

UNIVERSITY OF UYO

Addresses

OF THE



31st & 32nd COMBINED CONVOCATION CEREMONIES

Thursday 12th - Saturday 14th November, 2026

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DATE:
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His Excellency

BOLA AHMED TINUBU GCFR

President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

VISITOR



AN ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR
UNIVERSITY OF UYO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, ALHAJI (DR) ABUBAKAR ADAMU MAJE, CON,
THE EMIR OF HADEJIA, JIGAWA STATE,
AT THE 31ST AND 32ND COMBINED CONVOCATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF UYO, HELD FROM 12TH-14TH NOVEMBER, 2026

The Visitor to the University of Uyo
Your Excellencies, especially the Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State
The Honourable Minister of Education, Dr. Maruf Alausa
The Pro-Chancellor and Chairman, Governing Council, University of Uyo
Pro-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of other Universities
Distinguished Convocation Lecturer
Members of the Governing Council
Members of the University Management
Members of Senate and the Alumni
Honorary Degree Recipients
My dear graduands and the parents and guardians
My honoured Royal Fathers and University Host Communities
Members of the Fourth Estate of the Realm
Representatives of Corporate Organizations
My Lords, Spiritual and Temporal
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am deeply pleased to be part of the 31st and 32nd in the series of convocations of this great University – the University of Uyo. The very series of this convocation is an indication that the University of Uyo has come of age, with consolidation and progress in several spheres of existence.

Today's event, which is supposed to be a yearly ritual, may sometimes be deferred on account of different forms of interruptions or inconsistencies in the University system. That today's event has taken place, and we are all present to participate in it is a great sign of the academic and administrative sagacity of the Vice-Chancellor and a proactive Governing Council, as well as an insightful Management and Senate.

Let me at this juncture commend most particularly the maturity and good sense of judgement of the Governing Council led by a man of goodwill and experience, Dr. Muiz Banire, SAN, for the peaceful selection of the current Vice-Chancellor in the person of a Professor of Development and Monetary Economics, Professor Christopher Ekong. I wholeheartedly thank the Federal Government, through the Honourable Minister of Education, Dr. Maruf Olatunji Alausa, for the timely appointment of an Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Samuel Odewumi, to save the University from looming anarchy arising from delayed and failed attempts to conclude proceedings for the selection and appointment of a substantive Vice-Chancellor.

That the University of Uyo emerged even stronger with a teeming population of staff and students with smiling faces, coupled with the hosting of today's convocation, is a pointer to the resilience of the University brand and a people united in a destiny calibrated to survive in murky waters. I do not doubt the University of Uyo's place in the comity of universities in Nigeria as a fertile ground to birth excellence in learning, research and other impactful outcomes that will blaze the trail for town and gown.

Graduands being released today into a world of saturated employment opportunities are hereby advised to employ the most practical aspects of their studies to be job creators rather than job seekers, in an economy daily threatened by several global, national and even local economic disruptions. It is my counsel that Nigerian graduates in their curricula be trained to create rather than seek elusive white-collar jobs that are daily being driven into oblivion. The Asian, American, and global tigers were evolved, and raised with the mentality of job creators rather than job seekers.

Parents must assist the graduands by talking their wards away from a dependence mindset, to think out of the box with entrepreneurship blended with positive character to fit into today's world of the “new normal” and the “unbecoming” which have defined the perilous nature of our society. As it appears, the children we raised should not be left completely to eke out moral and economic direction by themselves; let us do our best in the moral guidance of our children who have been badly influenced by the negative side of social media and other global vices.

Members of the University community, some of whom would be engaged as ad-hoc staff in the upcoming elections, must never lose sight of the decent and credible background of the University. Your moral strength is strongly required in the coming months as midwives of electoral outcomes in the nation's drive for credible leadership that emerges from an untainted process of integrity, conscience and forthrightness. Every leader raised contrary to electoral virtues would spell disaster for the polity.

I must not fail to appreciate the various stakeholders of the University of Uyo who

stood and have been standing for it when it mattered most. Of great emphasis is the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, His Excellency, Pastor Umo Bassey Eno, PhD. Information at my disposal portrays him as an alumnus Governor perpetually poised to support his alma mater. From public lectures to physical participation at critical University events, the alumnus Governor and other products of this University should harness ideas, resources and contacts to push this University to its desired destiny of excellence in all facets of academic and institutional ranking.

Let me once again welcome everyone to the 31st and 32nd Combined Convocation of the University of Uyo and declare it open for the celebration of academic excellence for national posterity.

Thank you, and may God bless us all with peace, protection and safe return to our various destinations.



