

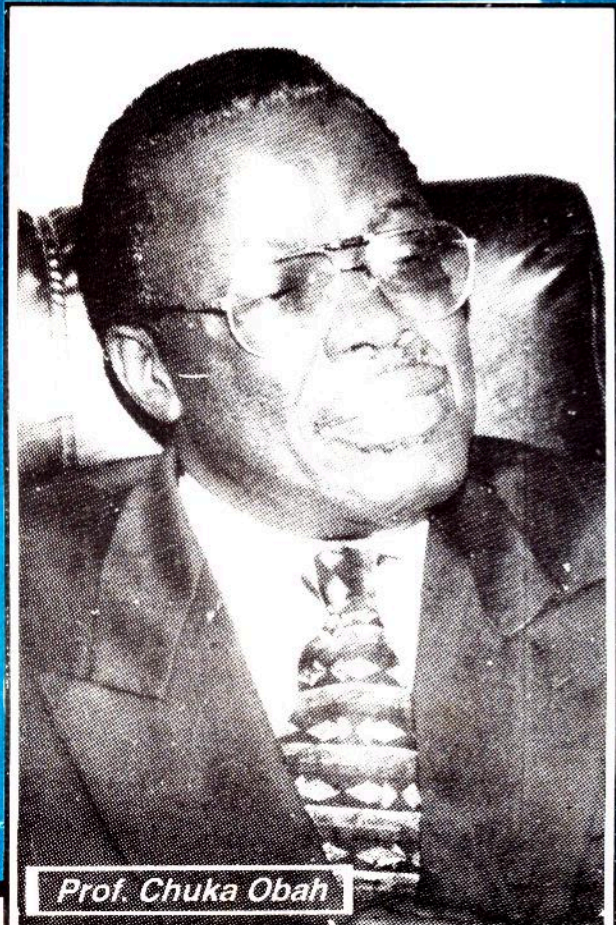


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Committee of Vice-Chancellors  
of Nigerian Universities:

# CVC Chairmanship Returns to FUTO



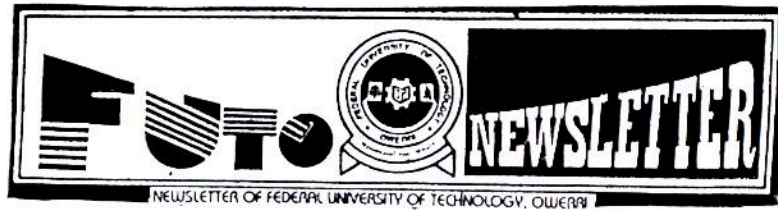
Prof. Chuka Obah

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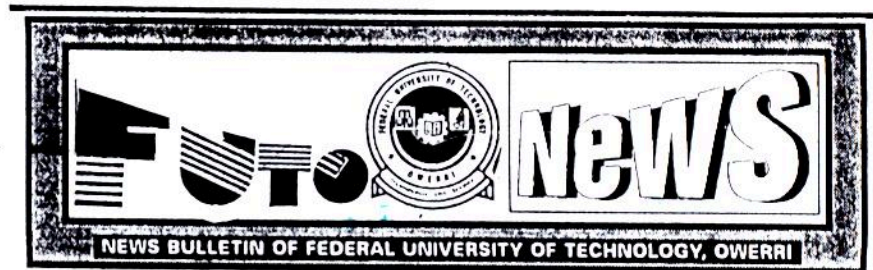
- Pope John Paul II Speaks
- FUTO Links With Alabama A&M University (USA)
- Special Guests on *FUTONews* Platform
- Strategies For Improved University Education
- Vice-Chancellors On Trial



*From*



*To*



The privileged opportunity given the present Editorial Board of the FUTO Newsletter to restructure and improve on the quality, content and layout of the FUTO Newsletter has warranted a change of name. We know, and are also persuaded by our readers to choose a name that reflects the present magazine format of the FUTO Newsletter.

The Vice-Chancellor has therefore approved the change of name of the University's official news bulletin from FUTO Newsletter to FUTO News.

Committee of Vice-Chancellors  
of Nigerian Universities:

# **CVC Chairmanship Returns to FUTO**

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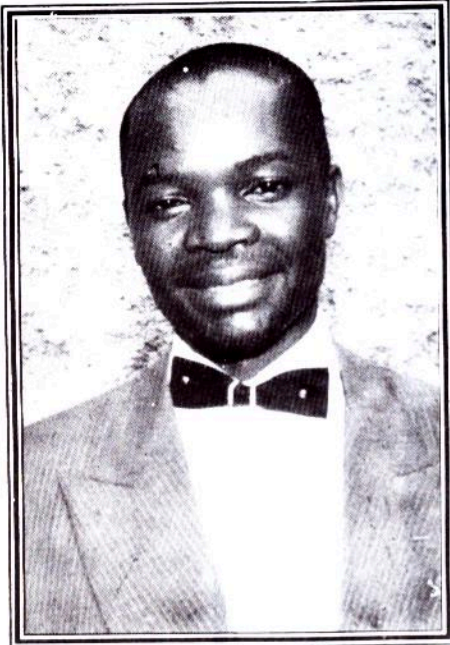
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## Vice-Chancellors as endangered Species



*"If anything keeps the Vice-Chancellor these days at the centre stage, it is more often than not, the chain of crisis which besieges his/her administration. If it is not the crisis of inadequate funding, it is that of the rising cost of goods and services. If it is not the crisis of threats to life and limb from the students, it is the crisis of harassment from staff and the unions over a myriad of problems including demands for democratization of the university administration, demand for academic freedom and university autonomy, failure of the administration to provide the critically needed physical structures and equipment, to rehabilitate old structures and to meaningfully and adequately support research and conferences attendance. The only thing certain in the universities these days is the certainty of looming crisis".*

— Prof. Chuka Obah in *Distress In the University System, 1996.*

The distress in the University System in Nigeria is palpable. It walks

and breathes as it inspires and promotes decadence and a culture of communal immolation. The Vice-Chancellor has thus become a prisoner of some sort. He is structurally incapacitated by the inadequacy of needed facilities and funds and daily confronted by the pent up anger and frustration of ill-motivated staff and disgruntled students. He runs from pillar to post to balance the two contending contradictions. He is a victim of his otherwise exalted office. To survive and thrive, a Vice-Chancellor must possess the proverbial nine lives of the cat, this hardly comes easy. As a result, the Vice-Chancellors usually run into the confluence of the rivers of discontent amongst staff and the rising tide of student hooliganism. IF the taps do not run, the Vice-Chancellor is in trouble; if electric power supply fails, the community calls for his head; when salaries are not paid or delayed, when there are no teaching materials and laboratory equipment, when unions fall out with the authorities, the Vice-Chancellor is held responsible and pilloried. The Vice-Chancellors sleep with one eye open. They are locked up in the conundrum of precarious foreboding. The student constituency is about the most problematic. With the rising wave of secret cults phenomenon in the campuses, the Nigerian University environment has become as risky and dangerous as a battle field. A motley of these gangs of vampires has permeated and consumed the minds and intellect of many student. They come with different names: Black Axe, Small Axe, The Buccaneers, Black Scorpion, etc. They lure innocent and unsuspecting fresh students into their satanic confraternities. Wars often break out amongst rival cults

struggling for supremacy. They maim and kill themselves using lethal weapons like guns, explosives, Axes and Daggers.

