



Text of the Keynote Address by

His Excellency
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on the theme:
KEEPING EKITI WORKING THROUGH RESPONSIBLE LEGISLATION
at the
RETREAT/ORIENTATION WORKSHOP FOR THE OUTGOING AND
INCOMING MEMBERS OF EKITI STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

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Protocols:

Let me start this address by expressing my gratitude to the Speaker of Ekiti State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Olubunmi Adelugba, the House Leadership and the entire Members of the Ekiti State House of Assembly for the honour of this invitation. I also want to thank you for your cooperation as a reliable partner in our shared Ekiti prosperity journey.

With you, the last seven months of working together has been thrilling, exciting and inspiring. Yours has been an Assembly of wonderful and thoughtful men and women whose patriotic commitment to the progress of our dear State is not in doubt. I deeply treasure your cooperation and acknowledge your sacrifices for the good of our people.

I want to congratulate the new Members-elect on their historic election to represent their constituencies. I am happy that the electoral processes have been concluded. I want to specially congratulate the nine members who have the unique honour of returning to the House for a second term. The nine returnees have set a new record in our democratic journey. With nine members returning, this is the highest number of returning legislators in the history of our State. This is an indication that our democratic culture is consolidating and maturing. I also congratulate those who are



leaving for greater opportunities on the successful conclusion of their tour of duty as members of the high-achieving and record breaking 6th Assembly of Ekiti State.

I know many of you personally, and I know how much sacrifices you have made in the four years of your invaluable service. You all have offered selfless services to our people in the last four years and it is my prayer that you will continue to find relevance and usefulness in life. Ekiti is grateful to you for your dedication to the growth and development of our people.

The incoming Assembly is unique in some respect that I am very pleased with. It has the highest number of returning members in history, it also has the highest number of female legislators-elect with six women elected into the assembly. It will also be the first Assembly where the Governor will have the honour of performing the task of *dissolving* the outgoing Assembly in accordance with the Constitution of the Federal republic of Nigeria on June 5th and also perform the duty of *proclaiming* the constitution of the 7th Assembly on June 7th. This has never happened before. This is an indication that our democracy is maturing and our legislature is coming of age. I therefore want to congratulate you all on being part of this historic moment.

Before I proceed, I want to commend the leadership of the House for coming up with this workshop that brings both the outgoing, returning and incoming House members together to learn and share ideas about the art and science of legislative duties. I am particularly thrilled that the theme of this workshop: ***Keeping Ekiti Working through Responsible Legislation*** takes its inspiration from our philosophical mantra of making Ekiti work for all.

As you know, I understand the centrality of the legislature to the overall success of any administration. As many of you are aware, the first political office I ever held in this State was being the Special Assistant to Otunba Niyi Adebayo on Legislative Matters which made me to serve as the executive-legislature liaison. I am proud to have been the first to perform the role of a liaison between the Assembly and the Governor. I am therefore sufficiently knowledgeable about the crucial role of the legislature and more importantly, the significance of an aligned vision between the two arms of Government.

As an administration, we are committed to our Shared Prosperity Agenda and we are convinced that this agenda can only come to full realization through cooperative



engagement, shared understanding and collective effort. It is therefore a thing of joy for me that we are already on the same page in setting your legislative agenda.

As for the incoming legislators, I will want you to familiarize yourselves with the Government's Six Pillars which are the orbit around which our policies and programs revolve. Expectedly, our expenditure also focus around these pillars because they represent our strategic plan to fast-track our socioeconomic development. More importantly, as a Government that is religiously committed to participatory governance, you are in the best position to project your constituencies' area(s) of needs within the framework of the Pillars.

Accordingly, you need to strengthen your technical know-how on how to use legislative instrument for development purposes. As co-travelers in the Ekiti development journey, we need a symbiotic relationship that works for the development of our people. The legislator must therefore be sufficiently educated on the philosophical foundation of the Ekiti State development plans so as to be able to plug his/her constituency's need in the context of the plan. This is how enduring and purposeful policies are conceptualized and implemented.

As for us, we want to be deliberate, purposeful and strategic in our responses to our development agenda, we therefore, not only need you to exercise your legislative mandate of enacting law and over-sighting on us, we also want you to have robust intellectual faculty that is able to critically review, progressively project and competently provide solutions where necessary.

This is even so, because we have a House that is overwhelmingly, APC and the mandate that brings all of us here is that upon which we campaigned. We need to demonstrate common purpose and discipline of vision even as separate but interdependent arms of Government. We also expect the two (2) members from another political Party to perform their functions as opposition members constructively. The manifesto of our party as a welfarist-progressive leaning party must be vigorously pursued while we must remain connected to the people who gave us this mandate.

Today, we are faced with the challenges of insecurity, unemployment and poverty in our State, and we are committed to tackling this problem through a robust implementation of the six (6) pillars. We are very determined to partner with you to develop Ekiti State.



Just a couple of weeks ago, our effort to achieve one of the key ideas to drive job creation has received a boost with the federal government's approval of Ekiti Knowledge Zone (EKZ) as a Free Trade Zone. When it finally takes off, the Ekiti Knowledge Zone will be a combination of industrial, creative and technological estates, an innovative hub that will drive new jobs and opportunities for the talented ones to unleash their creative and innovative energy because it is a unique free trade zone and it is our dream that EKZ becomes our Silicon Valley in the nearest future. Already we are at different levels of engagements and discussions with investors and technical partners to actualize our dream of an "Orange Economy" in Ekiti State.

We therefore earnestly seek your support and cooperation as we pursue these critical pillars of our administration. We will, from time to time, have interactive session to deepen our knowledge and evaluate our progress as we go on.

In the meantime, let me appeal to all of us to remain committed and loyal to the party that brought us to power and to respect the people who are the owners of the mandate that we hold in trust. As legislators you bear more responsibility of constituency interaction, feedback channel and connectivity than any other government officials in the State. You, therefore, must make yourselves available and reachable to your people. This is very important because many of them know you have direct access to me and that they can reach me through you. It is important we stay connected at all time and that we are responsive to their needs and aspirations as much as we can meet them.

Finally, I want to thank you once again for the cooperation we have received so far and the exciting expectation of greater cooperation in the future. I wish you happy deliberation and preparation.

Than you all for listening and God bless.

Biodun Oyebanji

Governor

Ekiti State

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