



World Igbo Environmental Foundation, Inc.

November 26, 2011

STATEMENT OF APPRECIATION

by
Okenwa R. Nwosu, M.D.

Protocols:

Let me first apologize for my inability to be here with you on this eventful day. I had earlier promised to be physically present to witness the finale of this year's Secondary Schools Sports Festival and also to receive the GRAND HERITAGE AND ADVOCAY AWARD conferred on me by ACOMEF – the organizer of this get-together. Due to scheduling conflict, I was offered the choice of having this event shifted to a more convenient date for me or to have someone else to represent me today. After profound deliberations, I settled for the latter. Yes, my presence is desirable, but it is hardly as important as having this year's annual sporting festival to proceed on its preplanned schedule. Rest assured that the Okenwa you have gotten to know so well over the years is here with you in spirit.

I commend ACOMEF, particularly its founder and proprietor, Engr. Ikenna Okonkwo, for the wisdom that informed establishment of the Secondary Schools Sports Festival as well as its other youth-oriented programs aimed at assuring a sound physical and intellectual upbringing of our future leaders. ACOMEF's programs are reminiscent of the Run-for-Life Campaign activities of the 1980s and 90s which were designed to inculcate good health habits, proper social consciousness and charity as valuable tools for our youths' upbringing. I am pleased to note that those yesteryears' youths are now the adults behind the ACOMEF and its many good works within Igbo community and beyond. It is my belief and expectation that today's youths, who are here gathered in very large numbers, are taking a cue from ACOMEF and shall continue with this legacy of community service and social mobilization when they come of age.

The World Igbo Environmental Foundation (WIEF) has taken special notice of the ACOMEF operational agenda and programs and found them convergent with those of our foundation's quest to assure a clean, healthy and safe living space for all our people. WIEF and ACOMEF, therefore, have agreed to collaborate closely, going forward, for the attainment of our mutual interests. As a gesture for this burgeoning alliance, the WIEF leadership has decided to become proactive in ensuring that the ACOMEF-inspired annual Secondary Schools Sports Festival



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shall not only endure but shall also expand its present reach to include all who wish to partake in it throughout Anambra state and beyond. For a start, WIEF is donating a sporting trophy in Table Tennis to be named after one of our foundation's late leader, Engr. J. N. B. Ofojebe. The Ofojebe Cup in Table Tennis is an annual event and an open invitational contest for all accredited secondary schools in Anambra state. WIEF shall provide ACOMEF with N100,000 annually for organizing the table tennis competition under the guidelines that shall be decided by the foundation's Sports Organizing Committee.

This Grand Heritage and Advocacy Award by ACOMEF means a lot to me personally. Even though many would see this recognition as acknowledgement of past antecedents, I would rather prefer to regard it as an exhortation to rise in order to overcome the many challenges that still lie ahead of us as a people. It is with this mindset that I gladly accept this unique honor with immense thanks to ACOMEF and its leadership echelon. I feel greatly energized and empowered by this home-grown gesture from those who know me better than anyone else worldwide. I hereby reaffirm my enduring pride in having been born and raised as an authentic Igbo son. More than ever before, I now feel duty-bound to devote my spiritual, intellectual and material capabilities toward the articulation, projection and protection of this hallowed land on which our ancestors walked, thrived and built a highly sophisticated civilization that we are beginning to unearth today. As we speak, there are already well thought-out schemes in the pipeline for taking our historical community to even greater heights in the very near future. With all hands on deck, we shall collectively assure a better and more fulfilling tomorrow for this and future generations of all our people.

ACOMEF, WIEF and foundations like them within Nigeria and elsewhere worldwide are nonprofit and are not sustained by government funds. They depend on their membership and supporters in sourcing the manpower and money needed for the planning and implementation of their programs and projects. For our communities and society to prosper, we cannot afford to fold our arms and wait on the government to come and do even the most basic things for us. Let all of us be reminded again today that, long before our people became exposed to the type of government we have in this era, our ancestors rallied together to take care of themselves and their needs. Our culture and indigenous Igbo value system have a place of pride for community consciousness and altruism. I, therefore, challenge you to give some of your time, sweat and money, whenever you are called upon to do so, in order to ensure that the good works of the likes of ACOMEF and WIEF shall endure and prosper.

Long Live ACOMEF!

Long Live WIEF!!

And Long Live the Federal Republic of Nigeria!!!