

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR AYODEJI O. OLUKOJU, VICE-
CHANCELLOR, CALEB UNIVERSITY, IMOTA, LAGOS STATE, AT THE SECOND
FOUNDATION DAY LECTURE ON JANUARY 21, 2011.**

The Special Guest of Honour and Honourable Minister of Special Duties/Sports, Prof. Taoheed Adedoja

Guests of Honour, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa & Prof. 'Dapo Afolabi, OFR

Our Royal Father, the Ranodu of Imota, Oba Ajibade Agoro II

Chancellor, Caleb University, Prince Oladega Adebogun

Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council, and Chairman of this event, Prof. 'Nimbe Adedipe

Members of the Board of Trustees of Caleb University

Members of the Governing Council of Caleb University

Our Guest Speaker, Professor Jacob Kehinde Olupona, NNOM

Members of the University Senate

Staff and Students of Caleb University

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Gentlemen of the Press

I am most delighted to welcome you all to the second Foundation Day Lecture of Caleb University, Imota, Lagos State. This event commemorates the commencement of lectures on January 21, 2008 after this University had taken off at its temporary site at Magodo, Lagos on January 7, 2008. The first Foundation Day Lecture was delivered on January 21, 2009 by Professor Julius Okojie, the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission. The event for 2010 could not be held because of circumstances beyond our control.

It is, therefore, with great pleasure and gratitude to God that we are holding the next one on our permanent site with a speaker coming all the way from Harvard University in the United States of

America. Some other person will introduce Professor Jacob Kehinde Olupona, NNOM but let me hasten to express our deep gratitude to him for honouring our invitation at short notice – barely a month ago! In addition to delivering this lecture, Professor Olupona has donated a carton of valuable books on diverse subjects to the Caleb University Library. We are greatly indebted to him for this act of generosity. It is only a person with his kind of large heart and intellectual genius that would undertake the task of preparing and delivering this important lecture on an issue of great moment under such conditions. Many thanks to Dr. Tayo Adesina of the University of Ibadan for facilitating access to Prof. Olupona. Prof. Olupona himself was also gracious enough to have helped us reach his friend, Prof. Dapo Afolabi, OFR, Head of Service of the Federation, who, unfortunately, could not attend this lecture owing to the pressure of state matters. But he is duly represented here.

We are grateful to our Royal Father and the University's traditional landlord, the Ranodu of Imota, Oba Ajibade Agoro II for heeding our call as usual and the much admired Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Member of the House of Representatives and the highest elected official from this locality. Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa had graciously pledged to attend any event to which we invited her after our own Mr. Abimbola Olulesi accosted her at the airport and challenged her to identify with the premier institution in her constituency. True to her word, she is here today to honour our invitation. We are also greatly appreciative of the presence of numerous friends and well-wishers – academics, captains of industry, opinion leaders, men and women of substance - from our immediate host community of Imota, from Lagos and other States and, even from abroad.

That said, we have every reason to thank God for what He has done for us at Caleb University. Indeed, we are celebrating and affirming our status as one of the nation's youngest but most dynamic universities. We thank God for the steady growth of the institution, its successful relocation to the permanent site in less than two years of take-off, the NUC accreditation of all our programmes, the uninterrupted operation through four successive academic sessions, the recent launch of our inspiring anthem and the cumulative success of our efforts to establish a brand that combines scholarship and professional skills with godliness. We are leaving no stone unturned to reinforce our workforce, carefully enrol quality students, strengthen our structures and infrastructure, and develop partnerships.

Undoubtedly, we have maintained and leveraged upon robust and beneficial relations with external stakeholders. In the last quarter of 2010, for example, we received on campus, among others, the President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) , Major-Gen. Sebastian Onwuama (Ret.) and the national executive of ICAN, and the National President of ARCON, Arc, Umar Aliyu and his team. Under a partnership agreement with New Horizons Systems, our students have secured

international ICT certification in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and COMPTIA+ well before graduation. We are the only Nigerian University partnering with the Association of Business Executives based in the United Kingdom. As well, our academic programmes have been made to undergo relevant professional accreditation, most recently, our Architecture programme by the Architects Registration Council of Nigeria (ARCON) in partnership with NUC. We have obtained the NUC's approval to mount degree programmes in Political Science, Philosophy and International Relations as a precondition for the take-off of our College of Law. Our programmes in English, Sociology, Psychology and Physics-with-Electronics are due for NUC resource verification preparatory to take-off. In particular, we are poised to develop flagship programmes in the fields of Business and Mass Communication for which we have comparative advantage. Plans have reached an advanced stage to run the Professor Idowu Sobowale International School of Mass Communication, which is focused on becoming the leading professional and postgraduate media training centre in Nigeria. For our Business School, our immediate goal is the running of an international MBA degree programme in partnership with foreign collaborating institutions and faculty.

Finally, our leadership school, the Caleb Leadership Academy, makes its debut this month to complement our regular curriculum to produce personnel endowed with requisite academic, professional, entrepreneurial and language skills fit for the local and global economies. For instance, we expect them to be able to compete for jobs in international organizations without language and technical disabilities. Beyond this, we expect our graduates to create jobs and be self-reliant. We instill in them the "can-do" spirit encapsulated in the Biblical Caleb's proclamation: **"we are well able."** Above all, they must be grounded in faith-induced ethical values.

As I conclude this welcome address, permit me to pay special tribute to our ever-supportive Chancellor, Prince Oladega Adebogun, who has led a team of totally committed men and women to mobilise resources and goodwill toward achieving what we are celebrating today. In the same vein, our University thanks God for the Chairman of our Board of Trustees, Dr. Christopher Kolade, CON, Members of the Board of Trustees, our able and amiable Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council, Professor Nimbe Adedipe, Members of the Governing Council, my predecessors in this office, our dependable and committed academic and non-academic staff, and our parents and dear students, who have committed themselves to us on this pioneering journey to excellence. We thank our parents for making the matriculation ceremony and Parents Forum on January 12, 2011 such a great success. I can assure you that we are addressing matters arising from our parley. God bless you all.

I urge all men and women of goodwill to collaborate with us in achieving these noble objectives. Surely, Caleb University can do with your goodwill in terms of the endowment of professorial chairs, doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships for our academic staff, prizes for our students and sundry educational infrastructure for all. All that is required is for you, dear friends and well-wishers, to share our dream of developing human capacity, raising a new crop of leaders and transforming our society in line with our motto: **“For God and For Humanity.”** Working together with you and working with God, we will transform our society for good. Given that horizontal and vertical partnership, **we are truly well able.**

Thank you for honouring us with your presence. May God grant you journey mercies, bless and keep you as you return to your respective destinations.

Professor Ayodeji O. OLUKOJU

Vice-Chancellor

21 January 2011