Solidarity Message!

The President, on behalf of the Council and entire Members of the Nigerian Library Association wishes to Congratulate the President, C-in-C of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

DR. GOODLUCK EBELE JONATHAN, GCFR
on his inauguration as the 4th EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA.
The NLA identifies with the ideals of your government and wishes you well as you move Nigeria to recapture her lost glories.

DA Omokaro (PRO)
For: Executive and Council
Fellow professional colleagues, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the January - June 2010 issue of your highly informative and refreshing Newsletter. We entered the year with mixed feelings but with high hopes and expectations for a fruitful 2010. Talking about 2010, the year is the 50th Independence Anniversary for Nigeria and the 48th Conference and Annual General Meeting of your Association. It is also an Election year for the NLA. Welcome to 2010 and may the Lord grant you your hearts desires. This is also my last editorial brief as your Editor-in-Chief and PRO. The activities reported in this issue are mostly those that took place between January and June 2010. The Executive Committee and Council held their first meeting for the year in Benin city, Edo State in January. The NLA held its workshop in Kaduna in April and the Executive Committee also held their second meeting in May here in Abuja. In between these meetings, the Conference LOC under the Chairmanship of the 1st Vice President, Alhaji Rilwanu Abdulsalami has been meeting to give you a befitting Conference/AGM in July, 2010. The President, Ms Victoria Okojie has also committed herself to leaving lasting legacies for the NLA as she bows out of office at this Conference.

On May 5th 2010, the LIS profession in Nigeria lost a great supporter and friend of Librarians in the person of President Umar Musa Yar’Adua after a protracted illness. President Yar’Adua was the President that gave LRCN life again by approving a budget for the Agency and appointing an acting Registrar. The commitment and love President Yar’Adua had for reading and the knowledge art is what informed his resuscitation of the LRCN. We shall miss him dearly, we have solace in the fact that the new President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR is also a “knowledge” man and we wish him well. May I use this forum to console the President, Executive Committee, Council and members of the Nigerian Library Association and Nigerians at large on the death of this great and illustrious son of Africa, President Umar Musa Yar’Adua. May the good Lord give the family the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.

Talking about LRCN, we posted a response to all the questions and issues raised concerning the relationship between the Association and the Agency on the NLA on-line forum so as to avoid any further distortion of the truth with a view to eliminating rancor of any kind from amongst our members. The response is published here again for your necessary information and record.

We are looking at surpassing the Ibadan record of the most attended Conference/AGM at Abuja in July, so we expect you to be in Abuja for the 48th Conference/AGM holding at the nation’s premier Conference venue and a must be venue for all Nigerians coming to Abuja for any Conference.

It is however sad to announce again that as we were going to press, we heard of the sad news of the demise of one of the pioneers of Government Libraries in Nigeria, Chief Odumosu and two other colleagues from Kwara State Chapter who died in a ghastly motor accident on their way back from the maiden conference of the Medical Librarians section held in Enugu. We pray that their souls have a peaceful rest with the Lord. We also pray that the good Lord will grant their families the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.

In conclusion, I want to thank every one of you for giving me the opportunity to serve you as your National Publicity Secretary and Editor-in-Chief of your Newsletter since 2005. I will urge you to extend the same arm of support to the person taking over from me as I look forward to serving you in another capacity. Do have a blissful reading experience.

Dominic Omokaro
Editor-in-Chief
INTRODUCTION

Once again, I count it a rare privilege and honour to write the introduction to the NLA Newsletter for the last time as President of our great Association. I consider this medium auspicious, as I seek your indulgence, to provide a brief on my career as a librarian.