AN ADDRESS BY THE PRO-CHANCELLOR AND CHAIRMAN, GOVERNING COUNCIL UNIVERSITY OF UYO

DR. MUIZ BANIRE, OON, SAN, LIFE BENCHER

AT THE 31ST AND 32ND COMBINED CONVOCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF UYO, NOVEMBER 12TH-14TH, 2026

The Visitor to the University of Uyo
Your Excellencies, particularly the Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State
The Honourable Minister of Education, Dr. Maruf Alausa
The Chancellor of our beloved University of Uyo
The Vice Chancellor, University of Uyo
Pro-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of other Universities
Eminent Convocation Lecturer
Members of the Governing Council
Principal Officers and members of the University Management
Members of Senate and the Alumni
Honorary Degree Recipients
My cherished graduands and the parents and sponsors
Distinguished Royal Fathers and University Host Communities
Members of the Fourth Estate of the Realm
Representatives of Corporate Organizations
My Lords, Spiritual and Temporal
Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great joy to address you at this impactful convergence of the University community known as convocation. That this is the 31st and 32nd Combined Convocation places on the University the uniqueness of history as a three-decade-old tertiary institution that evolved through a unique metamorphosis; from a defunct Practising School, to an Elementary School, Teacher Training College, College of

Education, State University and finally a Federal University and mother of all Federal institutions in Akwa Ibom State.

Every Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council has on his shoulders the task of managing the assets, liabilities and even the unique metamorphosis of this great University. My appointment as Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council came out of uncertain circumstances which behoved the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the Honourable Minister of Education, to chart a new direction and restore decorum and administrative rectitude to the University of Uyo.

Following the dissolution of the Professor Tayo Zubairu-led Governing Council and the decline of the Pro-Chancellorship appointment by an eminent Nigerian, General Ike Omar Sanda Nwachukwu (rtd), the lot fell on me as successor, in spite of my earlier engagement on the Council of the Federal University of Transportation, Daura, Katsina State. I met University of Uyo at the brink of disenchantment caused by a skewed advertisement for the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor, coupled with several failed attempts for the emergence of an Acting Vice-Chancellor from the plethora of cerebral members of the University Senate.

Let me commend the swift intervention of the Federal Government in the appointment of Professor Samuel Odewumi as Acting Vice-Chancellor to put an end to the seeming war of attrition in the University Senate. Everyone today can attest to Professor Odewumi's level-headedness, fairness and sense of responsibility in managing the Vice-Chancellor selection process and the general administration of the University, which earned him the name “Paymaster”. I would not be contradicted to say that Prof. Odewumi was deeply loved by the entire University community, who at his exit wished he would continue as Vice-Chancellor but for the legal limits of his appointment, and his earlier retirement from University service. Indeed, he was so deeply appreciated that he was conferred with a chieftaincy title of *Obong Mkpufiok* by the Uyo monarch.

The few months of the Acting Vice-Chancellor's tenure were eventful and impactful. Ranging from the restoration of peace and understanding in the University, he led a very transparent recruitment exercise for the few employment slots approved for the University, and cooperated with the Governing Council for an all-important Council/Management Retreat where the direction for the final conclusion of procedures for the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor was forged.

The Retreat exposed the University echelon to the need for digitization of the University administration, as well as processes and strategies for accessing funds from interventionist and donor agencies such as the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), in addition to the possibilities inherent in University advancement, endowment, targeted partnerships and beneficial collaborations. The establishment of the Directorate of Advancement, as well as the appointment of a Director of Advancement and Advancement Officers, were made possible to actualize the new vision and corporate direction for the University.

As the above efforts were geared towards the final selection of a new Vice-Chancellor, I wish to report that upon a very painstaking, rigorous and fair process, a Professor of Development and Monetary Economics, Professor Christopher Nyong Ekong, was

appointed as the 9th substantive Vice-Chancellor of this great University.

The nascent administration of Professor Christopher Ekong has shown hope, direction and cooperation with the Governing Council. The Governing Council has not regretted his appointment so far, as he has shown good faith and ability to raise the standard of the University of Uyo in the community of universities in Nigeria and the wider world. In his first 100 days in office, he has made accurate administrative strides as one who was prepared for the job and not a neophyte or learner. From the inauguration of strategic committees on critical sectors of the University to the inauguration of an Advisory Council replete with former Vice-Chancellors and Principal Officers, he has shown great promise as a Vice-Chancellor imbued with vigour, and meek enough to learn from his forebears to avoid pitfalls and launch accurate salvos to etch the University of Uyo on the annals of excellence. He has built on the successes of the short-lived Acting Vice-Chancellor, to the extent of earning the sobriquet "Higher Paymaster (HPM)".

The Governing Council, at my behest, will invest every energy at its disposal to partner with relevant groups, individuals and Government to raise the standards of the University of Uyo. I therefore encourage alumni of the University to rise to the occasion in their various sets to remember their alma mater and intervene in their various areas of calling. I also urge staff and students of this University to cooperate with the Governing Council and Management, which are poised to improve their welfare and wellbeing.

Let me commend the staff and students of this University who have excelled in local and international engagements. These feats should be sustained, as universities are ranked by spectacular achievements that enhance their brand and attraction to global partners. I must at this point commend the Vice-Chancellor on the recent visit of the South Korean Ambassador to Nigeria to the University. We need more of this bilateral cooperation and exposure to move the University forward.