In their spirited bid to combat and stamp out this ugly trend, some Vice-Chancellors have been savagely assaulted and mobbed, some had their cars and official residence razed down in an orgy of mindless inferno, while some others are daily living in fear of the Assassin's bullets.

The University System is in distress because the larger society is in distress. The prevailing climate of anomie and alienation in the system is not an isolated matter. It is inextricably tied up with the complete loss of positive values in the citizenry. The consequent collapse of the social superstructure and the attendant disorientation and dislocation of the economic substructure immediately aligns the society on the path of vicious cycle of under-development.

We submit that unless and until the society is reorganized, its priorities refocused and redirected along the path of genuine development and moral rectitude, so long will the Vice-Chancellors remain endangered species in their Universities.

It is against this background that one begins to appreciate the weight of the cross Prof. C.O.G. Obah has elected to shoulder as the new Chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities. He has always called himself 'the slave in the Ivory Tower'. We are confident that following his impressive track records he will be able to weather the storm and calm frayed nerves.

CHIKE EZENWA



## OBAB ASSUMES OFFICE AS CVC CHAIRMAN

**T**he Vice-Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Engr. Prof. C.O.G. Obah has been duly conferred with the mantle of office and reins of authority as the new Chairman of the Committee of Nigerian Universities. Prof. Obah was formally inducted into the new office by the Secretary-General of the CVC at a grand ceremony held in the Federal University of Technology Owerri on Thursday, February 5, 1998.

Speaking at the occasion, the Secretary-General of the CVC, Prof. F.O. Aboaba believed that Prof. Obah was fully equipped, experienced and perfectly well situated to take the CVC to greater heights. Prof. Aboaba told the audience that Prof. Obah has been a great supporter of the CVC and that he would be happy to work with him. He further traced the historical background, aims and objectives and membership of CVC which is presently composed of all Vice-Chancellors of the 24 Federal University in Nigeria. Prof.

Aboaba pointed out that the Chairman of the CVC is also the Chairman of the Committee of Vice Chancellors of State Universities (CVCSU). Prof. Obah is thus the spokesman of all Vice Chancellors in the Country. As such he is entitled to sit on such international councils as the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), Association of African Universities (AAU) and International Association of Universities (IAU). According to Aboaba, the chairman is normally elected from among the members in rotation and the term of office is for one academic year.

He revealed some of the aims and objectives of the CVC which include "to provide a focus of academic leadership through bold initiatives in higher education in the Country with particular reference to the roles of the universities" among other nine points targets.

In his acceptance and declaration of direction speech, Prof. Obah promised to bestir himself with the new challenge

and articulated a new and dynamic orientation for the CVC. He recollected that history was repeating itself since this was the second time FUTO has produced the Chairman of CVC.

The new CVC helmsman noted with delight the prevailing atmosphere of peace, order and purposefulness in the University System and hoped that it would lead to "an eventual harmonization of our academic calendar and also to meaningful academic activities". Prof. Obah described the CVC as "an effective sounding board for the Vice-Chancellors", contending that it shall "in 1998 continue in its mission of taking proper initiative and providing positively - articulated proposals and suggestions for improved university education in the Country".

In attendance at the high brow event were the Deputy Secretary-General of the CVC, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Profs, Registrar, Bursar, Ag University Librarian, Deans/Directors, Heads of Departments/Unit and a large representation of the Press.



Prof F.O. Aboaba, CVC Secretary General congratulates Prof. Chuka Obah — The new CVC Chairman



# STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVED UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

*Being the text of the address delivered by Engr. Prof. C.O.G. Obah as the new CVC Chairman*

I am very pleased to welcome you all to today's briefing. The event is significant in many ways: Firstly, while my good friends, the current Secretary-General of the CVC Prof. Aboaba and his Deputy Alhaji Idowu have been frequent august visitors to our beloved Campus, their visit today provides an official seal to my assumption of the Chairmanship of the CVC for the 1998 session. I am particularly grateful to them for their solidarity and congratulatory visit, and I do count on the continued support of the Secretariat for my successful and effective tenure. Secondly, it is significant to note that this is the second time that FUTO has, since its inception in 1980, produced the Chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors. Of significance too, is the that this year can be termed the year not only of Transition but a year of Great Expectations during which the CVC must play a vital role in restoring confidence in the educational system of the nation.

I am happy that peace, order and purposefulness are gradually returning to our academic institutions, and am proud of the role of the CVC in bringing about such a situation which will lead to an eventual harmonization of our academic calendar, and also to meaningful academic activities. The CVC, as an effective sounding board for the Vice-Chancellors, shall in 1998, more effectively continue in its Mission of taking proper initiative and providing positively-articulated proposals and suggestions/ comments on the

strategies for improved University education in the country. In this respect, therefore, the CVC has an effective role to play towards the full realization of the Vision 2010.

The faithful implementation of the 1998 Budget of Transition is expected to bring about a year of restored confidence, loyalty, respect and dedication in our educational institutions, and consequently herald a bold attempt to arrest the apparent decline in the quality of teaching, research and productivity in the educational system. 1998 is therefore a Year of Great Expectations.

Since improved conditions of service of staff are a sine qua non for conducive academic activities, we call on the Federal Government to speedup action on putting into place the infrastructural logistics needed to ameliorate the present widespread stress and strain, and indeed frustration among the University workers.

The delay in the disbursement of the Education Tax Fund has continued to be a source of concern to the CVC, and it is hoped that all the perceived bottlenecks against the infusion of the Fund into the educational system shall soon be removed.

We welcome and indeed commend the Petroleum (Special) Trust Fund (PTF) for presently extending their intervention programme to the rehabilitation of facilities in the tertiary institutions. We believe that such a programme shall definitely improve the learning facilities and reduce tension in the various campuses. The Vice-

Chancellors are painfully aware of the state of deterioration of the required facilities in their respective campuses, and wish the PTF a quick, cost-effective and successful implementation of its intervention programme. In addition, they are hopeful that a similar programme will soon be extended to Inter-University Centres since these form an integral part of the higher educational system.

