

*The President of Bowie State University,
Academic Deans, Provosts, and Directors of Programmes,
Members of Staff,
Students of this great university,
Friends of this university,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Governing Council, the senate, staff and students of Godfrey Okoye University, I thank you immensely for the invitation to visit your university and to attend this important meeting. The United States of America is not a place where you wake up one morning, rush to the airport and take a flight to travel. For some of us who have their roots deep in Africa and Europe, traveling to US brings memories of seeming endless distance and space, and needs some form of intensive psycho-somatic preparation. But as we say in my Igbo culture, a place is never far, where you have your friends and relations. The feeling of having many friends and trusted collaborators in this university has always made my journey to the US a joyful one. You can see how refreshed and happy I am being among my friends and colleagues in this university.

Sometime ago in 2013, I visited this university. The visit was to discuss our Memorandum of Understanding with this university, explore the opportunities we had and discuss ways of making the MoU very effective. Since the signing of the MoU, my international liaison office in Germany has continued to monitor the implementation of the MoU by noting activities involving my university and the Bowie State University. The office has also continued to report our collective activities to our European circle of friends and other partner universities.

A lot has happened between our universities since the signing of the MoU. During the first convocation of our university, Godfrey Okoye University, for instance, a formidable team of three professors from this university (Prof. Patricia Ramsey, Prof. George Ude and Prof. Cosmos Nwokeafor) represented the president and the entire university very well. Since that convocation Bowie State University has become a household word at Enugu, Southeast Nigeria.

In addition, since the signing of the MoU, Professor Dr. George Ude has embarked on a lot of researches with students and professors of Godfrey Okoye University, producing valuable results and thus placing Bowie State University and Godfrey Okoye University on the map of serious centers of research. The researches done on yam and tropical plants will continue to be

of tremendous benefit to our universities and mankind. Besides, students of BSU have also visited our university. I believe that the research visit by these students have opened their eyes to possibilities which Nigeria, as the biggest black nation in the world, offers for research. The variety of tropical plants and fish in Nigeria is second to none in the whole world. Students of BSU who went to different places with our students to collect data saw the Nigerian world of immeasurable possibilities and unquantifiable value.

Furthermore, BSU has participated in biannual international conferences on Biotechnology jointly organized by our university and National Biotechnology Centre in Abuja (Nigeria) and also made great contributions. Prof. Dr. George Acquah made great contributions during the last conference. Also our Mass Communication Department has benefitted a lot from the timely intervention of Prof. Dr. Cosmas Nwokefor whose advice and support for the growth of the department will never be forgotten in our university. Through his strong support our university radio, which supports the mass communication department, emerged this year the best campus radio in Nigeria.

I am glad also to note that Dr. Patricia Ramsey and Ms Tammi Thomas are coming to our university this year to offer their help in the improvement of our university administration.

As we can see a lot has happened in the last couple of years since the signing of our MoU. However, it appears that the MoU has not really been embraced by all the colleges in this university. I would appeal that the deans of other colleges should join the train of our collaboration which is certainly of tremendous benefit to our universities.

Let me say at this juncture that collaborating with Godfrey Okoye University will bring a lot of benefits to BSU. Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with a population of 180 million people. It is the biggest black country in the whole world. Historically such a setting should be of great interest to Bowie State University, which has its background and roots in the history of black Americans in the United States of America. Also collaborating with Godfrey Okoye University opens a large market for Bowie State University to market itself and get students from rich Nigerians who can afford to send their children overseas for studies. In addition, collaborating with Godfrey Okoye University will open a whole world of research areas for Bowie State University, which will make this university even more famous than it is now. Our students and professors are ready to work with your students and professors. Together we will achieve research results that are unimaginable in the world. I am glad that our

friend from the DNA Learning Centre in New York, Dave Miklos, who is also present on this occasion, is willing to assist us in the research. I would like to invite him after my speech to make an intervention.

To make our MoU even more effective, I would like to suggest the following:

1. That deans of other colleges should be encouraged to do joint research projects with their colleagues at Godfrey Okoye University.
2. That more students of BSU should be encouraged to visit Godfrey Okoye University for their research in collaboration with the professors and students of our university or take some lectures in areas jointly approved by our universities.
3. That students of Godfrey Okoye University who offer to study in this university should get a certain discount in fees.
4. That BSU should list its partner universities in its website, with a link to the websites of the partner university (if this does not exist). This will improve our visibility and web-ranking.

I would like to conclude this speech by thanking Mr. President for giving me the privilege of coming to this university and for supporting the collaboration of BSU and GO University. I thank you all for being present here today. May God bless you all!

Rev. Fr. Prof. Christian Anieke
Vice Chancellor