To sum up my career progression, I graduated with a Master of Library Studies degree from the University of Ibadan, Ibadan in 1983 after my first degree in Education (Geog) from the University of Benin in 1980 as well as a Masters degree in Geography from the University of Ibadan in 1991. My working career began in August 1984 at the Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan. In 1992, I became the first Nigerian to be appointed Area Director of the British Council, Ibadan, with responsibility for South Western Nigeria (except Lagos) and worked there till 2002. Shortly after, I moved into full time consultancy work in the Library and Information sector, with organizations such as the World Bank, DFID and the British Council being my main clients. In October, 2009, I was appointed the pioneer Acting Registrar of the Librarians’ Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN), a position which I hold to date. I am a Fellow of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning; the United States of America State Department International Visitors Leadership Program and have served on the Advisory Committee of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Access to Learning Award. I am also a Member of the Board of the National Library of Nigeria and a Trustee of the Nigerian International Book Fair Trust.

My interest in serving the Association was kindled in 1985 when I joined the Nigerian Library Association (NLA), through the Oyo State Chapter and was elected the University Representative (1985-1987) under the Chairmanship of Mr. Felix Ubugu. Since then, I have served in various capacities, including the Secretary, Oyo State Chapter (1987-1989); Chairman, Oyo State Chapter (1993-1996); National Councillor (1997-1999); Vice President (2000-2005) and finally as National President (2005-2010). Indeed, in the 26-year span of my career in librarianship, I have served in the Executive Committee of the NLA, either at the State or National level for about 19 years! In addition, I have chaired every Standing Committee of the Association, including the Constitution Review Committee; Communiqué/Resolutions Committee; Conference Hosting Rights Committee; Committee on Drawing up Criteria for various NLA Awards; Awards Committee; the Committee on Drawing up the Guidelines for Maintaining Discipline within the Profession and the Local Organising Committee of the National Conference held in Ibadan, ‘Oluvo 96’. Furthermore, I served as the Chief Orator of the Association by writing and reading the citations of awardees for many years. At the international level, I have served as a member of each of the Standing Committees of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), Public Libraries Section and Africa Section. At present, I am the Secretary of IFLA, Africa Section as well as the Secretary, West African Library Association (WALA).

In recognition of my service to the Association, I have received the following Awards:
i. Award for Excellence in Librarianship by NLA Oyo State Chapter 1998  
ii. Eminent Service Award by NLA Oyo State Chapter 2000  
iii. Fellow, Nigerian Library Association (FNLA) 2005  
iv. Award for Excellence in Librarianship by NLA Oyo State Chapter 2007  
v. NLA Anambra State Chapter Award 2008  
vi. Award of Honour for Immense Contributions to the Upliftment 2010 of the NLA by Chief Executives of Library Boards in Nigeria  
vii. Presidential Merit Award for Excellence as Ambassador of the year 1999 By the Student Union Government, The Polytechnic, Ibadan  
I established the first “Librarian of the Year” Award in Oyo State in 1993.  

As a valedictory piece for this newsletter, I write with great nostalgia, a piece that gives an insight into my achievements and challenges as the helmsman of our great Association in the last five years and offers a few words of advice as the Association moves into the future.  

Through your mandate, which was unanimously vested on me, I was elected the 17th President of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) on 11 July, 2005 at the June 12 Cultural Centre, Abeokuta, Ogun State, thus becoming the first woman to be so elected in 38 years and, the second female President in the history of the Association (the first female President, Professor (Mrs.) Adetoun Ogunsheyi, held office from 1967-1970, during the Nigerian civil war). Consequently, I was under great pressure to succeed and surpass the achievements made by my predecessors in order to pave the way for other women who may have the ambition to become President of the Association.  

It was against this backdrop that I adopted the themes: “Building New Frontiers for Librarians and Librarianship” for my first term (2005-2007) and “Libraries on the Agenda” for my second and final term (2007-2010). In these five years, with the support of other elected colleagues and with the cooperation of members, I focused on these themes by working through the underlisted five key sub-themes:  
i. Building New Frontiers/Partnerships at local, national and international levels  
ii. Expanding the Financial Base of the Association & development of structures and relevant policies  
iii. Capacity Building/Continuing Professional Development, especially in the use of ICTs  
v. Publicity, Advocacy and Lobbying  
v. Education and Training  

ACHIEVEMENTS  

It is gratifying to give a highlight of the modest achievements of the Executive Committee (EXCO) under my Presidency during this period as follows:  

1. **NLA House:** After 47 years, the first house was purchased for the Association in January, 2009 in Abuja, FCT, Nigeria at a cost of over N18.5 million (about US $125,000). The house, named ‘**NIGERIAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION HOUSE**’ may eventually serve as the permanent National Secretariat of the Association.  

