



AN ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT/CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL, THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF BANKERS OF NIGERIA, OTUNBA (MRS.) 'DEBOLA OSIBGUN, FCIB AT THE APWB 2014 ANNUAL CORPORATE DINNER, OCTOBER 30, 2014 AT VICTORIA CROWN PLAZA HOTEL (VCP), VICTORIA ISLAND, LAGOS .

Protocol

It is indeed with great honour that I stand to celebrate with you at this Annual Corporate Dinner which is your first under my tenure as President/Chairman of Council of our great Institute. My tenure so far, has indeed been eventful but with its challenges. However, tonight, we have all come together as professional colleagues in the same gender under a relaxed and friendly atmosphere to recreate, refresh and regain strength for greater focus. I commend the leadership of this group and the entire membership for your untiring contributions to the development of women bankers across the country and your huge support for the Institute. You have indeed proved yourselves to be a very reliable partner not just at ensuring sustainability at home front, but also in the professional banking business world.

If you recall at my investiture, I promised to work with your Association to enhance the growth of Women bankers. An Ad Hoc committee on "Increasing the Participation and Involvement of Women in Banking & Finance Industry" was set up and they turned in their report on the 30th of September. Let me say a very big thank you to all members of this committee and to commend them for the inspiring report. I want to assure you that I will work with management to see how we can adopt your suggestions.

Today's event which is a celebration of milestone achievement of women folk in the banking profession will remain the balancing factor to offer great and far reaching impacts for the stuff we are made of in nation building in every aspect.



I am aware that the Association of Professional Women Bankers (APWB), is open to all female bankers in the country. I therefore would like to charge you to more than ever before, consciously reach out and encourage more women to sit for the Chartered Institute of Bankers examinations thereby equipping them for higher responsibilities in the industry. Further to this, you must design more strategic initiatives to draw into the fold, top level women within the industry who indeed serve as rallying points for mentoring of young female bankers. This initiatives will also enrich your knowledge through cross-fertilization of entrepreneurial and other useful ideas of mutual interest affecting members jointly and severally within the banking industry. The resultant impact of this idea will include among others building the culture of integrity, qualitative and high ethical values and professionalism among women in banking.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is imperative to note that so far, the APWB has performed creditably well over the years but the opportunities still abound to widen its horizon. I am impressed that the event of today will witness the celebration of icons, women of great value and game changers in the affairs of our nation.

Furthermore, the Keynote Speaker, **Dr. (Mrs.) Sarah Alade, OON, FCIB**, Deputy Governor, Economic Policy, Central Bank of Nigeria, is a woman of great value and an inspiration to all women bankers in Nigeria and beyond. She has made remarkable contributions to the financial development of our great nation. She will enlighten us more on the topic of discussion tonight, which is; **“Sustaining Financial Inclusion through Micro-Enterprise Development”**. As for the Guest Speaker, **Ms. Modupe Ladipo**, the Chief Executive Officer EFInA, I have no doubt that she will do justice to tonight’s topic of discussion. For those of us who are familiar with financial inclusion, you will bear me witness that her organization has made huge contributions in this respect to the banking industry.



The case for Micro-Enterprise Development through Financial Inclusion has assumed an advanced level in both advocacy and implementation. The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sub-sector have been identified as one of the critical elements in the achievement of the country's vision 20-2020. A nurtured and well-structured MSME sector contributes significantly to employment generation, wealth creation, poverty reduction, sustainable economic growth and development and indeed inclusive financing. The Federal Government through the Central Bank of Nigeria has also made available funds through several means to tackle the issue of financial inclusion and micro-enterprise development. Fresh in our memories is the ₦220billion intervention fund released through the Microfinance banks on 9% interest rate. This fund is very dear to my heart because 60% of it, is targeted to reach women, who has been described as engine blocks for speedy economic growth, wealth creation and national development. I want to encourage the Microfinance Banks to endeavor to access this fund and implement this policy for the development of the Micro-Enterprises and the overall benefit of the nation.

Let me assure you that the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria on her part is poised to vigorously pursue through its advocacy and educational programme the attainment of the lofty goals of the financial inclusion programme.

In conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are all partners to the development of the nation. Your positive contribution would go a long way in making the nation reach its potential. To the APWB, you should endeavour to keep ahead in your programmes especially the mentorship program and other motivational meetings where young female bankers are groomed into enviable positions for the industry. I want to encourage you to chart a more worthy course for yourselves, make higher aspirations and press for it, distinguish yourselves on your various desks and be that change you want to see. By doing so, you would attract to yourself a good name that is better than riches.



Finally, let me once again express my delight in your decision to open your membership to incorporate Honourary Senior Members. This is a step in the right direction as this will increase your membership base.

We should all take the opportunity that has been provided here today to interact, relax and have fun.

Enjoy your dinner.

Otunba (Mrs.) 'Debola Osibogun, FCIB
President/Chairman of Council
October 30, 2014