The socioeconomic problems of the nation have had a profound effect on our campuses varying from a quantum increase in the antisocial activities, including cultism, to the recent crippling academic staff strikes. However, we are confident that the realization of the present pronounced constructive and significant government involvement in the revitalization of the Universities, coupled with effective complementary efforts of other stakeholders of higher education would go a long way towards restoring the Universities as Centres of Excellence in all their ramifications. The CVC is poised to help to usher in an era of peace and tranquility on campus and to make the campuses free of the menace of secret cults and other forms of antisocial behaviour. Furthermore, the CVC is geared towards bringing to fruition the much needed restructuring of academic and administrative strategies in our Universities towards a full realization of VISION 2010.

**ENGR. PROF. C.O.G. OBAH**  
*Chairman, Committee of Vice-Chancellors  
and  
Vice-Chancellor, Federal University  
of Technology, Owerri.*



# THE COMMITTEE OF VICE-CHANCELLORS OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES (CVC)

## *Historical Background*

In April 1959, the Federal Government of Nigeria, after consultation with the three Regional Governments, appointed a commission on Post-School Certificate and Higher Education in Nigerian under the Chairmanship of Sir Eric Ashby. The Report of the Commission, "Investment in Education" now popularly known as the "Ashby Report", was submitted to government in September 1960 and its recommendations were accepted with a few amendments. Following this, in 1962, the University of Lagos was established by the Federal Government, while, at the same time, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) were established by the Northern and Western Regional Governments respectively. The Eastern Regional Government had earlier established the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1960. The University of London in 1962 to which it had always maintained special academic relationship. An outgrowth of the Ashby Report was also the establishment of the National Universities Commission (NUC) in 1962, as a Department in the Cabinet Office to oversee the activities of the Universities.

The dependence of the

Universities on Government subvention, the role and functions of the National Universities Commission (NUC), and the need for a common forum made it incumbent upon the Universities to come together to exchange ideas and express joint opinions on matters affecting higher Education generally in the country. Consequently, the Vice-Chancellors of the Universities in the country agreed to follow a clear pattern which had proved invaluable, in this regard, in countries like the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, India and Pakistan, and to set up a body known as the Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (CVC).

### *Aims and Objectives*

The objective of the Committee include:

- (a) To provide a focus of academic leadership through bold initiative in higher Education in the country with particular reference to the roles of Universities,
- (b) To act as a channel through which the joint opinion of Nigerian Universities on any matter affecting higher education in Nigeria is expressed;

- (c) To study, and comment, and make recommendations on proposals, legislation, regulations or rules affecting Universities in Nigeria.
- (d) To act as a bureau of information and facilitate communication and mutual consultation among the Universities.
- (e) To cooperate with organisations having similar aims and objectives on University education in Nigeria and to project generally the interest of Nigerian Universities.
- (f) To organise, sponsor or promote conferences, seminars, workshops, lectures, colloquial and symposia on higher Education particularly in Nigeria.
- (g) To provide a platform for discussing common problems such as inter University cooperation, administrative and academic practices, maintenance of academic standard, staff recruitment, physical exchange and students affairs.
- (h) To serve as a forum for collaboration with the National Universities Commission (NUC) and Federal Government on matters concerning University education.



- (i) To do all such other lawful thing as are necessary for the attainment and furtherance of these objectives.

### **Membership**

The Committee is presently composed of all Vice-Chancellors of the 24 (Twenty Four) Federal Universities in Nigeria. A Chairman is normally elected from among the members in rotation, and the term of office is one Academic year.

### **What it does**

Meeting, Conferences and seminars:

The Committee meets five times in an Academic session (October to June) to discuss a number of issues affecting the Universities presented by the Secretariat and to take appropriate actions. The meetings also provide the Vice-chancellors with opportunities for personal contact and informal exchange of views and experience. There is also provision for special meetings

usually at the request of members to consider issues that have significant impact on the affairs of the Universities and need urgent attention e.g. Extra-Ordinary meetings were held to resolve the impasses between Academic Staff of Universities and the Federal Government.

### **Relationship with National and International organisations**

The Committee relates with the national Universities Commission (NUC) Federal Ministry of Education (FME), The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), the Committee of Vice-Chancellors of State Universities (CVCSU), Committee of Pro-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (CPC), and other similar national organisations. The Committee is also represented on a number of public organisations such as the Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM), Council and Board of Studies; and the

West African Examination Council (WAEC) in its Technical Examination Committee.

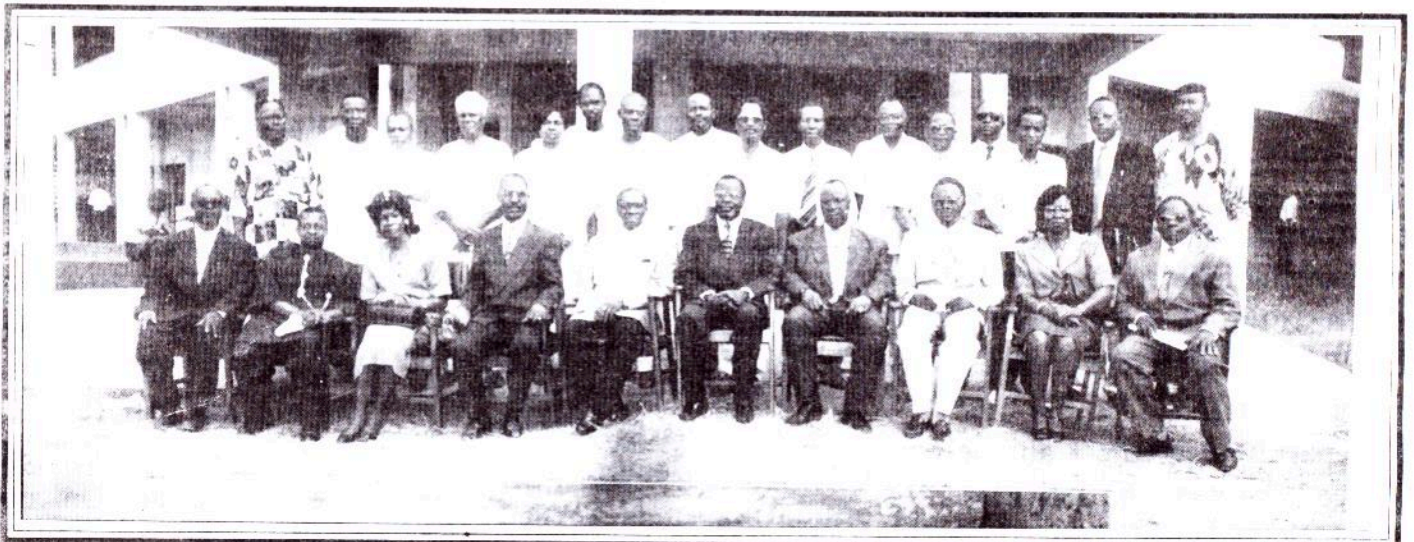
The Committee is a member of International organisations such as the International Association of Universities (IAU), the Association of African Universities (AAU) and the Association of Common Wealth Universities (ACU). It participates actively and regularly too in various international meetings and is represented on the ACU Council.

