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Special Release

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OBITUARY

HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. OLUSEGUN KOKUMO AGAGU, FNMGS, FNAPE (16 February, 1948 – 13 September, 2013)

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor I. F. Adewole, FAS, announces with deep regret the death of Dr. Agagu Olusegun Kokumo.

Dr. Olusegun Kokumo Agagu was a renowned geologist, a sound academician, an astute businessman, a foremost politician, an outstanding statesman and a widely acclaimed promoter of peace and sustainable socio-economic development.

He was born at Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State on February 16, 1948. His father, Chief Isaac Olorunfemi Agagu, was a Local Government Council administrator and prominent community leader. His mother, Madam Leah Omopelumi Agagu, was a highly respected businesswoman and also a community leader. From his parents, he imbibed the virtues of hard work and perseverance and strove relentlessly to achieve the very best that life had to offer.

Dr. Agagu started his primary school at Okitipupa but as luck would have it, his primary school education spanned the length and breadth of this country. From Okitipupa to Ibadan, from Ibadan to Kano, and then to Ibadan. This even in his early years had broadened his perspective about Nigeria. He had his secondary school education at the famous Ibadan Grammar School where he bagged the WASCE and HSC in flying colours.

He was admitted to the University of Ibadan in 1968 to study Botany but he later changed to Geology. As an undergraduate, his academic record was replete with laurels and prizes. He won three scholarships namely, the Western State Government Scholarship, the University of Ibadan Scholarship and Gulf Oil Scholarship.

He proceeded to the University of Texas in 1973 for his masters degree in Geology. He later obtained a PhD in Petroleum Geology from the University of Ibadan in 1978. He also attended numerous post doctorate professional courses, workshops and conferences in almost all the continents of the world.

As an academic, he researched and published widely in his field of specialization, having to his credit 4 monographs, 15 articles in learned journals, several book chapters and over 50 technical reports in diverse areas of Earth Sciences.

At the last count, he had been to 36 countries. In the process, he had made a wide spectrum of robust social, business and academic interaction with numerous people from other ethnic and racial backgrounds. Hence, he was amiable, mixed freely and was completely

detrribalized. He was married to Mrs. Olufunke Ibidun Agagu (Nee Aliu) who hails from Ibaram-Akoko, in Ondo State. They are blessed with children.

Dr. Olusegun Agagu started his professional career as a geologist with the Gulf Oil Company, Lagos between 1971 and 1972. He also had an eventful academic career at the University of Ibadan between 1972 and 1988. He served as Head of Department from 1985-1987. He voluntarily retired from the service of the institution in 1988, having made up his mind "to quit" salaried employment by age 40.

His membership of learned and professional societies included the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, Geological Society of Africa, Fellow, Nigerian Mining and Geosciences Society and Fellow, Nigerian Association of Petroleum Explorationists. Dr. Olusegun Agagu also served on the boards of many Private and Public companies.

He forayed into partisan politics in 1978 when he became a member and resource person of the defunct Unity Party of Nigerian (UPN). He later became a member of the then People Solidarity Party in 1989 which metamorphosed into Social Democratic Party (SDP). It was on the platform of the SDP that he was elected Deputy Governor of Ondo State in 1992.

Dr. Agagu was a foundation member of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and was the gubernatorial flag bearer of the party in Ondo State in the 1999 election, which though he lost, showed him clearly as a democrat and good sportsman as he wrote to congratulate the winner immediately after the election.

He was appointed a Minister of Aviation in 1999 to preside over the then comatose Aviation industry. It is on record that during his short one year tenure, the Aviation industry experienced a noticeable turnaround starting with a pragmatic restructuring of the industry into Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Nigerian College of Aviation (NCAT) and Nigerian Airways. He engineered the lifting of the 7-year ban of flights to and from America and caused the resumption of flight training at NCAT after a nine year suspension.

In the year 2000, he was moved to the strategic Power and Steel Ministry, and as usual, he rose to the challenge. Within 30 months, he had improved the power generation from 1425 to more than 4000 megawatts and revamped the three comatose rolling mills at Oshogbo, Jos and Katsina. He resigned his ministerial appointment voluntarily in November 2002 to re-contest the gubernatorial election in Ondo State and won by a very wide margin.

He was instrumental to the Endowment of the "Friends and Associates of Dr. Olusegun Agagu Prize" for the best student at the 200, 300 and 400 levels, respectively, in the Department of Geology, Faculty of Science, University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

As an astute politician and patriot, Dr. Agagu's sterling contributions to national politics and his matchless record as a Governor of Ondo State have placed him on a lofty pedestal among Nigeria's eminent statesmen. A few of the eloquent testimonies of Agagu's contributions to the development of Ondo State resonate in the following:

1. Improved provision of potable water coverage from 4.4% to 52%.
2. Improved health care facilities with the establishment of more than 200 standard General Hospitals, Comprehensive Health Centre and Basic Health Centers.

3. Construction and reconstruction of more than 1200 kilometers of paved road especially in the difficult riverine terrains of the State.
4. Provision of new classrooms, modern libraries, Information and Communication Technology training, bursary awards and scholarships to students.
5. Prompt payment of salaries and pensions.
6. Regular promotion of workers.
7. Improved social infrastructure and innovative agriculture reforms, entrepreneurship training and other poverty alleviation policies.
8. The establishment of the strategic Omotosho Industrial Park.
9. Construction of the Owena Multipurpose Dam.
10. The opening of the coastal areas of the state to development through the Olokola Free Trade Zone.
11. Transparency and accountability in governance.
12. Peaceful resolution of chieftaincy disputes and communal conflicts, and so on.

A man who could see beyond the ordinary, Dr. Agagu was an active advocate and indeed, worked assiduously to ensure that the South-West geo-political zone joined the mainstream of national politics in order for the Yoruba nation to benefit maximally of the Nigerian Federation.

May his soul rest in peace. Amen.

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BURIAL PROGRAMME

Monday, 30 September, 2013 – Day of Tributes at International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan, Ibadan by 11.00a.m.

Friday, 4 October, 2013 – Burial at Anglican Church, Iju Odo, Ondo State at 11.00a.m.