2. **Parcel of Land For The NLA:** After 44 yrs, the first parcel of land was purchased for the Association in 2006, at New Karu, Nassarawa State with about N600,000 (about US $5,000) as an investment for the NLA. Although the land has not been developed, it is cheering to mention that its current market value has increased by over 100% of its original value.  

3. **NLA Car:** For the first time, the Association purchased an official car for the President at about N1.3 million (about US $11,000) in 2007. This necessitated employing a full time driver for the Association.  

4. **Librarians’ Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN):** This regulatory body was established in 1995 through an enabling decree (Decree 12 of 1995). Through conscientious advocacy and lobbying, the NLA succeeded in ensuring that the LRCN was established as a fully functional parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Education with the appointment of an Acting Registrar in October, 2009. The NLA had stepped up its advocacy to ensure the inclusion of the LRCN in the 2009 budget of the Federal Government of Nigeria and the appointment of a Registrar, as the non-existence of these structures had hindered the smooth running of the LRCN since it was established in 1995. The LRCN Application Form and the application procedure have been uploaded on the NLA Website (www.nla-ng.org) since 2008 and can be downloaded and printed.
5. **Improved Finances**: I took over office as President in 2005 with about N5million in the purse of the Association. I am happy to state that as we leave office in 2010, the value of the Association’s investments has increased exponentially to over N45million, in addition to about N10million in cash. **This is an increase of over 1000%!** With a great sense of modesty, I make bold to say that this achievement is unprecedented in the history of the Association. How was this achieved? Considerable time and effort were spent to put more effective and efficient systems in place in order to maximise the resources of the Association. Donations in cash and kind were actively sought such that the Association made between two million naira and six million naira annually, mainly from book publishers, booksellers, banks, library ICT vendors and international agencies. Other sources of revenue included training programmes regularly mounted by the Association (sometimes in collaboration with the Private Sector), investment in the capital market and landed property, and increased participation in the Association’s conferences and other activities.

6. **Improved Quality of National Conference**: In the two-term tenure lasting five years, the quality of the annual National Conference improved in many ways. For the first time: each delegate received a CD copy of the conference proceedings; lunch was provided free-of-charge to delegates; the conference compendium was uploaded on the NLA Website, such that it could be accessed globally and, payment of conference registration fees through banks and via online was introduced. No doubt, these initiatives led to a progressive increase by over 100% in the number of conference delegates in comparison to the preceding periods. The annual National Conference has also attracted more foreign delegates and foreign exhibitors in the last five years.

7. **Improved Management of the Association**: With the expanding activities of the Association, EXCO decided to set up various committees for ease of coordination and to enhance efficiency. The committee system made the management of the Association more inclusive, thereby enabling more ideas to be generated for the benefit of the Association. The committees that were set up included: Library & Information School Curriculum Review/Accreditation; Library Minimum Standards/Guidelines; Media/Advocacy; Database Management/Website Management; Occasional Publications; Investment/Fundraising, and Continuing Professional Development/Capacity Building. Most of the committees are at various stages of rounding up their work. In addition, an online mentoring programme (nlanewlibrarian@yahoogroups.com) was developed for young Library and Information Professionals (yLIPs). Furthermore, the NLA Secretariat was better equipped to enhance productivity through the purchase of a good quality photocopier, public address system, voice recorder, office furniture, equipment and stationery, UPS, colour printer and scanner, as well as two flat-screen computers and a printer donated by the US Embassy.

8. **Review of LIS Curriculum in Nigeria**: The NLA set up a committee in 2008 to review the curriculum of Library, Archival and Information Studies schools in Nigeria, with a view to making it more relevant to the needs of 21st century Nigeria. The curriculum has been reviewed and the process of engaging with all library schools in Nigeria to adopt the new curriculum and, to further work with the National Universities Commission to use it as an accreditation tool are in progress.

