

Introduction

Homo proponit, sed Deus disponit!

"For the resolutions of the just depend rather on the grace of God than on their own wisdom; and in Him they always put their trust, whatever they take in hand. For man proposes, but God disposes; neither is the way of man in his own hands" – Thomas À Kempis (A devotion written in Latin)

A Minute's ROUND OF APPLAUSE for the victims of the DANA Air Disaster.

Welcome Address

Good evening distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen. On behalf of The Oxford and Cambridge Club of Nigeria, it is an honour, and indeed a pleasure, to welcome you to the May Ball holden today, Saturday 9 June 2012.

As is customary, I also welcome you to the May Ball on behalf of our Grand Patron, The Oba of Benin HRH Oba Erediauwa (King's College, Cambridge).

(i) Dignitaries

It is with great privilege to welcome all our guests tonight. In particular, I welcome our Special Guest and

his beautiful wife: a man who started life in the Weald of Kent, spent time in Ajegunle and now resides at the Edifice on Marina, Lagos - My Lord Spiritual, The Very Reverend Pelu Johnson, Provost of the Cathedral Church of Christ, Lagos.

(ii) Past Presidents

Although the education afforded at the Universities tend to lend itself to a more egalitarian society, the maxim *Primus Inter Pares* is also equally true - I am indeed also honoured and privileged to welcome in our midst my predecessors in office present here today.

(iii) ExCo

Any Leader must also have a good team to work with. I welcome all those who have served our Club over the years in various capacities

a. Past – of particular note must be the ExCo of 2006 to 2010 and I extend a special welcome to (VP) Mr Dele Martins - Trinity, Cambridge and (Hon. Secretary) Ms Funke Adeyemi – Churchill College, Cambridge

b. Present – to my team, Sir Chris (as I fondly refer to him), Dapo, [Uche], Bayo, [Michael], Inewari and Jumoke - I welcome each of you present to this Event

(iv) Members

Without the Members, put simply, there is no Club! We have seen a significant increase in Member engagement over the last few months and, on behalf of the ExCo, I warmly welcome each Member here present to this May Ball.

(v) May Ball Committee

To the May Ball Committee, chaired by Mr Uche Okoli, I Welcome each of you to your event and also take this opportunity (contrary to convention) to thank you, on behalf of the Club, for delivering what we hope, will certainly be a most wonderful evening.

Our Club

The Oxford and Cambridge Club of Nigeria welcomes all persons who have attended either the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge and are Nigerian or living in Nigeria.

Our Club must strive to have a Leadership role within Society. We must demonstrate good leadership and governance throughout in our endeavours. We must:

- i) Lead and not be Led;
- ii) be Visionary and not simply pursue our own personal Ambition

iii) Serve and not wait to be Served!

However, for this evening, I guess there are two ways in describing what the Club stands for – intellectual stimulation (by way of our Oxbridge Lecture series and the Spring Lecture) and copious libations (May Ball)! We are here tonight to enjoy the best of latter!

May Ball 2012

For our guests (and perhaps, some Members), you are no doubt asking yourself why are we having this event in June when it is called a May Ball? Simple, **Tradition** - as you well know, Oxford and Cambridge is steeped in tradition. [May Balls are held at the Colleges to coincide with the end of the academic year, which used to be in or around the third week of May. In recent times however, these annual events typically hold in June (after the exams) and are very much a formal affair with a strict dress codeno difference tonight I see!]

The May Ball is often themed by the majority of the Colleges in order to add flavour and character to the event. You will therefore not be surprised to hear that we have done the same tonight. The theme for this year's May Ball is the "Diamond Jubilee" to commemorate 60 years of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the British throne. This is a once in a life time experience being only the second Diamond Jubilee in

British history and even the most righteous is unlikely to see another one!

The May Ball Committee has ensured that no stones are left unturned. From the rendition of the British National Anthem (in addition to our Beloved Country's) to the detail in the Programme in front of you – you will also note that many of the dishes on the Menu tonight were indeed first served at the banquet of the Coronation of Her Majesty in 1953!

There is also entertainment throughout the Evening. In addition to the Band, Dominant Sound, we shall take you on a journey meandering from classical music by the 3 Baritones, Ball Room Dancing by Bunmi Olunloyo (Bailamos) and Contemporary Music by Sésu, Robinson College, Cambridge.

End

I hope The May Ball Committee has done enough to whet your appetite. Without further ado, I urge you to sit back, relax and enjoy the night!

THANK YOU