I must not forget to register my appreciation to the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Pastor Umo Bassey Eno, Ph.D, who has supported the University in several ways. He has proven himself as a dependable alumnus, partner and landlord of the University. We pray this continues in the spirit of an alumnus with his alma mater.

To the graduating students and parents, let our mutual cooperation continue even as the graduands navigate the world of work with creativity and entrepreneurship blended with sound morals. Parents should not relegate moral guidance upon the graduation of their wards, as moral loss after graduation renders certificates in their possession mere papers of irrelevance.
Your Excellencies, all our invited guests and well-wishers, I welcome you to this first convocation of this Governing Council and the Vice-Chancellor, and pray for your safe return.

Thank you.



AN ADDRESS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
UNIVERSITY OF UYO
PROF. CHRISTOPHER NYONG EKONG
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 31ST AND 32ND COMBINED CONVOCATION CEREMONY HELD FROM THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2026 TO SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2026

PROTOCOL

Your Excellency, the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and Visitor to the University of Uyo, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR

Your Excellency, the President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Godswill Obot Akpabio, GCON.

The Chancellor of the University of Uyo, and Emir of Hadejia, Your Royal Highness, Alhaji Abubakar Maje, CON

The Chancellors of other Universities here present

Your Excellency, the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Pastor Umo Bassey Eno, Ph.D

Your Excellencies, the Governors of other States here present

The Honourable Minister of Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, CON

The Inspector-General of Police, Federal Republic of Nigeria

The Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Senator Dr. Akon Eyakenyi

Members of the National Assembly here present

The Speaker and Members of the Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly

Your Lordship, the Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State, and other Judges here present

Your Excellencies, Former Governors of Akwa Ibom State, and Former Governors of other States here present

Members of the Akwa Ibom State Executive Council and of the Executive Councils of other States here present

The Assistant Inspector-General of Police, Zone 6 Command

The Commissioner of Police, Akwa Ibom State

The Director, Department of Security Services, Akwa Ibom State Command

The Commandant, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Akwa Ibom State

The Commandant, 6th Motorized Brigade, Ibagwa, Akwa Ibom State

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

The Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission, Professor Abdullahi Yusufu Ribadu

The Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the 10th Governing Council of University of Uyo, Dr. Muiz Banire (SAN), OON.

Former Pro-Chancellors and Former Governing Council Members of University of Uyo here present

Pro-Chancellors and Members of the Governing Councils of other Universities here present

Distinguished Convocation Lecturer – Prof Taiwo Oloyede (Hon. Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy of Nigeria)

Visiting Vice-Chancellors and Former Vice-Chancellors

Secretary-General, Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities

Deputy Vice-Chancellors and other Principal Officers, University of Uyo

Members of Senate and Members of Congregation, University of Uyo

Distinguished Honorary Graduands or their Representatives here present

Royal Fathers here present

My Lords, Spiritual and Temporal

Representatives of Corporate Organizations here present

My dear Graduands, Parents and Guardians here present

Members of Our Dear Host Communities here present

Great Tuskers

Members of the Press

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

WELCOME

1. INTRODUCTION

I feel highly honoured and privileged to welcome you all, with great delight, on behalf of members of the Senate, other members of staff and the students of our great university to this 31st and 32nd combined convocation ceremony of our dear University of Uyo. I especially thank God Almighty for granting you journey mercies to Uyo, the capital of Akwa Ibom, a State that has been enormously blessed with a chain of dynamic and visionary leaders who have worked competitively towards its rapid transformation to its present enviable status among the comity of Nigerian states, symbolizing its moniker, ***Land of Promise***. Let me heartily welcome the Visitor to the University, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, to this convocation ceremony. I no less appreciate and welcome to this occasion the President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Godswill Obot Akpabio. I also welcome very warmly our dear Honourable Minister of Education, Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, CON, a man who has himself paid his dues in the vineyard of academia both within and outside the country, and his team, which includes the Distinguished Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission and the team from TETFund.

It is also with special joy that I welcome the Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State, a man who, standing on the eminent shoulders of his predecessors, and through his ARISE agenda, has committed himself absolutely, passionately and zealously to the development of Akwa Ibom State, His Excellency, Pastor Umo Bassey Eno, PhD, of whom the University of Uyo remains proud as its eminent alumnus. Let me, through him, extend my appreciation to the members of the State Executive Council for their presence at this occasion. I similarly welcome the Speaker and members of the Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly; the Chief Judge and members of the Akwa Ibom State Judiciary, all of whom have been committed partners in the rapid transformation of Akwa Ibom State as the host of our university. The robust presence here of members of the National Assembly, past governors and their spouses, and members of the public, including the members of the press as the fourth estate of the realm has not escaped my notice, and I most heartily welcome all of them to this great event.

