

**BROADCAST DELIVERED BY THE GOVERNOR OF OGUN STATE,**  
**HIS EXCELLENCY, PRINCE DAPO ABIODUN MFR,**  
**AT THE 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF OGUN STATE,**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY, 2021**

*My dear people of Ogun State,*

On this day, 45 years ago, exactly 3rd of February, 1976, the then Military Head of State, Late General Muritala Ramat Muhammed, made a nationwide broadcast. It was a broadcast like no other, especially, for us in Ogun State. The import of that broadcast is that it acceded to our agitation for a unique identity. With the merger of two existing provinces comprising Remo, Ijebu, Yewa and Egba divisions, Ogun State was born. On behalf of your Government, I say a happy 45<sup>th</sup> birthday to our dear State and all of us, citizens and residents of Nigeria' s Gateway State.

2. Let me appreciate the contributions of our founding fathers and mothers whose efforts culminated in the creation of our dear State. Not all of them can be mentioned here. But I specially acknowledge that of the Chairman of the Panel that recommended the State for the

consideration of the Supreme Military Council, the late Justice Ayo Irikefe and his co-panelists. I also appreciate all others who in thoughts and deeds contributed to the making and sustenance of Ogun State in its present FORM.

3. I salute the patriotic zeal of all those Public Servants who transferred their services from the Old Western State to the then nascent Ogun State. But for their sacrifices, good faith and great passion, the State that we are so proud of, might just have been a mere geographical expression. Many of them had to commute daily from Ibadan to Abeokuta and back. In this class, the names of late Chief A.A.K. Degun, our pioneer Head of Service and his army of bureaucrats from Ibadan readily come to mind. Interestingly, they were mentored by another great son of Ogun State, Chief Simeon Adebo, who is acclaimed to be one of the fathers of the modern Nigerian Civil Service.

4. For their charity and foresight, let me put on record our deep sense of gratitude to all those who made available their private properties to accommodate the offices of the different Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and staff. I cannot but thank all my predecessors, the military governors, administrators as well as the democratically elected governors, their Deputies and Commissioners, who have had the good fortunes of steering the ship of our dear State from the then Lt. Col. Seidu Ayodele Balogun who had the distinction and responsibility of being the first person to administer the new born State. A solid foundation was laid on which all of us continued to build on. Brig. Gen. Harrison Eghagha (Rtd.), the second military Administrator continued with the tradition and facilitated the enabling environment for the effective take-off of the Democratic governance till October 1, 1979 when Chief Victor Olabisi Onabanjo was sworn as the first democratic Governor of our dear State. Governor Onabanjo, a renowned journalist, deepened the tradition of education especially in the area of implementing the free education policy of their party, the

Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). Brig. Gen. Oladipo Diya, the first indigene of the State to be appointed as military Governor strengthened social order and brought a sense of urgency to the development of our dear State. Col. Oladayo Popoola he also deepened the legacy he inherited from his predecessors. Col. Raji Rasaki despite being a military Administrator engendered inclusiveness by engaging stakeholders in the administration of the State. Navy Capt. Muhammed Lawal also did his bits and handed over to Navy Capt. Oladehinde Joseph, another Naval officer. Chief Olusegun Osoba, a renowned journalist, in his first coming, opened a new vista in the development of Ogun State. Akinrogun's tenure remains a reference point in rural development in the history of our dear State. Lt. Col. Daniel Akintonde also pushed the frontiers in the development of Ogun State before handing over to Group Capt. Sam Ewang. Ewang's tenure will be fondly remembered for the housing estate for workers aptly named after him, Sam Ewang Estate. Navy Com. Kayode Olofinmoyin took over and had the distinction of presiding over the transition that led to the next

democratic dispensation that ushered in Chief Olusegun Osoba's second coming which also marked another remarkable achievement in governance and delivery of democratic dividends. Otunba Gbenga Daniel took over and his tenure will be remembered for the rapid industrialisation and economic development especially blazing the trail of the increase in the Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) of the State. Senator Ibikunle Amosun, my immediate predecessor in office and the fourth civilian Governor of the State approached the task of governance with zeal and determination to consolidate the gains of the past and chart a course for further infrastructural development of our dear State. To all of you, once again, on behalf of the Government and the entire people of Ogun State, I say thank you.

