



REMARKS BY UCHE MESSIAH OLOWU, Ph.D., FCIB PRESIDENT/CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL, THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF BANKERS OF NIGERIA (CIBN) AT THE 2019 CORPORATE FORUM/ANNUAL DINNER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL WOMEN BANKERS (APWB) HELD AT THE EKO HOTEL AND SUITES, VICTORIA ISLAND, LAGOS ON, OCTOBER 25, 2019

Protocol

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, it is no secret that I am a huge supporter of gender equality and inclusiveness. It is my extreme pleasure therefore, to Chair this special occasion of the Association of Professional Women Bankers (APWB) 2019 Corporate Forum/Annual Dinner.

I heartily congratulate the Association ably led by Mrs Mercy Ojo, FCIB for holding a world class event sure to add value to participants. Looking at the line-up of facilitators, I am sure that participants would gain from their respective insights and expertise on the subject matter to be discussed.

I acknowledge the presence of the Distinguished Guest of Honour for this occasion, Mrs Ronke Sokefun, Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation. Mrs Sokefun is a consummate lawyer, with over 3 decades of experience. It may interest you to note that upon graduation from Olabisi Onabanjo University with a degree in Law in 1987, she emerged as one of the best in her graduating class as she won two prizes – Jurisprudence & Legal Theory and Commercial Law. We are indeed honored to have her present with us this evening.

I also acknowledge the presence of our Keynote Speaker who barely needs an introduction given his indelible mark in policy research, and corporate intelligence. Paul Adams is currently an Advisor to S-RM Intelligence and Risk Consulting Group, one of the world's leading risk and intelligence consultancies. He is also a journalist who regularly contributes to the Financial Times, London and the Reuters News Agency. I have no doubt that his presentation on the theme of today's programme, **Insecurity: Impact on Socio-Economic Development**, would be an invaluable source of information for participants.

Distinguished guests, as we all know, insecurity has long been a matter of concern in our great country, Nigeria. These concerns heightened with the surge in indiscriminate killings by sundry cartels of gunmen, herdsmen and insurgent groups such as Boko Haram. Other ills including kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery and other assorted violent crimes seem to have become common place in Nigeria. The value of human life has become gravely so degraded that news of deaths often on an industrial scale hardly illicit much emotion anymore.

Our girls have particularly fallen victim to such activities with examples including Chibok and Dapchi where over 300 schoolgirls were kidnapped by members of Boko Haram. Meanwhile statistics from the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) report for Nigeria 2019, states that as of August, 2019 – there were approximately 2 million displaced Nigerian 79% of which were women and children.



Girls who face such ills, automatically face challenges such as limited access to education, early marriages and are unable to make significant contributions to their community and the economy. As a father of five girls, such matters are indeed close to my heart.

As bankers, we may question our role in quelling the continued unrest in selected parts of our nation. However, there is no doubt that insecurity has severe impacts on the banking business. It scares foreign investors, limits business opportunities in certain parts of the country and paints a generally unstable picture of Nigeria. The presentation by our esteemed keynote speaker would tackle such issues and more. Without usurping his role however, I urge female bankers here present to further empower the next generation of female bankers with the tools and capacity to succeed in spite of insecurity challenges in the country.

Let me end my remarks by congratulating the Association once again for this highly impressive outing. I implore you not to relent in your efforts at supporting the Institute's mandate to promote high ethical and professional conduct in the industry.

Thank you all for your kind attention as I wish you an eventful evening.

Uche Messiah Olowu, Ph. D, FCIB
President/Chairman of Council
The Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria
October 25, 2019