The Visitor, Sir, ladies and gentlemen, let me very particularly thank God for the special presence here of the University's Chancellor, an eminent royal father, His Royal Highness, Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Adamu Maje, CON, the Emir of Hadejia, and Chairman of Jigawa State Traditional Rulers Council, and all members of his entourage to the ***Land of Promise***. I extend the same measure of welcome to the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the University of Uyo 10th Governing Council. In the same vein, it is my pleasure to welcome and appreciate the presence here of my fellow Vice-Chancellors and Principal Officers of the University of Uyo, and of other institutions of learning, and they include heads of our collaborating institutions of learning and corporate bodies from both within and outside the country.

2. MY JOURNEY TO THE OFFICE OF VICE-CHANCELLOR

To the glory of God, I was formally inaugurated as the 9th substantive Vice-Chancellor of the University of Uyo on June 16th, this year. In Nigeria, and perhaps elsewhere in the world, the emergence of a vice-chancellor almost always witnesses a divergence of interests, giving the emergence the flavour of a political contest. Right from its inception, the University of Uyo, including its earlier name as the University of Cross River State, Uyo, has had its own share of such clash of interests. But none of such scenarios ever necessitated the appointment by the Federal Government of an Acting Vice-Chancellor from outside the University, who would run the affairs of the institution for up to six months, as it did happen prior to my appointment as Vice-chancellor. However, rather than regarding the intensity of the contest as a source of ill feelings, I choose to interpret it as a part of the price to pay for the position, which I must value highly, and a position I must work to justify. In other words, it is my resolve to work towards the transformation of the University to prove beyond every reasonable doubt that the confidence you repose in me and the efforts of those who believed in my suitability for this responsibility are robustly justified. Ladies and gentlemen, let me make it clear that whatever dust the leadership recruitment process raised, I have, as Vice-Chancellor, put everything else behind me and I, accordingly, in the same spirit, welcome on board every member of the University community to work with my administration towards the urgently needed transformation of our great institution.

I must, however, not forget to thank and appreciate those who believed in my appropriateness and capability to recover our University. I also acknowledge with gratitude those who actively contributed to the realization of my dream to pay back to this institution, which nurtured me by offering it exemplary leadership through the flank of vice-chancellorship. The first is God Almighty, without whom the dream would not have materialized. The next person is the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria, His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu, The Visitor to the University of Uyo, at whose table the buck stops in the appointment of vice-chancellors of federal universities in the country. I am no less grateful to the current President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Godswill Obot Akpabio, who found in me a tested and trusted individual, and offered me all the necessary support and encouragement. His Excellency, the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Pastor Umo Bassey Eno, Ph.D also proved beyond words that he believed in me.

I must commend and thank very specially the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council of the University of Uyo, Dr Muiz Banire (SAN), OON, and all the members of the Governing Council for their steadfastness in the pursuit of justice and fair play. Permit me, ladies and gentlemen, to appreciate members of the Senate of the University, specifically, Prof Aniekan Brown, Prof Emmanuel Onwioduokit, Prof. Joseph Essien, Prof. Emmanuel Udofia, Prof Aniefiok Ukommi, and all the other members of staff and the students of our great university for their principled alignment with the process while the struggle lasted. I want to please invite Professors Aniekan Brown, Emmanuel Onwioduokit, Joseph Essien, Emmanuel Udofia, and Aniefiok Ukommi to come out here and receive the *Heroes Golden Medal* of our University.

As I said earlier, since the dust raised by the succession exercise settled, my attention has been focused on how to work towards the growth and development of our dear University. Thus far, the Visitor, Sir, and other respected members of this great gathering, my administration has been able to make notable impact on many aspects of the University within just over the first 100 days of my assumption of office. I feel greatly indebted to all the former vice-chancellors and their members of management, and all other teaching and non-teaching members of staff for their cooperation with my administration thus far. May the good Lord bless each and every one of them.

3. HITTING THE GROUND RUNNING: MY FIRST 100 DAYS

From the outset, my vision of, and mission as Vice-chancellor of the University of Uyo was unambiguously clear, namely: to restore excellence, rebuild confidence, renew infrastructure, strengthen scholarship, and reposition the University of Uyo as one of Nigeria's leading centres of learning, innovation, research and service. I dreamed of a university whose graduates are respected and sought after anywhere in the world. I dreamed of a university whose research solves real societal problems. I dreamed of a university whose environment inspires learning and innovation. I dreamed of a university whose name evokes admiration, respect, confidence, and pride. To drive this mission, I proposed six pillars on which the *modus operandi* of my administration would be anchored: infrastructural renewal, academic and research excellence, staff welfare and professional development, student-centered administration, digital transformation and good governance, partnership and global engagement.

In my inaugural speech on the 16th of June, 2026, I made 18 specific commitments to the University community, all of which were strands of the six pillars listed above. These commitments were deliberately practical and measurable, covering, in particular, admissions, campus security, infrastructure, digital transformation, staff and student welfare, academic quality, institutional governance, revenue generation, and the overall renewal of the University environment. The marking of my first 100 days in office on Thursday, 24th September, 2026, was, therefore, not intended to be a speech-making event, but one during which there would be a report on what had been delivered for the good of the institution. The 100 days were intentionally stuffed with action, foundation-building and measurable delivery. In this regard, Your Excellencies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, kindly permit me to place on record a few of the successes my administration has recorded.