5. Let me also say that the list of national icons in Nigeria is more or less that of who is who in Ogun State. Our sons and daughters continue to blaze the trail in all fields of human endeavour. If Ogun State continues to tower over and above her contemporaries, it is because we are standing on the shoulders of these giants. It is, as a matter of

fact, because of the solid foundation already laid for us by those giants that we are where and what we are today at the top of everything good in Nigeria.

These people gave their yesterday to give us the today that we are proud of. That is why, as a State and citizens, we will never toy with the efforts of our heroes.

6. We are proud that some of the people who are founding fathers and promoters of the new Ogun State are still around. Baba Oluneye Bisola Okuboyejo, who was then a Permanent Secretary, is still serving in the capacity of the Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council. Baba in his advanced age still serves the State with his heart and might. This should serve as inspiration to those of us, the younger generation, to work harder and more assiduously, in building a State we all desire and which those who would come after us, would be proud of.

7. My dear people of Ogun State, 45 years is no mean achievement in the historical development of any State: whether a sub-nationality

or a Nation. We should have rolled out the drums in celebration, but, we will not do that. This is not because of want of what to celebrate, but because of the need to adhere strictly to the prevention protocols against the COVID-19 pandemic. This celebration will be decidedly low-key.

8. With a humble beginning in 1976, our dear State has grown to become one of the most viable States in Nigeria. We have grown our internally generated revenue to become the first among States created at the same time with us. We are the fastest growing investment and commercial destination not only in Nigeria, but in the entire West-African sub-region, attracting one of the highest Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and local investments. We are the leading State in the production of limestone, granite, glass-sand, etc. This is corroborated by the records of the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in its 2019 report which states that Capital importation into Nigeria

amounted to 5.3billion US Dollars, and Ogun State ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> only behind Lagos and Abuja in the destination of these investments.

9. With only one University in 1982; the then Ogun State University, now Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), Ago-Iwoye, having just over 500 students, we have grown to become the education capital of Nigeria with 26 tertiary institutions. OOU alone now has over 50,000 students, offering graduate and post graduate courses in different fields of human endeavours.

10. With the commitment and doggedness of our people, we have become the biggest producer of cassava in Nigeria; the biggest producer of poultry in Nigeria; the biggest producer of rice in South-West of Nigeria; and, one of the biggest producers of other food and cash crops. This is not to forget that we are also the spiritual headquarters of Nigeria with almost all the denominations and societies of our religions having their headquarters in our dear State.

Who says Prayers are not answered in Ogun State? These are not just fiction. These are in the records of many reputable local and international organisations. These have also been acknowledged by various awards in the last one and half years marking the inception of our Administration.

11. My dear people of Ogun State, one cannot have this kind of inheritance and lay it to waste. As an Administration, **WE WILL NOT CONTENT OURSELVES AS PROUD INHERITORS OF THESE WORTHY LEGACIES. THE INHERITANCE ALSO IMPOSES A RESPONSIBILITY TO CREATE A BETTER FUTURE THAT COMING GENERATIONS WILL BE PROUD TO INHERIT.** We will continue to push the frontiers. This informs our unwavering commitment to the continued and successful implementation of our **ISEYA** mantra. This is the vehicle for the ***Building our Future Together*** Agenda. Our inter-related programme for ***Infrastructure; Social Welfare and Wellbeing; Education; Youth Development;*** and, ***Agriculture*** has continued to yield bountiful harvests.

At the micro economic level, many more of our people are living healthier and more prosperous lives. They are more economically empowered and have continued to contribute to the development of our dear State. At the macro-economic level, our dear Ogun State provides a more conducive atmosphere where existing investments continue to thrive and new investments are attracted. As a result, more jobs are created; poverty continues to dwindle; and by the grace of God, we have never had and will never have a food crisis because of our investment in food security.

12. In all, the people are happier. And, you will agree with me that this is in tandem with the supreme goal of the founding fathers of Ogun State. The first Military Governor of the State, then Lt. Colonel Seidu Ayodele Balogun, set the template in his maiden Address, said, and I quote, “***that\_the supreme goal..., broadly speaking, is to achieve the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people in this State***”. We keep raising the stakes, expanding these frontiers and there is no going back.