9. **Resuscitation of Dormant State Chapters**: Within the five years, we were able to resuscitate all the dormant State Chapters of the NLA (about 10 State Chapters). We now have chapters in the 36 states and Abuja up and running. This feat was achieved through the collaborative efforts of many colleagues.

10. **NLA Publications**: The NLA Newsletter and the NLA journal, *Nigerian Libraries*, are both current and widely distributed among all paid-up members of the Association. The NLA Newsletter, Conference Compendium and Constitution were all uploaded on the NLA Website during our tenure.

11. **Advocacy and Lobbying**: In the period under review, the NLA successfully advocated for the replacement of two of the three non-librarians, who were employed as Directors of State Library Boards, with librarians. In addition, the NLA was instrumental to the inclusion of the LRCN in the 2009 Appropriation Act and the Appointment of an Acting Registrar in 2009 thereby ensuring that the LRCN became a fully functional parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Education.

12. **Increased Publicity**: Publicity of the
Association’s activities increased significantly during our tenure. To this end, the NLA President and EXCO paid courtesy calls to the Director-General, Nigerian Television Authority; Chairman, Education Trust Fund; Executive Secretary, Universal Basic Education Commission and have been featured on NTA, AIT, FRCN, Aso Radio and other mass media several times. Many national newspapers published reports on the last conference and have continued to feature articles on the library and information sector. For instance, the Association was one of the organisations that placed advertorials in the Daily Trust newspaper to commiserate with the nation on the death of the immediate past President, Late Umaru Musa Yar’Adua, GCFFR and to congratulate HE, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFFR after being sworn in as the new President. However, in realisation of the fact that a lot more still needed to be done to increase the visibility of the LIS profession in Nigeria, the NLA instituted the “Nigerian Library Association Award for Outstanding Journalist in the Library and Information Sector” in 2010. The main objective of the Award is to stimulate journalists to focus more on the development and key issues in the LIS sector in Nigeria, thereby increasing the volume of reports on the LIS sector. The Association commissioned a Radio/TV Jingle which is aired in the media as a readership promotion campaign strategy.

13. New Awards/Grants/Section: During the period under review, seven new Awards/Grants were instituted. They are: the ‘Dr. James O. Daniel Award for the Most Innovative ICT-based Library Project’ in 2006; the ’Dr. T. M. Spilisu Award for the Most Published Librarian’ in 2008, the ‘Young Library and Information Professionals Award’ in 2006 instituted by the NLA to support young librarians with less than five years experience to attend the national conference, the Dr. (Mrs). Rose Bini Okiy Award for the ‘Most Innovative Librarian in the Use of Information for the Creation of Awareness of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic’ in 2009; the Professor Matthew Ajiboro ‘Award for the Best PhD Dissertation in Nigerian Library Schools’ in 2010 and the ‘Nigerian Library Association Award for Outstanding Journalist in the Library and Information Sector’ instituted by the Nigerian Library Association in 2010. The President also instituted an Award for librarians who publicize the Association the most in 2010. Also, the Dr. Ghaji Badawi Conference Grant was instituted to support Library and Information Science undergraduate students to attend the national conference from 2008 to 2010. Furthermore, in 2009, a new Section, the Medical Librarians Section was established to bring the number of Sections in the NLA to thirteen.

14. Capacity Building Programmes: It is remarkable to report that many capacity building programmes took place during the period covered. The Association has reached the level where it now organises at least two national workshops yearly and ten Sections hold regular annual workshops. Many other training programmes are held in collaboration with private sector enterprises, international agencies, institutions and professional groups on fee basis. Our national workshops have been turned around to become profit-making programmes, accruing profit of about three million naira annually. We have collaborated with: the Mortenson Centre, University of Illinois, USA on a workshop on Proposal Writing, Fundraising & Grant Seeking; the American Embassy to run a video conference with colleagues in the USA on Resource Sharing; Goethe Institut on Advocacy, Lobbying and Fundraising; Nelifibrary and SABINET, South Africa on e-Resources in Libraries; IFAP NATCOM UNESCO on Information Literacy; IFLA FAIFE Section on Intellectual Property, Internet Manifesto and HIV/AIDS Information Provision workshops, eIFL.net on Open Access and Institutional Repositories, etc. Many State Chapters have followed suit to use the platform of their Annual General Meetings to run Continuing Professional Development programmes for the benefit of their members.