(i) Prior to my assumption of office, the issuance of transcripts from this University was a nightmare for our graduates. I am glad to announce that as of now, over 2,387 transcripts have been duly processed and released to our graduates since I assumed duty; and we have in place a 72-hour deadline within which any transcript request must be attended to.

(ii) The unkempt image of the University has been replaced with our *Green and Clean Environment Initiative*.

(iii) The delay in releasing results has been surmounted – the results of the second semester of 2025/2026 session are already approved by the University Senate.

(iv) Undergraduate and Direct Entry admissions have been returned to departments and faculties, in keeping with global best practices.

(v) TetFund projects that were in a state of abeyance owing to unsatisfactory management of the funds have been reactivated, and are progressively accessed currently.

(vi) Insecurity in our campuses has greatly abated due to the new security architecture that is operational.

(vii) Rampant cases of sexual harassment and cultism have been extensively whittled down. We are still dealing with those to ensure that ethical conducts are significantly restored.

(viii) The over 39 years feud with our host communities was resolved through tactful and humane engagements.

(ix) For the first time, we have started to commercially cultivate our land, while also building new infrastructure for livestock. The two major commercial farms: the 40-hectare Bio-ethanol cassava farm, and UNIUYO Farms Company's cocoa, plantain, and oil palm, as well as chicken, snail and mushroom farms are a delight to behold. Many thanks to our scholars in Agriculture. The farm has generated employment to over 200 locals who work as labour hands on the farm daily.

(x) The setbacks we had for our Medical Laboratory Science and Dentistry programmes have been addressed.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me stress that these chronicled humble strides are just what my administration was able to achieve within the relatively short period of 100 days. Other concrete feats recorded by the administration thus far would be presented in the course of this address.

4. THIS CONVOCATION

This convocation holds special significance in the life of this institution in many ways, and in my personal life as the first I am organizing as Vice-Chancellor. Owing to circumstances outside the orbit of my control, we have had to combine two sets of graduands for the occasion. These are the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 sessions. Given the innovations, especially in terms of prompt release of results, I can assure us that this would be the last time University of Uyo, under my leadership, would combine two or more sets of graduates for its convocation ceremonies.

5. THE UNFOLDING NEW FACE OF THE UNIVERSITY

Over the seasons, our university has produced distinguished scholars, professionals, public servants, entrepreneurs, and leaders who continue to make meaningful contributions to Nigeria and the global community. We are proud of the heritage, and grateful to the visionary men and women who laid the foundations upon which we stand today. Though classified as a third-generation Nigerian university, our institution has largely caught up with its second-generation counterparts in many respects. Yet, we must

also admit that the University has faced significant challenges in recent years. Prior to my appointment, many of our critical infrastructure were in a dire state of dilapidation. Research capacity was underwhelming. Staff morale had been strained as their welfare was at an intensely low ebb. Students were forced to learn under conditions that were not befitting of the standards of a modern university.

As a proud alumnus of this great citadel of learning, who rose through the ranks, and who is familiar with the ascetic, disinterested judgment of history, I folded up my sleeves, and went to work immediately. My first port of call on assumption of office was the organization of town hall meetings with staff and students on all the five campuses of our university in order to have a direct feel of the pulse of the University community, and glean first-hand information on the peculiarities of each unit of the University. That was followed by the University Congregation, where I further engaged with university stakeholders on serious university matters.

One key area of concern was the poor visibility and performance of our University in national and global rankings. That problem has been tackled head-on. Modalities have been evolved to ensure that our researches are indexed in global academic platforms like Google Scholar and Web of Science, among others. We are also very intentional about focus on staff participation in conferences, publication in high-impact journals, use of University email addresses, and promotion of university-based journals under the Directorate of ICT management. We have also instituted other mechanisms for prompt decisions on visibility, including registrations and surveys, workshops, training, staff support and publications support. While these processes are ongoing, I am pleased to inform you that as of today a recent webometrics ranking of Nigerian universities has elevated our university to 24th position nationally from the repugnant previous position.

While we acknowledge that this is yet a far cry from our vision, the improvement offers an early pointer to our unwavering devotion to restore the University to its pride of place in the comity of global ivory towers. These efforts are already paying off as the number of candidates who sought admission to our university in the 2026/2027 session has increased substantially.

