

Welcome Address by the President, Nigerian Academy of Engineering - Engr. (Mrs.) J. O. Maduka, FIET, FNSE, FAEng, MFR, at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Academy held on Wednesday, 5th July, 2017 in the Conference Room of the Academy Secretariat, Chemical Engineering Complex, University of Lagos, Akoka.

Fellows of the Academy
Distinguished Guests
Gentlemen of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is with great joy that I welcome you all to this year's Annual General Meeting -- an avenue for us to look inwards, assess ourselves and fine-tune our goals for the year that lies ahead of us, as an academy of fellows.

First, I wish to thank you all for making it to today's AGM. I am also sincerely grateful to my colleagues, the fellows of the Academy, for making the last one year a fruitful one. I did solicit your support at the beginning of my tenure, and I am happy to observe through the past year that many distinguished fellows unreservedly showed much commitment to the cause of the Nigerian Academy of Engineering. To these, I am most grateful. The support you showered on me and the academy, and the sacrifices some of you made to ensure the smooth delivery of our programmes during the past one year are remarkable.

The last one year, which also happened to be my first year in office as the president of this academy, was – without doubt – a fruitful one. I remember at the beginning, during my investiture, I reiterated our responsibility as an Academy of Engineering, which is to leverage the unique knowledge and experiences of our eminent members to provide advice to government and the business community on issues that have to do with application of technology to our needs. I also remember asking us to "'fasten our seat belts' and prepare to fly". I can say today that we did fly.

This AGM marks the end of the first half of my tenure, and thankfully, we had a score of events that propelled us forward, and towards the goal we set for ourselves at the beginning of the year. Our public lectures touched on two important infrastructural concerns that we have as a nation – communication and electricity; and thankfully, our guest speakers, who were also major stake holders and influencers in those sectors did justice to the subject matter. They also got useful feedback, which we hope they pencilled down for implementation. We all know that power is a major issue, especially in our context. Hence, in addition to the public lecture on electricity, we also organised a forum on sustainable power.

One very important theme we focused on during the past NAE year, which I also highlighted during my investiture, was engineering education. A landmark achievement on this regard was the commencement of our partnership with the Royal Academy of Engineering on the Africa Catalyst Project (ACP). I am glad to state here that the ACP (which aims at specifying the competences required of different grades of engineering practitioners in Nigeria through a document called the Nigeria-SPEC) is in its final stages, and will be concluded this month. Fellows' fora, workshops, team meetings and study tours were among our collateral activities on engineering education and the development of the Nigeria-SPEC. We hope to see policy impacts from the provisions of the Nigeria-SPEC in the near future. You may also have noticed from the invitation cards that this year's Annual Lecture and Technology Dinner Lecture have a lot to do with engineering education and the perception of engineering in our context. I'm guessing that the justification for our focus on engineering education, and its perception, is obvious enough that it need not be overly emphasised.

As an Academy of Engineering in Nigeria, we will never renege on our quest for leaders amongst us who have shown exceptional commitment to the engineering profession. Therefore, part of our activities this season is the induction of new fellows into the academy. Professional quality remains a major criterion for selection of fellows of this academy. Hence, fellows are nominated on the basis of their distinguished contribution

to engineering research and practice. Competition for this year's fellowship was remarkably high, as we got applications from many high-performing academics and practitioners. I therefore seize this opportunity to congratulate the candidates who made this year's impressive list of inductees.

Finally, as we transit to the second half of my term, I will be asking you, my colleagues and fellows of the academy to be more involved in the activities of the academy. There will be programmes and meetings at various levels in the coming months; I ask that you invest more of your time, expertise and treasures; and rise up towards delivering the mandate we have placed on ourselves as think tanks and distinguished fellows of the Nigerian Academy of Engineering. I welcome you all to this August occasion.

Engr. (Mrs.) J. Olu Maduka, FIET, FNSE, FAEng, MFR

President, Nigerian Academy of Engineering.