### **The Secretariat**

The Secretariat's core income comes from annual contributions by the member Universities, and proceeds from investments.

The Secretariat is currently headed by the Secretary General, Prof. E. O. Aboaba, and assisted by a number of supporting staff. The functions of the Secretariat are carried out through the Administrative, Academic and Finance Units.

*Source: CVC Information Bulletin*



*The Visiting CVC Team in a group photograph with members of the FUTO Administration*



**A**s we reported in the last edition of FUTONEWS, a new Registrar and Bursar were recently appointed by the Governing Council of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri. To have a peep into their loaded programmes of action or manifestoes, we invited them on the FUTONEWS PLATFORM. They came and we talked. The excerpts from the two interviews are reproduced below.

## 'A MISSION OF RESTORATION' - OKOYE

**Futo News:** What is your vision as the new Registrar of this University?

**Registrar:** I am very much abreast of the tradition, mission and vision of the University. I believe that I will deliver the goods. I came in at a period when the Registry was losing its grip and glory in the University administration. I believe that as the new Registrar of the University, I will be able to restore the lost dignity and glory of the Registry Department.

**Futo News:** We realise that the task ahead is very heavy. How do you hope to tackle the culture of coming to work late and early departure?

**Registrar:** This is not an easy question to answer bearing in mind the circumstances of FUTO. FUTO is located in a virgin forest and far away from Owerri town, about 25km away and given the harsh economic situation, staff are constrained to come to work late generally. Nevertheless, I very much believe that a good teacher teaches by example. Since I assumed office

as the Registrar, I have made it a point of duty to be on Campus not later than 8.30 a.m. every morning and most of the time, I come here at 8 O'clock and that has motivated a lot of my staff in the Registry to come to work early. As I come to work early, I go late. Some of my

Such excesses will be combated. The Coordinators and my senior colleagues in the Registry are now being galvanized to be punctual to work themselves. Whether we believe it or not, the Registry is the heart of the University. If we live by example, generally the University

Community will emulate us. I also intend to reintroduce where it is not functioning, the signing in and signing off Register in every department starting from the Registry and then to other departments in the University. When that is strictly adhered to, it will help a lot to minimise the attitude of coming late and going early.

**Futo News:** There is apparent low appreciation of the role of the Registry staff which tends to generate a

feeling of inferiority complex among young administrators, vis-a-vis the academic staff. What is your view on this?

**Registrar:** Before assuming office as the Registrar, I had identified it as a problem in the University. Registry staff particularly the young administrative officers, have been



Mr. Okoye Stressing a point at the Interview

staff have started imbibing that example

I know for certain that lateness to work had been occasioned by circumstances but some people have capitalised on it. In the morning they come out looking for transport to go to work but praying to God they do not find transportation.



psychologically intimidated at various meetings. They are cowed down and reduced to mere clerks. Well, I intend to combat this by leading the young administrative officers and even the senior administrative officers to gain and build up experience on the job by reading the various administrative books and having a mastery of the Handbook of Administrative Procedure, the Regulations for both senior and junior staff, the scheme of service and other necessary documents. When the administrative officers are versatile with these documents and books that are very essential to administration, when they attend meetings, they will be able to speak with authority and give vital information to a committee and guide the committee well.

I will also assist the young administrators by making proposals to the Management so that these

young administrative officers can be trained. We start by organising internal training programmes within the University by getting seasoned administrators within and without the University to have weeks of training internally. Therefore, we can venture out by sending them out on short courses at Administrative Staff College of Nigeria and other areas. In this way, they build up knowledge and experience that will help them to hold their heads high among their colleagues, both academic and nonacademic.

*Futo News: Are you aware of the undue bureaucracy and almost sheer sadism among some staff of the Registry in Handling mails?*

*Registrar:* Yes, I believe in goals-setting and the achievement of goals. Goals-setting for the day, goals-setting for the week, goals-setting for the month. I intend to introduce or reinvigorate this model

in the Registry generally. If we form the habit of goals-setting, input and output and realisation of goals, we will be better disposed to treat mails fast because it is a target, getting our jobs done, realising our targets.

I have, within these few weeks that I have fully taken control, introduced a system which ensures that no mail stays in my office for more than one day and for my Coordinators, there is a rule which I am embodying in my circular that no mail should remain in a division for more than two days. There is going to be a special assistant to the Registrar whose duties would include monitoring the movement of mails within the Registry to ensure compliance with this new initiative.

Essentially, these are the initial steps in our firm resolve to put back the Registry on the path of honour and relevance.

*Futo News:*

*Thank you Sir.*

## ‘A MISSION OF RE-ORIENTATION’ - Ahiarakwe

*Futo News: What new visions do you have for the Bursary Department:*

*Bursar:* This university has been on for about 16 years now. During this period, we have had two Bursars and I am the third. First and foremost, I will like to give this department an entirely new look. The department has always been accused of delaying bills. I want to make sure that this negative aspect will be wiped away. I do not think that bills now stay that long again. I want to restore the image the Bursary used to possess by running timely and affective services.

Secondly, I will like my department to take a lead in

anything that is on the positive side. You have seen at least, that when others do not come to work, members of the department come to work regularly and they are the last people to go.

Thirdly, we stay these long hours so as to have an up-to-date information for management decisions. Now, we make sure that the university gets the services that it needs, that salaries are paid on time, We all come here to work to earn our salaries.

I do not believe that at the end of the month, you start telling stories that salaries cannot be paid due to one reason or the other. My priority is to make sure

that each month, by the grace of God, I reserve money for our salaries before any other thing. These are the major things I will like to take up within these first few months of my appointment.

I am carrying out a kind of re-orientation campaign: that we are here to serve people and that without people coming to us we will not be here. With time, we will try to make some reshufflements so that new blood will be injected into the system. During the orientation, I pointed out two things an accountant could do - either to pass bill as being correct or query it. That is my motto which I have given to them. Do not sit on a bill, either you pass that bill or you query it. So with that, I do not think that



there will be more delays of bills in the department.