Beyond these general changes, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased also to inform us of the progress we have made in the following more specific aspects of the life of this great institution. A highlight of these developments, and a general picture of the University under my watch is presented under the following headings:

(i) INFRASTRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

(ii) CLEAN, GREEN AND SAFE CAMPUS INITIATIVE

(iii) UNIUYO COMMERCIAL VENTURES

(iv) RETURN OF ADMISSIONS TO DEPARTMENTS AND FACULTIES

(v) PROMPT PROCESSING OF EXAMINATION RESULTS, AND 72-HOUR TRANSCRIPT ISSUANCE

(vi) STAFF AND STUDENT WELFARE

(vii) COLLABORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENTS

(viii) CONVOCATION STATISTICS

(ix) APPRECIATION AND CONCLUSION

(i) INFRASTRUCTURAL RENEWAL AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In keeping with the promise I made at my inauguration, we have aggressively pursued funding through government intervention agencies, strategic partnerships, alumni engagement, grants, endowments, and responsible resource mobilization initiatives. This is because infrastructure is a statement of institutional values, and no great university can flourish amidst physical decay. The environment in which knowledge is produced matters. The condition of our classrooms matters. The state of our laboratories matters. The quality of our students' hostels matters. The reliability of our power supply matters. The appearance of our campuses matters since infrastructure is not merely about concrete and steel but a holistic picture of the environment. In this regard we have achieved the following:

(a) 12 vehicles purchased: 1 Prado, 1 Hilux and 10 Geely Cooray Subcompact Crossover SUVs for Principal and other University officers — completed.

(b) Office renovation and retrofitting at the Central Administration Building — completed.

(c) Central Administration entrance beautification with dual water fountains, and modification of the entrance lobby — completed.

(d) Repair of pothole-ridden Main campus entrance road — completed.

(e) NDDC female hostel in the Main campus comprehensively renovated and retrofitted.

(f) Needs Assessment Hostel at Main Campus fully renovated

(g) Presidential Hostels at Main Campus fully renovated

(h) NDDC Medical hostel renovation is in progress right now — ongoing.

(i) Renovation of Physiotherapy/Medical Laboratory Science office complex — ongoing.

(j) Provision of furniture for Uniuyo Staff School — completed.

(k) Medical Campus Auditorium renovation — completed.

(l) 75 beds with mattresses on Medical Campus — completed.

(m) 2 boreholes on Annex and Town Campuses — completed.

(n) 40-hectare cassava Biotech Farm at Main Campus — ongoing.

(o) Faculty of Pharmacy Building construction — ongoing.

(p) One-storey University of Uyo Women Association Building with daycare provision — ongoing.

(q) UNIPOD Centre construction/expansion, including heavy-duty machines and Phase 2 development — ongoing.

(r) Renovation of relevant academic/laboratory facilities — ongoing.

(s) 500 computers to strengthen digital learning and examination capacity — arriving soon.

(t) Overhaul of the Faculty of Dentistry building, with landscaping and beautification

(u) Purchase of Dental Chairs and Phantom Heads for the first time ever to the Faculty of Dentistry

(v) Construction of two markets, each having 20 lock-up shops and 20 open shops and special provision for 5 number restaurants at each of the markets, with borehole, toilets and electricity fully provided.

(ii) CLEAN, GREEN AND SAFE CAMPUS INITIATIVE

On assumption of duty, I resolved that the physical appearance of the University, which had become an eyesore at some points, must be practically and promptly addressed. We followed up that promise with the launch of a university-wide initiative involving staff and students to cover all our five campuses. A committee tasked with implementing this objective was immediately inaugurated. As of now, we have so far provided mowers, trucks and other equipment for the committee. We have also embarked on the planting of 320 economic trees including coconuts, orange, mango and avocado.

(iii) SECURITY

To boost security, we have engaged forest guards, and provided them the needed equipment, as well as motorbikes to facilitate their operations. That move has brought to the lowest level the erstwhile perennial incidence of insecurity on our campuses. To further tackle the incidence of insecurity on our campuses, my administration has taken steps to identify and block out vulnerabilities by deployment of digital security technology, including drones, CCTV, biometric/log-in systems, improved access control, and stronger and convivial University-Host Community relations.

(iii) UNIUYO COMMERCIAL VENTURES

Your Excellencies, Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, it is with utmost delight that I inform you that as a university aligning with global benchmarks, my administration is making tangible efforts at breaking away from the over-dependence on Federal allocations, which has been the practice for years. With no intention to sound immodest, but as an Economist, it should be expected of me to be resourceful and evolve funding solutions for our university. Consequently, my team and I have already launched a string of businesses which we hope can supplement our budgets by way of internally generated revenues. These include:

(a) UNIUYO Commercial Paint and Block Companies

This initiative is intended to, among other things, provide construction materials at reduced cost, leverage on building contacts, including TETfund-supported projects, provide employment opportunities, commercialize our university's expertise, and promote participation in construction projects.

(b) UNIUYO Farms and Allied Industries Ltd.

