

## **Chairman's Goodwill Message**

It is a great honour to be delivering this keynote address and I will like to start by thanking God and acknowledging his presence; I will also like to acknowledge and welcome everyone present here today to celebrate with us.

Celebration some say is an outward expression of gratitude and that is exactly what we are doing here today as we all acknowledge that Iwa Ji is a show of gratitude for a good and safe planting season and a request for same or better in the coming year.

We in ICA have a lot to be grateful for in the last year as we went about our own planting and harvesting here in Aberdeen. Key amongst these things for which we are grateful are the intangible aspects of our assets which include our health and that of our various families as well as the peace and harmony that we have been blessed with as a group in ICA.

We are also very grateful for the very idea of ICA, this idea that has afforded us the great ability to focus on the things we have in common which is 95% of our make up as individual Igbo people, whilst at the same time sharing the other 5% of our makeup that we still have in common but are sometimes interpreted differently by average on lookers. This selfless and benevolent mind-set and appreciation of one another has been the bedrock for the amiable peace and harmony that has become a given in ICA. The said peace and harmony which was recognised and pursued as the most valuable asset to us as an organisation has in turn created the right and conducive environment for all the feats that has been achieved by the organisation despite the challenges in Aberdeen and back home in Nigeria for the best part of 2 years now.

The hard and trying times has gone a long way in showing what we are made of as an organisation. As an organisation we have been through a challenging time in the last year with the passing of our brother Divine and we have also been involved in numerous productive events and activities in that period; including but not limited to; playing a prominent role in the coordination of the Nigeria town hall in Aberdeen in conjunction with NIDO UK north and the Nigerian high commission in October 2015, membership review exercise, actualisation of the free Igbo class for our kids, support of the solidarity rally in Aberdeen by concerned Nigerians, business brainstorming event and most importantly doing our duty with pride following the passing of our brother Divine.

Despite all challenges we were able to deliver on all these activities and still find the time, effort and commitment to plan and execute this Iwa Ji in less than a month with a record budget; this is a mark of maturity and growth as an organisation all made possible due to the shared commitment and harmony in ICA for which we are grateful.

Let me please use this opportunity to specially appreciate the efforts of the events committee who made this and some of the other events and activities possible. They say that circumstance can never change a man rather it reveals him; you guys and many others in the various ICA committees have done very well. Every single ICA member has also shown what they are individually made of in their support of ICA activities and in supporting ICA's overriding objective of peace, harmony and unity through selfless sharing and giving of their time, opinion, support and other things of value for the benefit of all regardless. I will like to thank you all and encourage everyone to please endeavour to have fun and enjoy this day.

Obinna Ugwu (Okpolu Ibe Mkpa) BEng, MSc, MBA, CEng, MIMechE,  
ICA Chairman.