**Futo News:** *There is a preponderance of the executive cadre staff in the Bursary. Any plans to attract more graduate accountants?*

**Bursar:** We have a lot of people in the executive cadre. Almost all of them were here since 1981 at the inception of the university, may be as a kind of luck. However,

g r a d u a t e accountants are difficult to come by nowadays. They prefer to go into the private sector where they are highly paid. The few that come, after about a year or two, they just go away into the private sector. But we hope that with what is happening now in the banking sector, we will have the opportunity to get some graduate

accountants. And as a matter of fact, we have just got one on temporary appointment. He has had experience in the banking sector and I hope he will help us at least in the banking areas. With time, I think we will attract more graduate accountants.

**Futo News:** *What are you plans about com-puterising the Bursary?*

**Bursar:** Our Department right now is partly computerised in the payroll section and part of the General Ledger. But with time, we hope to be fully computerised, give the new accounting system where all the

universities will have the same accounting system and have the same kind of reporting format. Right now, we have acquired two new computers and hope to acquire more so that each Unit will have its own working computer assigned to the officer of that Unit.

The most important thing is not just to acquire computers, but when we acquire, we have to be able to use them so as to have



Mrs C.C. Ahirakwe on the FUTONews Platform

the information stored there retrieved and also to store some information. It is not just that we are going to be computerised right here, we will also link up with NUNET and with the NUC.

So, we hope that within the next few months, we will be fully computerised in the department. The Vice-Chancellor has supported us by giving us a generator which reduced our problems. It is likely we will be fully computerised, soon.

**Futo News:** *We notice that the Loans and Advances Section of the Bursary seems understaffed given their work load. Do you agree with this view?*

**Bursar:** I do not think that the Loans and Advances Section is understaffed. Fortunately, I have worked in all the sections of the Bursary Department before becoming the Bursar of the University and I know what each Unit or Section is doing at any particular time. It is just that the people there have a kind of poor attitude to work. With what I said before about re-orientation and reshuffling, I think the

problem of delays will be a thing of the past. With the new people that will take over there, and with new blood coming into the system and with proper supervision, all these delays will be overcome. I now ask them to work at my own pace, all these delays, all this missing of bills, with time, will be a thing of the past.

Finally, I will like you to pass on to the University

community that we are here to serve them and if at any time they find any delay or backsliding or measures below what they expect, they should inform us so that we take appropriate action. A tree cannot make a forest and by united efforts, we wish to move the university forward. We are here for the benefit of the university. Without the university we would not have been here.

**Futo News**

- Thank you Madam





# 'God in Christ was reconciling the world to Himself'

*Being text of the homily delivered by Pope John Paul II at the beatification of Fr. Cyprian Michael Iwene Tansi, at Oba, near Onitsha, on Sunday March 22 1998.*

**D**ear Brothers and Sisters: God has given me the joy, for the second time, of coming here to Onitsha to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with you, Sixteen years ago, you welcomed me to this fair land, and I experienced the warmth and fervour of a faith-filled people, men and women reconciled to God and eager to spread the good news of salvation to those near and far.

Saint Paul speaks of "the new creation in Christ" (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17) and goes on to tell us: "God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, not holding men's faults against them, and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled, the appeal we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:19-20). The Apostle is touching here on the history of every man and woman: God, in His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, has reconciled us to Himself.

This same truth is presented even more vividly in today's Gospel. Saint Luke tells us of a young man who left his father's house, experienced the painful consequences of this action, and then found the road of reconciliation. The young man

comes back to his father and says: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants" (Lk. 15:18-19). The father

forgiveness and reconciliation of Christ our peace (cf. Eph. 2:14) "Otherwise," the Bishops said, "the world will look more and more like a battlefield, where only selfish interests count and the law of force prevails" (Ecclesia in Africa, 79).

Today, I wish to proclaim the importance of reconciliation: reconciliation with God and reconciliation of people among themselves. This is the task which lies before the Church in this land of Nigeria, on this continent of Africa, and in the midst of every people and nation

throughout the world. "We are ambassadors for Christ... and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20). For this reason, the Catholics of Nigeria must be authentic and effective witnesses to the faith in every aspect of life, both in public affairs and in private matters.

Today, one of Nigeria's own sons, Father Cyprian Michael Iwene Tansi, has been proclaimed "Blessed" in the very land where he preached the Good News of salvation and sought to reconcile his fellow countrymen with God and with one another. In fact, the Cathedral where Father Tansi was



## **His Holiness, Pope John Paul II**

welcomes his son back with open arms, he rejoices because his son has returned. The father in the parable represents our Heavenly Father, who wishes to reconcile every person to himself in Christ. This is reconciliation which the Church proclaims.

When Bishops from all over Africa gathered for a Special Session of the Synod to discuss the problems of this continent, they said that the Church in Africa has to become, through the witness of her sons and daughters, a place of true reconciliation (cf. Ecclesia in Africa, 79). Being first reconciled among themselves, the Church's members will bring to society the



ordained and the parishes where he exercised the priestly ministry are not far from this very spot in Oba where we are gathered. Some of the people to whom he proclaimed the Gospel and administered the sacraments are here with us today - including Cardinal Francis Arinze, who was baptized by Father Tansi and received his first education in one of Father Tansi's schools.

In the great joy of this event, I greet all those taking part in this liturgy, especially Archbishop Albert Obiefuna, Shepherd of this local church of Onitsha, and all the Bishops from Nigeria and neighbouring countries. With particular affection, I greet the priests, the men and women religious, the catechists and all the lay faithful. I thank the members of other Christian Ecclesial Communities, of the Moslem Community and of the Religious Traditions who have joined us today, and the various state and local authorities present at our celebration. In a special way, I ask God to reward those who have worked so hard, giving generously of their time, talents and resources, so that this Beautification might take place on Nigerian soil. I make my own the words of the Psalmist as I invite all of you: Glorify the Lord with me; together let us praise His name (Ps. 34:3)!

The life and witness of Father Tansi is an inspiration to everyone in the Nigeria that he loved so much. He was first of all a man of God: his long hours

before the Blessed Sacrament filled his heart with generous and courageous love. Those who knew him testify to his great love of God. Everyone who met him was touched by his personal goodness. He was then a man of the people; he always put others



*Blessed Cyprian Michael Iwene Tansi O.C.S.C.*

before himself, and was especially attentive to the pastoral needs of families. He took great care to prepare couples well for Holy Matrimony and preached the importance of chastity. He tried in every way to promote the dignity of women. In a special way, the education of young people was precious to him. Even when he was sent by Bishop Heerey to the Cistercian Abbey of Mount Saint Bernard in England to pursue his

monastic vocation, with the hope of bringing the contemplative life back to Africa, he did not forget his own people. He did not fail to offer prayers and sacrifices for their continuing sanctification.