My administration has also instituted the UNIUYO Farms Ltd. with investments in fish, poultry, snail, vegetable, mushroom and greenhouse farming. So far, we have provided the following infrastructure and incentives:

- 6,000-cocoa-seedling plantation established
- 1,000-capacity poultry broiler facility completed
- 1,000-capacity fish pond completed
- 1,000-capacity snail-rearing facility completed
- 6 hectares of market gardening ongoing
- Approximately 6,100 cocoa seedlings being planted on 5.7 hectares; about 3,000 plantain species planned for interplanting across 30 hectares ongoing
- 4,000 oil-palm seedlings being raised in nursery ongoing
- Melon cultivation ongoing.
- Mushroom facility rehabilitated; borehole installed near Faculty of Agriculture; electricity transmitted to poultry site; Faculty tractor rehabilitated, all completed
- 3 screen houses for in-season vegetable production completed
- Rehabilitation of four-wheel-drive farm vehicle completed
- Main operational site for commercial agriculture developed, with more than 10 hectares cleared completed

(c) RETURN OF ADMISSIONS TO DEPARTMENTS AND FACULTIES

As I mentioned earlier in this address, I had promised, right from the outset, to return UTME and Direct Entry admissions to Departments and Faculties, with proper training for Deans, Heads of Departments and Quality Assurance personnel. Today, that promise is completed and fully operational. No longer would parents, guardians and sponsors be left at the mercy of one person on matters of admission.

To facilitate a seamless transition, we conducted hands-on admission training for184 staff members, including Deans, Heads of Departments, Quality Assurance Committee members and Directorate of Quality Assurance staff. We also instituted a taskforce to monitor compliance, and check all forms of sharp practices and racketeering. Computer business operators were registered across our University campuses, even as we heightened our security intelligence/surveillance network. Today, from the peasant farmer to those in the corridors of power, you do not need to know anyone in UNIUYO for your child or ward to be offered admission.

(d) PROMPT PROCESSING OF EXAMINATION RESULTS, AND 72-HOUR TRANSCRIPT ISSUANCE

Again, as I hinted earlier, I had, in my inaugural speech, committed to addressing the hydra- headed problem of delay in the release of examination results, and the prompt processing and issuance of academic transcripts. Transcripts, in particular, had made our institution notorious for decades. When I assumed office, I confronted these challenges strategically. I got the University Senate to approve necessary modalities that would ensure the approval of results in seven weeks after examination. Today, we have overcome that challenge, and one of the outcomes is the clearing of the backlog of applications for transcripts, which manifested in the completion of the processing of 2,837 transcripts.

(e) STAFF AND STUDENT WELFARE

Staff welfare will continue to occupy a central position in my administration. This is borne out of the fact that no institution rises above the commitment of its workforce. My administration has demonstrated this conviction by paying all entitlements due staff members up to date. It has been a downpour of credit alerts because of my conviction that every labourer is worthy of his wage.

We have cultivated a culture of respect, inclusion, fairness, and merit. We have strengthened opportunities for training, career advancement, mentorship, and professional growth. We have maintained open communication with staff Unions, and maintained constructive engagements in addressing the challenges that affect our workforce.

Universities are built by people, not by buildings, and not by budgets. The very best cannot be implemented if there are no people, properly motivated, to translate the policies into actions. The lecturers who inspire, the researchers who discover, the administrators who serve, the technologists who support, the students who dream, all deserve respect, fairness, and opportunities. From day one, this has been a listening administration, ready to engage, ready to communicate, and transparently so in our bid to rebuild confidence, and foster a renewed sense of purpose. Specifically, we have:

- improved staff welfare through payments of outstanding arrears and implementation of applicable Federal Government directives and agreements
- paid CATA (Academic Allowance) and CONTA (Non-Teaching Allowance) from January-October, 2026.
- Commenced the full implementation of CONMESS salary structure for medical teachers
- implemented the new tax law, resulting in lower tax deductions than the previous arrangement.
- stabilized our Bursary Department to enable more timely attention to financial needs.

- developed Bursary Operational Manual.
- identified and blocked revenue leakages with visible results beginning to manifest.
- paid salaries on time since commencement of the administration.
- resumed the legitimate payment Out-of-Pocket Expenses (OPE) which was stopped following a query from the Office of the Auditor General of the Federation, Abuja.
- been paying promotion arrears in batches, and the process is ongoing

Your Excellencies, eminent guests of our university, at my inauguration, I denoted myself as the "Bigger Paymaster", and I believe that I have lived up to this description of myself, and the efforts are progressing.

Let me reiterate that, in the same vein, our students are equally important, and remain the primary reason for the existence of our university. This administration will continue to promote a learning environment that supports academic success, character development, innovation, entrepreneurship, and responsible citizenship. We shall work to improve student facilities, strengthen support services, encourage leadership development, and create opportunities that prepare our graduates to thrive in a rapidly changing world. The voice of our students will continue to be heard, respected, and considered.

I am pleased to announce that I have successfully midwifed a seamless transfer of power in the Student Union Government of our University. With the proficient desk officer for NELFUND, we hope to continue to dialogue in the best interest of our students. Protection of students, especially at night, is enhanced by our highly networked security patrols and surveillance.

6. RENOVATION AND REVAMPING OF EXISTING HOSTELS

I inherited hostels that were only fit for animals to live in. Even the new NDDC Hostel and Needs Assessment Hostels completed and handed over to the University for less than 3 years had gone totally dilapidated. The male and female Presidential Hostels in the Main Campus were totally broken done. We have completely renovated the NDDC and Needs Assessment Hostels and handed them over to a Facility Manager for purpose of good management of the facility and sustainability.

