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UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN EMERGES CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE AFRICAN UNION PAN AFRICAN UNIVERSITY'S PROGRAMME ON EARTH AND LIFE SCIENCES

The University of Ibadan has emerged as the Centre of Excellence for the African Union Pan African University's (PAU) programmes on Earth and Life Sciences.

The announcement was made after a high level panel of experts evaluated the submissions made by competing countries at the sub-regional level and made recommendations to the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF IV) held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 18 June, 2010.

The implication of this is that the University will host about 150 scholars from other West African countries for PAU's sponsored academic programmes on Earth and Life Sciences. Such programmes include Agriculture and Forestry; Wildlife and Fisheries; Botany and Microbiology; Food Technology; zoology; Geology and Petroleum Engineering. Others are Oil and Gas; Dentistry; Nutrition and Dietetics and Medicine and Surgery.

The University of Ibadan presently runs these programmes in nine of its faculties namely Science; Technology, Pharmacy, Agriculture and Forestry, Veterinary Medicine, Basic Medical Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Dentistry and Public Health.

Enumerating how UI won the hosting right for West Africa, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. O.A. Bamiro, FNSE, FAS, said the university showed considerable evidence of involvement in thematic priority areas, existence of postgraduate programmes and research as well as evidence of international partnerships and joint research collaboration.

The University of Ibadan defeated Senegal, Republic of Benin and Guinea to emerge as the hub for the West African Earth and Life Sciences Programmes. There are expected to be 10 centres under each hub.

Prof. Bamiro commended the Honourable Minister of Education, Prof. Ruquyyat Ahmed Rufa'i, OON; the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education, Prof. Dapo Afolabi; the Director of Tertiary Education, Dr. Shuara Jamila and her team; the National Universities Commission and the AUC Technical Assessors at the ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja for their support and commitment which contributed immensely to UI's Success.

The Vice-Chancellor also commended the inputs from the DVC (Admin) Prof. E.A. Bamgboye; the DVC (Academic), Prof. A.A.B. Agbaje, the Postgraduate School, some HODs, Heads of some key Research Laboratories, Acting Director of Planning, Chairman ICT and others.

Prof. Bamiro observed that with this achievement, the University has made giant strides in the direction of actualizing its vision of transforming to a postgraduate university that continues to impact the immediate and larger society through its teaching and research that produce graduates who become active players in the increasingly globalised economies.

He however stated that the African Union would carry out follow-up visits to assess facilities and readiness for project take-off. He therefore called for improvement in the University's information management system and appealed to all members of staff to update their pages on the University website. "Let us all join hands as we place our UI where it rightly belongs" Prof. Bamiro concluded.

The Pan African University was established in 2008 by the African Union Commission for the promotion, networking and development of programmes and research centre within some existing excellent universities in the five geographic sub regions, namely Northern, Western, Eastern, Central and Southern Africa.

The strategic vision of the PAU is to develop institutions of excellence in science, technology, innovation, social sciences and governance which would constitute the bedrock for an African pool of higher education and research. This is expected to usher in a new generation of leaders who are properly trained to take the best advantage of African human and material resources imbued with a common vision of a peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa.

The PAU is an academic network of existing postgraduate and research institutions whose mission is to enhance the mobility of students, lecturers, researchers and administrative staff between African Universities to improve on teaching, leadership and collaborative research.

The Thematic Areas under the PAU programmes are Space Sciences in South Africa; Water and Energy (including climate change) in North Africa; Basic Sciences Technology and innovation in East Africa; Earth and Life Sciences (including Health and Agriculture) in West Africa and Governance, Humanities and Social Sciences in Central Africa.

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Registrar