of the Administration, prompt action will be taken towards computerising the operations of the Bursary and the Registry to among other things enhance rapid processing of transcriptions and provide accurate on-time information for management decision making.

The admission process will be decentralized, but closely monitored and supervised, with a view to speeding up the process and furthering inclusiveness.

To ease Students' and Staff accommodation problems and to build a more cohesive University community, early action will be taken to provide on-campus students' and staff accommodation.

I intend that by the end of my 5-year tenure, 50% of the undergraduate students and 70% of post-graduate students will live on-campus. Leveraging on public private partnership,

through the Build, Operate and Transfer model, on-campus staff accommodation will be developed with initial emphasis on the junior staff and few senior staff; in the main staff whose nature of duties makes it desirable that they be resident on-campus, such as: drivers, plant operators, and medical personnel, among others.

As part of efforts to create a sense of community the UNIZIK FM will be further empowered and repositioned to give more coverage to events in the University; and in particular anchoring: *UNIZIK INNOVATIONS*.

Due emphasis will be given to human capital development through enhanced sponsorship of staff to conferences, workshops, etc, to enable them keep pace with the ever expanding frontiers of knowledge. Among other things for other staff, programmes will be developed for the re-certification of technologists.

8. Again, we will block fund leakages and we will generate funding from various sources:

Because we will need a lot of money to implement all that we intend to do in a short period, we will not rely on our traditional sources of income. We will expand our tentacles and operate through a new ICT/Business/Industrial park which will have the capacity to generate enormous fund to increase our IGR.

Dear friends. I want us to remain friends. Therefore, I want to apologize in advance in case I may offend you on the course of implementing **Project200**. I know you were happy because I was appointed the substantive Vice-Chancellor of Our great UNIZIK. I want you to be happier when I hand over to my successor by God's grace in 2024. God bless you! God bless UNIZIK

Support Project200. Thank you

#Project200

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Vice-Chancellor