Work is on-going on the Presidential Hostels for male and female in Main Campus. Renovation works in these hostels will be completed before the new academic session begins later this month.

In our Town Campus, TETFUND has approved to fund the full renovation of the Postgraduate Students Hostel as well as the W2 Hotels. Letters of award of these contracts are ready.

7. COLLABORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENTS

Collaboration remains a central drive for institutions that seek to attain global reckoning, especially in today's technology-driven knowledge ecosystem. Since I assumed office, I have intentionally worked to strengthen relationships with government, industry, development partners, alumni, and international institutions. This is to position our university firmly to attract investments, research collaborations, academic exchanges, and opportunities that benefit our staff and students. Permit me to highlight a few:

(a) Hosted His Excellency, Ambassador Jeong Yo-An, the South Korean Ambassador to Nigeria who delivered a public lecture in the University as well discussiong collaborations with the Republic of Sourh Korea

(b) Hosted the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria's Committee on Tertiary Institutions and Tetfund, discussing collaborations and benefits our University and students can get from the Committee, especially with NELFUND

(c) Hosting the Managing Director and Executive Board members of South-South Development Commission alongside all Federal Universities in South South Nigeria with deliberations centering on collaborations among the Universities and with the Commission

(d) Visiting the Managing Director of Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to discuss collaborations in Research and other areas of mutual benefits

(e) Improved relations with University Unions

(f) Educational Collaboration with SRH University of Germany

(g) Educational Collaboration with the Center for Canadian Education Council (International Career Center)

I intend to instill a new lease of life into the Directorate of International Collaborations in the bid to revamp some of the collaborations that had become redundant, or had lapsed into a state of abeyance.

8. CONVOCATION STATISTICS

(i) Postgraduate Level

Doctoral Degrees	Master's Degrees	Postgraduate Diplomas	Total
714	1303	665	2682

(ii) Undergraduate Level

Bachelor's Degrees	Diplomas	Certificates	Total
19,217 .	144	161	305

A further breakdown of the total number of undergraduate results for the three sessions yields this distribution:

(iii) Classes of Pass

First Class	Second Class (Upper)	Second Class (Lower)	Third Class	Pass	Total
214	7,216	10,468	917	402	19,217

Below is a distribution of the graduating students on a sessional basis:

(iv) 2023/2024

First Class	Second Class (Upper)	Second Class (Lower)	Third Class	Pass	Total
116	3,452	4,846	476	216	9,106

(v) 2024/2025

First Class	Second Class (Upper)	Second Class (Lower)	Third Class	Pass	Total
98	3,764	5,622	441	186	10,111

(vi) SUMMARY

TOTAL NO. OF BACHELOR'S DEGREES FOR THE TWO SESSIONS = **19,217**

TOTAL NO. OF UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMAS FOR THE TWO SESSIONS = **814**

TOTAL NO. OF CERTIFICATE GRADUATES FOR THE TWO SESSIONS = **248**

TOTAL NO. OF POSTGRADUATES FOR THE TWO SESSIONS = **2,682**

GRAND TOTAL OF GRADUATES FOR THE 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 CONVOCATION = 22,961

9. AWARD OF HONORARY DEGREES AT THIS CONVOCATION

(i) His Excellency Agbu Kefas

Executive Governor of Taraba State, Nigeria

(ii) High Chief Government Oweizide Ekpemupolo

Chairman Tantita Security Services

(iii) Chief Dr. Samuel Ogbuku

Managing Director, Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)

(iv) Mr. Ubong Obot

Chairman, Ubotex Nig. Ltd.

10. APPEALS

Despite the determination of my administration to improve on the internally-generated revenue capacity of the University, we still solicit the support of government, individuals and corporate bodies in tackling the problems of erosion, staffing and funding to enable us to transform our dreams into reality.

11. APPRECIATION AND CONCLUSION

His Excellencies, royal fathers here present, ladies and gentlemen, in concluding this address, I wish to thank the Almighty God once more for granting that I emerge as the 9th Vice-Chancellor of our great University, and for making this convocation ceremony possible. In the same vein, I thank immensely the Visitor to the University, His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. I feel indebted to the President of the Senate, His Excellency, Godswill Obot Akpabio, GCON, the Minister of Education, the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC), the Chancellor of the University of Uyo and Emir of Hadejia, His Royal Highness, Alhaji Abubakar Maje, CON, and the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council for always standing by the University and providing invaluable counsel and guidance always. I must not fail to appreciate the members of my Management team for aligning so perfectly with my vision and mission in the way they carry on with their various responsibilities. Let me also thank the Convocation Lecturer, the Distinguished Honourees, UNIUYO Alumni, our special donors, the Representatives of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund, Principal Officers of the University, Members of Senate, Deans and Directors, Staff and Students, Parents and Guardians, Members of the Convocation Planning Committee, Members of the Press, friends of the University, Ladies and Gentlemen. I wish you all journey mercies back to your destinations, and may God bless you all for your patience and attention.