

## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME ADDRESS

It is with great pleasure and delight I welcome you all to the Michael and Cecilia Ibru University(MCIU), as we host the 6<sup>th</sup>International Conference of the National Geophysical Society.

Michael and Cecilia Ibru University is the brainchild of **Olorogun Michael** and **Chief Dr. (Mrs) Cecilia Ibru**.

The mantra of this University is that we are **“on a quest for excellence in a changing world.”** The conviction, which underpins our vision namely, “Knowledge Alleviates Poverty,” is that there is an inextricable nexus between excellence, knowledge and poverty alleviation, barring all confounding factors.

In the four years of the existence of this institution, we have pragmatically pursued excellence via emphasis on diligence, dedication, discipline and determination. These values that have contributed to the Accreditation by National University Commission (NUC) of all the programs presented for Accreditation in our two faculties - Social and Management Sciences, and Natural and Applied Sciences. In this new academic session, we are commencing programs in the Faculties of Law, Computing, Humanities Medical Lab, Nursing and Arts. All these programs are tailored to equipping our graduates with knowledge, skills and competencies required to solve life’s conundrum in a dynamic and fluid political, socio-cultural and economic environment.

The dynamism within the global environment is driven principally by rapid changes in science, information and computer technology. These changes have reduced the world into a global village with a resultant increase in volume and velocity of threats and opportunities available to all. Eight areas of technological changes that will yet transform our world are the use of Drones, Artificial Intelligence, 3D Printing, Internet of Things, Robotics, Block Chain, Virtual Reality, and Augmented reality. It is within the context of these changes that we, as an institution, seek to equip our graduates to cope with the challenges with better life and living consequent upon graduation.

This year's theme for the 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the National Geophysical Society is **“Exploring the Diversity of Geophysical Sciences for National Development.”** The theme strikes a harmonious chord with the very essence of what MCIU stands for. Whether you use the term “national development” as in this conference theme or “poverty alleviation” as in the vision statement of our University, we will mean the same thing, if we play down on semantics and technicalities of meanings. It is therefore not an academic coincidence that this University has been chosen to host this conference.

Development is a hydra-headed concept encompassing both economic and non-economic variables. Development can simply be seen as an improvement in the quality of life and level of living of citizens of a country. It means that citizens have access with the ability to assess choices that imply an improved quality of life. Unfortunately, Africa has been described, and rightly so, as a perennial tortoise in the race for development. In 2017, for example, the UNDP report showed that for Nigeria, life expectancy is 53.9 years, while expected years of schooling is 10years.

This means that schooling years is 6.2 and gross national income per capita is \$ 5231. This gives a Human Development Index of 0.532. In 2018, Nigeria, with the Human Development Index of 0.5 ranks 157 out

of 189 countries. This leaves much to be desired when compared with the HDI of 0.9 for countries such as Germany, Norway, Hong Kong, Sweden and Singapore.

These startling statistics shows that every individual, institution and indeed government should be concerned about National Development. This year's conference theme, "Exploring the Diversity of Geophysical Sciences for National Development" is therefore quite appropriate. It is therefore my hope that this conference will not only talk the talk but will help us walk the talk to National Development and Transformation. Our earnest desire is that knowledge generated from this conference will not end in the bookshelf or the library.

We must find ways of making the results effective for individuals, corporate bodies, the government and activate new research propositions in the academia. The current orthodoxy is to focus on sustainable development and transformation for the current and future generations without mortgaging the well-being of our subsequent generations.

Primarily, sustainable development focuses on environmental protection and encourages economic behavior that is meant to preserve nature. Geophysics is a natural science concerned with the physical processes and properties of the Earth. This conference, therefore, should be a voice for defending the Earth even as we exploit the resources therein.

I welcome you once again to Michael and Cecilia Ibru University, Agbarha Otor. As we confer for national development and transformation in this conference; please remember, "all work no play makes Jack a dull boy." Here in Agbarha, there are scenes and sights to behold. Make out time to visit our Art Gallery, a Gallery of World Class renown Housing Etchings and Paintings by Our Professor Emeritus Bruce Onobrekpeya, the Ibru Ecumenical Centre and Michael and Cecilia Foundation Demonstration Schools, I wish you a successful conference and pleasant stay here at Agbarha the Heartland of the Urhobo Communities.