Father Tansi knew that there is something of the Prodigal Son in every human being. He knew that all men and women are tempted to separate themselves from God in order to lead their own independent and selfish existence. He knew that they are then disappointed by the emptiness of the illusion which had fascinated them, and that they eventually find in the depths of their hearts the road leading back to the Father's house (cf. *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, 5). He encouraged people to confess their sins and receive God's forgiveness. He inspired people to welcome the peace of Christ, and encouraged them to nourish the life of grace with the Word of God and

with Holy Communion.

God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself (2 Cor. 5:19). When we speak of the world as reconciled to God, we are speaking not only of individuals but also of every community: families, clan, tribes, nations state. In his providence, God made covenant with after covenant with mankind; there was the covenant with our first parents in the Garden of Eden; the covenant with Noah after the Flood; the covenant with



Abraham. Today's reading from the Book of Joshua reminds us of the covenant made with Israel, when Moses led the Israelite out of slavery in the land of Egypt. And God has now made the final and definitive covenant with all of humanity in Jesus Christ, who reconciled individual men and women - as well as entire nations - to God by his Passion, Death and Resurrection.

Christ is, thus, a part of the history of the nations. He is a part of the history of your own nation on this continent of Africa. More than a hundred years ago, missionaries arrived in your land proclaiming the Gospel of reconciliation, the Good News of salvation. Your forebears began to learn of the mystery of the redemption of the world, and came to share in the New Covenant in Christ. In this way, the Christian faith was firmly planted in this soil, and in this way it continues to grow and to produce much fruit.

Blessed Cyprian Michael Tansi is a prime example of the fruits of holiness which have grown and matured in the Church in Nigeria since the Gospel was first preached in this land. He received the gift of faith through the effort of the missionaries, and taking the Christian way of life as his own he made it truly African and Nigerian. So, too, the Nigerians of today - young and old alike - are called to reap the spiritual fruits which have been planted among them and are now ready for the harvest. In this regard, I wish to thank and to encourage the Church in Nigeria for her missionary work in Nigeria, in Africa and beyond. Father Tansi's witness to the Gospel and to

Christian charity is a spiritual gift which this local Church now offers to the Universal Church.

God, in fact, has blessed this land with human and natural wealth, and it is everyone's duty to ensure that these resources are used for the good of the whole people. All Nigerians must work to rid society of everything that offends the dignity of the human person or violets human rights. This means reconciling differences, overcoming ethnic rivalries and injecting honesty, efficiency and competence into the art of governing. As your nation pursues a peaceful transition to a democratic civilian government, there is a need for politicians - both men and women - who profoundly love their own people and wish to serve rather than be served (cf. *Ecclesia in Africa*, III). There can be no place for intimidation and domination of the poor and the weak, for arbitrary exclusion of individuals and groups from political life, for the misuse of authority or the abuse of power. In fact, the key to resolving economic, political, cultural and ideological conflicts is justice; and justice is not complete without love of neighbour, without an attitude of humble, generous service.

When we see others as brothers and sisters, it is then possible to begin the process of healing the divisions within society and between ethnic groups. This is the reconciliation which is the path to true peace and authentic progress for Nigeria and for Africa. This reconciliation is not weakness or cowardice. On the contrary, it demands courage and sometimes even heroism: It is

victory over self rather than over others. It should never be seen as dishonour. For, in reality it is the patient, wise art of peace.

The passage from the Book of Joshua which we heard in the First Reading of today's liturgy speaks of the Passover which the children of Israel celebrated after arriving in the Promised Land. They celebrated it with joy because they saw with their own eyes that the Lord's promises to them had been fulfilled. After 40 years of wandering in the desert, their feet now stood on the land which God was giving to them. The Passover of the Old Testament, the memorial of the exodus from Egypt, is the figure of the Passover of the New Testament, the memorial of Christ's passing from death to life, which we recall and celebrate at every Mass.

As we stand before the Altar of Sacrifice, soon to be fed and nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ, we must be convinced that each of us, according to our particular state in life, is called to do no less than what Father Tansi did. Having been reconciled with God, we must be instruments for reconciliation, treating all men and women as brothers and sisters, called to membership in the one family of God.

Reconciliation necessarily involves solidarity. The effect of solidarity is peace. And the fruits of peace are joy and unity in families, co-operation and development in society, truth and justice in the life of the nation. May this be Nigeria's bright future!

"The God of peace be with you all. Amen" (Rom. 15:33).

*Culled from the Guardian  
Monday, March 23, 1998*



# Smatt Holds Exhibition/Symposium

The School of Management Technology which has for sometime now been leading in organising orientation for its students and in-house seminars for staff has again recorded another landmark. This time she has debuted with an ambitious Exhibition and Symposium. According to the Dean, "the decision to stage the event was taken jointly by the SMAT strategic planning committee and the SMAT Board of studies". Having come this far, Prof. T.Y. Obah, Dean of SMAT revealed that "the entire school had a collective feeling that we had many things to be proud of and that with all modesty, there is a time to blow one's trumpet".

Singled out for mention in the Dean's address was the uniqueness of SMAT - the only school of its kind in sub-Saharan West Africa. She argued that SMAT was not "another School of Management but a School where there is effective coupling of management concepts and technological skills to produce technocrat managers — today's modern managers of technology".

Prof. T.Y. Obah went ahead to dispel some ill informed rumours about the school and certain misconceptions of its function. The present proud and formidable status attained by the school was equally due to the quality of staff and students in the school. The staff were described as "young, energetic and committed" - a picture aptly demonstrated by the daunting list of new publications showcased at the exhibition. Apart from the maiden issue of the journal of Project Management Technology pioneered

by the Department of Project Management Technology, new titles by staff of the school included:

1. Aspects of Social Science: A Handbook for General Studies by *Agbogu et al.*
2. Use of English for Higher Education - *Obah & Ojinmah*
3. Philosophy, man's Quest for Meaningful Living - *Uzoma*
4. Basic Facts for the History & Philosophy of Science - *Uzoma*
5. Philosophy and Logic - *Obi-Okogbuo*
6. Sociology: A Practical Understanding for Social Reality - *Iheriohanma*
7. Management Control Systems: A Practical - *Anuolam*
8. Cost Accounting and Control: A Management Guide - *Anuolam*
9. Project Management - *Ntamere*
10. Topical Issues in Economics - *Ntamere*
11. Ethical Diplomas of Assisted Reproductive Technologies and Human Cloning & Ethical Issues in Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide - *Asiegbu*
12. Contemporary Readings in Management Technology - *Nworuh, Agbogu & Ekwenna.*

The school also brought out the third edition of its **SMAT Brochure** - which profiles its full-time and adjunct staff as well as sets out its programmes at a glance. A highlight of the event was the Symposium which featured incisive and well researched papers delivered by Lecturers from the school.