13. Our fair, just, inclusive, equitable, and adherence to the rule of law approach to governance has its origin in the wisdom and vision of our founding fathers. I hold it as a self-evident truth that despite all the problems faced by this country, Nigeria has a valuable asset: it's young people and their resilience. I will encourage our youths to seize the hour like their forbears and make the critical difference with their ideas and ideals. I call on our youths that this process of building our future together requires that they rise up to the challenge of their own time and be counted to do so in a positive way. By doing this, posterity will also be kind to them just as it is kind to the people that we now remember for giving us this State that we call our own.

14. As an individual and your Governor, let me restate my commitment that I proudly inherit the many projects and programmes of all my predecessors from inception of our dear State. I also appreciate the fact that I owe a sacred duty to the memories of those of them that are now late and to those of them who are still living to

deepen the legacies inherited from them. I also restate my commitment to lead the way in achieving this. It is because of this privilege that I have taken the mandate, with my heart and soul. Like Chief Obafemi Awolowo once said and I quote: **“Those of us placed in a position of leadership must be prepared to grasp the nettle if we unite in doing so, and if, in addition, we set a worthy example and a marat on pace in probity, unselfishness, and self-sacrifice, the people will follow all too readily in our footsteps”**. I and my team have internalised these prescriptions of our sage, Papa Awo, to achieve the Ogun State of our collective dream and blaze the trail of good governance in the comity of States in Nigeria.

15. Let us also use the occasion of the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our dear State to appeal to the rest of Nigerians. We must eschew all forms of violence and learn to live together. We must also appreciate that there can be no development in an atmosphere of insecurity. We must learn to manage our diversity and turn it into our strength.

There can never be a better lesson in the management of diversity as a source of strength than from us in Ogun State. With over 10 sub-ethnic groups, this diversity has been one of the major forces propelling the development of our dear State. We keep harnessing the strengths and potentials of these sub-ethnic groups for the general good of everyone. Today, Ogun State is the home to not just indigenes of our dear State, but people from diverse backgrounds all over the country and even to a lot of foreigners. Yes, I agree there may be reasons for us to disagree on certain issues of our essentials. But, we will only disagree to agree and move forward. We must not encourage those stoking the embers of violence for disintegration of our great Nation. A country where tribes and tongues may differ but stands in brotherhood is where unity in our diversity thrives. We all have duties, responsibilities and obligations to aid better understanding of our local and national realities. All we need to do is manage our differences effectively and efficiently and Nigeria will be greater.

16. My dear people of Ogun State, let me restate the commitment of our Administration to continue to deploy resources towards ensuring conducive environment for all our people to discover and nurture their potentials, irrespective of their age, gender, status and location. However, I am aware that I cannot do it all alone, not only with my team, which I am proud of, but, with every citizen and residents of Ogun State.

17. On this day of the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our dear State, therefore, I enjoin all of us to look back as proud inheritors of worthy legacies. We should even be more proud that we have continued to build together a viable future that is brighter than where we are coming from. On our part, we will continue to put Ogun State on the top amongst the comity of States in Nigeria. Although, no government can claim to possess all the wherewithal for development, but meaningful contributions and cooperation from our people will take our development strides into a higher pedestal. All we ask for is more

support, cooperation, collaboration and prayers towards the continued development of our dear State. I also use this opportunity to call on individuals and corporate organisations to continue to partner with us in the journey to building a viable future for our dear State.

18. As I end this address, I enjoin all our people that as we join in the celebration of our dear State at 45, we should continue to adhere strictly to the guidelines and protocols in the fight against COVID-19 at all the times.

19. Once again, on behalf of your Government, I wish all of us and our dear State a happy 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of creation of Ogun State. And, I pray that we have more prosperous years for us as individuals and as a State.

20. I thank you all for listening and God bless.

***Igbega Ipinle Ogun, Ajose gbogbo wa ni o!***

**Prince Dapo Abiodun, MFR**  
Governor of Ogun State, Nigeria  
Wednesday, 3rd February, 2021.