The major theme of the symposium was **CRISES IN THE COUNTRY - THE WAY FORWARD.**

Based on this major theme, Mazi Gibson F. Okorafor, a Lecturer

in the Department of Project Management Technology in his paper titled *CRISES IN THE COUNTRY: PROJECT MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY PERSPECTIVE* defined what a project is and dealt with the issue of abandoned projects in the country and recommended strategies to avoid these.

Dr. A.E Agbogu, the Ag. HOD of General Studies Unit delivered the second paper titled *THE CRISIS OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA* in which he argued that "The crisis of national development in Nigeria is man-made and emanates at all levels. The radicals may argue that this factor is indeed the handiwork of our erstwhile Colonial masters who deliberately implanted disunity in order to remain relevant in the affairs of the country." Dr. Agbogu all the same prescribed a total change of attitude on the part of Nigerians with regard to National Unity.

In his own paper titled *CRISES IN THE COUNTRY: TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT OPTIONS* Dr. O.R. Owen the Associate Dean of SMAT blamed the high cost of transportation on the incessant increases in fuel prices. This he said had lowered the physical quality of life of most of our citizens thereby increasing the number of beggars and the number of "people visiting the psychiatric clinics everyday seeking cure as a result of the terrible effects of poverty".

Dr. Owen proffered a solution by saying that "The NNPC should as a matter of urgency do something about piping this product (petrol) from the major depots to the retailing outlets" to avoid diversion



by tanker drivers. This he said could be done with cooking gas which could be piped into individual kitchens. He concluded that "we as a nation must invest in management technology, because with the application of appropriate management technologies, we can monitor job performance, offer

better job satisfaction, and cut down on overall cost, improve our productivity and make our economy competitive".

The Vice-Chancellor as the chief guest of honour opened the exhibition while the Dean of SMAT Prof T.Y. Obah conducted him and his entourage round the various c

colourful stands and book displays. The Vice-Chancellor later bought copies of the books on behalf of the University.

The exhibition was well attended by a cross section of the University Community, friends of the University, Deans/Directors and Heads of Departments/Units amongst others.

## Linkage Between FUTO and the University of Alabama, A & M

The Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria and Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University, USA, have jointly entered into and signed a memorandum of understanding for reciprocal exchange and co-operation in academic, research and public service activities.

This linkage programme between the two Universities is based on friendship, equality and mutual assistance. It is also envisaged that Alabama A &

M University may serve as the lead institution for various consortia of university, policy institutes and foundations which may operate as part of this agreement.

Signatures to validate this memorandum of understanding between the two universities were appended across dotted lines by leaders of each team. While the visiting team was led by the President of Alabama A & M University, assisted by Prof. Onuma Okezie,

Director of International Programs, The FUTO team was led by the Vice-Chancellor Engr. Prof. C.O.G. Obah assisted by Prof. M.U. Iloeje, DVC (Academic).

Other witnesses of the historical event were the Principal Officers, and Deans of Schools of Futo, wife of the President of Alabama A & M University, Dean of Students of Alabama A & M University.



The President of the University of Alabama A&M signs the visitor's Register in the VC's office



# 'FUTO IS MORE THAN YOU SEE' - Obah

**T**he Vice-Chancellor, Engr Prof. C.O.G. Obah has said that "a University is not merely as collection of buildings nor is it even the pool of experts and Scholars". In his own words, he argued that "it is the students, past and present, who fill the walls of the University and swell the ranks of professionals in the world beyond the walls of the University

These comments were contained in an address delivered by the Vice-Chancellor during the 16th Matriculation Ceremony held on Saturday, February 21, 1998 on the grounds of the Multiple Activity Centre. He cautioned the young students to realise that they have "exchanged the shelter of home for the exposure of University" and believed that they would by the oath of matriculation become "bound for all time to show allegiance to FUTO as your Alma Mater and abide by its rules and regulations".

Prof. Obah also informed the Matriculating students that FUTO being a specialised institution has a

peculiar mandate. According to the Vice-Chancellor, "FUTO strives to produce graduates who are 'finished products' - graduates capable of taking their place in the world of work as job creators rather than job seekers".

While discussing the diverse influences on students' life on Campus, the FUTO Chief Executive advised the new students to be wary of negative influences. He warned them to "reject the enticement to belong to the "happening group" noting that "the appeal of secret cults and examination malpractice which ultimately prove to be downfall of those that allow themselves to be enticed".

A total of 1,210 students were formally admitted as bona fide students of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri.

Prior to the Matriculation Ceremony proper, the Vice-Chancellor met with parents/guardians of these newly admitted students. At the forum, Prof. Obah

noted that the administration, parents and guardians are all "joint stakeholders in the education of your sons and daughters". The forum, he maintained, "is an important avenue for rubbing minds together and sharing problems, perspectives and practical solutions". Prof. Obah then went ahead to catalogue the numerous achievements of his administration which include a hitch free 1997/98 Harmattan Semester and the return to normal academic calendar, a feat that is almost a miracle when the experiences of sister institutions are taken into consideration. Parents and guardians were however, warned to closely monitor their children and wards with regards to the friends they keep. This, the Vice-Chancellor noted, was to keep them away from bad influences.

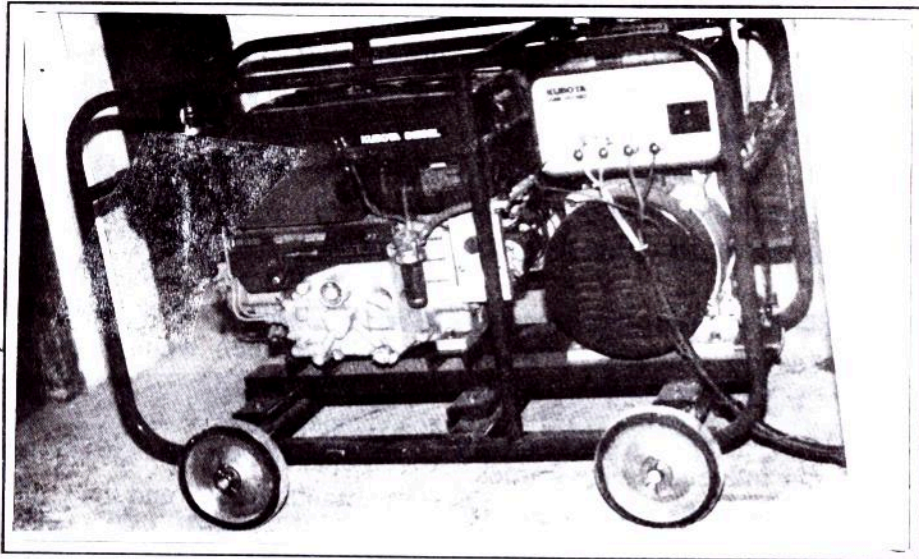
The forum was well attended by many parents and guardians. The University Administration was also well represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Principal Officers, Deans/Directors and Heads of academic departments.



*A cross section of Parents/Guardians at the Matriculation Ceremony*



## 10 KVA GENERATOR COMMISSIONED



*The 10 KVA Generator*

In order to render better and quicker services to the University Community, the Bursary Unit of the University recently acquired a 10KVA Generator Set. This was commissioned by the Vice-Chancellor Engr. Prof. C.O.G. Obah on Tuesday, January 27, 1998.

In her speech, the Bursar, Mrs C.C. Ahiarakwe thanked the Vice-Chancellor for answering anytime the

Bursary calls. She enumerated the problems faced by the unit. According to her, the Bursary sub Units were scattered, some in the town and others on the permanent site. This, she said was very expensive to maintain. The computers of the unit also need constant power for quicker output. She told the Vice-Chancellor that Bursary staff now spend extra hours

at work and pleaded with him to provide transportation for them. The Bursar also prayed the Vice-Chancellor to approve the purchase of a photocopier. She informed the Vice-Chancellor that the Bursary's policy now is pass on your bills each day.

The Vice-Chancellor in his remarks expressed happiness at what the Bursary Unit is doing. He assured that he would always answer to any of their distress calls. He went further to say that he was happy that the University has succeeded in bringing together all the segments of the Bursary Unit. He also promised to look into the problem of transportation and extra working hours for the staff. According to him, the Bursary Unit hold the University therefore it should be given unalloyed support for better accountability.

Also present at the occasion were the two Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Prof. J.E. Njoku and Prof. M.U. Iloeje, Director of Computer Centre, Prof. M.A. Nwachukwu and the heads of the various sub-units in the Bursary Unit

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHAIRMAN CALLS ON VC

The Vice-Chancellor Engr. Prof. C.O.G. Obah has again stressed the need for good rapport, and cordiality between the University and its neighbours.

He made this remark during the familiarization visit of the Executive Chairman of Owerri West Local Government Area, Barrister B.C. Nzimako and the honourable supervisory councillors of the local government.

In an address presented on behalf of the Chairman by the Deputy Chairman, Hon. R.O. Ajero, revealed that the purpose of the visit was for the Local Government to extend its hand of friendship to the institution and also to remind the institution of her statutory obligations which include paying the property/tenant

rate, capitation rate, and environmental sanitation fee and extending amenities to assist the development of the rural areas since the institution is sited in the Owerri West Local Government Area.

The Chairman Barrister Nzimako in his remarks thanked the Vice-Chancellor for giving them the opportunity to exchange ideas of mutual interest. As a new local government, according to him, the local government needs help and FUTO should make a positive impact on the local government. The local government in turn will do her part because according to him "it is a symbiotic relationship". The Chairman further promised the Vice-Chancellor that he will do all within his power to maintain a good security

network in the local government with FUTO as top priority.

In his remarks, the Vice-Chancellor congratulated the Chairman for winning the election, and expressed optimism that as a young, enthusiastic and dynamic chairman with very impressive ideas and visions, the sky would be his limit. Prof. Obah noted the problems enumerated especially in the area of water supply. However, he observed that oftentimes "Man proposes but lack of funds disposes"

Later on the Vice-Chancellor gave the chairman some publications on the Mission of FUTO.

In attendance at this occasion were the two Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Prof. M.U. Iloeje and Prof. J.E. Njoku and the Registrar Mr. M.O. Okoye.



# Staff News

## NEW ARRIVALS

NAME OF STAFF	SCHL/D	DESIGNATION	EFFECTIVE DATE
DR. EMENALO B.I.	SOSC	VISITING SCHOLAR	20-10-97
J.N. AKUJIABI	SAAT	FARM ATTENDANT	19-12-97
R.C. IHEJIRIKA	SMAT	ASSISTANT LECTURER	14-01-98
MR. IGWILO K.C.	SEET	LECTURER II	06-02-98
MR. AKPUDU A.	SMAT	LECTURER II	10-12-97
MR. C. NWOKENNA	BURSARY	PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTANT	16-02-98
MR. J.C. OGBONNA	SOSC	ASSISTANT LECTURER	23-01-98

## Appreciation

On behalf of my wife and children as well as the entire members of St. Cyprian's (Ang.) Church, Federal Housing Estate, Owerri, I wish to express my profound gratitude to all the members of Federal University of Technology, Owerri Community especially to Vice-Chancellor, the Principal Officers, Directors and Heads of Departments who were with us during our recent Thanksgiving and Reception for my investiture as Knight of St. Christopher and baptism of my baby-boy. May God reward and bless you abundantly.

—ARC. SIR I. B. ECHETA

## Assumption of Duty

Name of Staff	Rank	Dept/Schl.	Date of Assumption of Duty
Mrs Ngozi A. Enyinnaya	Data Analyst/ Processing Controller	Computer Centre	26-01-98

## Re-Deployment

The Vice-Chancellor has approved the redeployment of the following staff to take charge of the Divisions in the Registry.

S/N	Name of Staff	Divisions
1.	Mr. R.O. Ugbohue	General Administration
2.	Alhaji M. Ahmed	Council & Legal Matters

The redeployment took effect from Monday, February 16, 1998.

## Births

Name of Staff	Schl/Dept.	Sex	Date
Mr. S. A. Ukaegbu	Est & Works	F	16-02-98
Mr. A.U. Ikwuwunna	SEET	M.	15-11-98

## OVRI WINS ELECTION

Dr. J.E.O. Ovri, a senior Lecturer in the Department of Materials and Metallurgical Engineering attended the annual general meeting of the Nigeria Corrosion Association held on the 20th - 21st February, 1998 at the Airport Hotel Ikeja where Prof. V.O. Nwoko, the Director of C.I.S presented the keynote paper titled "CORROSION AND ITS Pervasiveness".

Elections were held into various offices during the Annual General Meeting and Dr. Ovri was elected the Technical Secretary of the Association for a period of two years in the first instance.

## Died

### MR. JUSTUS AMUZIE

A fourth year students of the Department of Chemical Engineering, Mr. Justus Amuzie died on 3rd March, 1998 and has since been buried.

*May his soul  
rest in peace.*