15. Building New Frontiers/Partnerships at Local, National and International Levels: During the five years of our stewardship, efforts were made to collaborate with various partners and put the NLA on a sound footing on the international scene. Forging strong partnerships and increasing our finances are notable areas in which the most significant strides were taken by my administration. Some of the new partnerships we cultivated and built are listed below:

i. For the first time, a Nigerian, the NLA President was appointed a member of the Advisory Committee of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Access to Learning Award in 2006. This qualified her to get full sponsorship to the 2006 IFLA Conference in South Korea from the Foundation and gave the opportunity to raise awareness on the criteria for the Award to public libraries in Nigeria.
ii. The NLA President was also supported by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Addis Ababa to attend a Post-WSIS workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in March, 2006.

iii. The President was appointed a member of the Planning Committee of the Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning Colloquium organized by IFLA Africa Section & UNECA. (The planning meeting held in Pretoria, South Africa in 2006 was supported by the National Library of South Africa). Five Nigerians participated in the colloquium held in Addis Ababa in April, 2007.

iv. Also, for the first time, the NLA facilitated the participation of librarians in Nigeria in the Professional Development Programme of UNESCO. The President and two other librarians were sponsored by UNESCO to meet with the Information For All Programme (IFAP) Committee in Paris, France in June 2007.

v. The President was awarded a three month Fellowship to the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Hamburg, Germany from October to December, 2007.

vi. The President was sponsored to tour Emerald Publishers, UK office in October 2007. This led to the establishment of the 'Welcome to Library School Programme' which enabled library school students and faculty taking a course in Collection Development to access Emerald journals for the period of the course. Four Nigerian library schools and six others from Africa were nominated to participate in the pilot programme.

vii. The President was sponsored to participate in an IFLA FAIFE workshop on Internet Manifesto and the Provision of HIV/AIDS information in Connecticut, USA in November, 2007. Only nine participants from all over the world attended the workshop.

viii. The President participated in the United States of America State Department International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP) which involved a tour of libraries in the US, including attendance of the American Library Association Conference in June, 2008. About ten librarians have benefited from the programme since her assumption of office as President in 2005.

ix. The President was sponsored by the Goethe Institut to attend a follow-up workshop on ‘Libraries as Gateways to Information and Democracy: Improving Networking, Advocacy and Lobbying Strategies’ in Johannesburg, South Africa in November 2008.

x. The President was one of the 11 participants sponsored to attend a workshop to draft a manual on learning materials on the ‘ILFA Manifesto on Transparency, Good Governance and Freedom from Corruption’ in Karlsruhe, Germany in December, 2008.

xi. The President was sponsored by IFLA Africa Section to attend a workshop on “the Role of Libraries in the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)” in Accra, Ghana in June, 2009.

xii. The President was sponsored to attend the First International Conference on Digital Libraries in Africa (ICADLA) in UNECA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia with five other Nigerians in July, 2009.

xiii. The President was sponsored by IFLA HQ to participate in the pilot workshop on “Strengthening National Library Associations” in Gaborone, Botswana in September, 2009.

xiv. The President was sponsored by IFLA Africa Section as a Resource Person at a workshop on “the Role of Libraries in the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)” in Pretoria, South Africa in October, 2009.

xv. The President was sponsored by the South African government as a Guest Speaker at the National Conference of the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) in Bloemfontein, South Africa in October, 2009.

xvi. The President was sponsored by IFLA HQ to attend the IFLA Africa Section Mid-Term meeting and the IFLA President’s “Colloquium on Open Access to
Information Resources” in Cape Town, South Africa in February, 2010.

xvii. The President was elected a member of the Standing Committee of IFLA Public Libraries Section, 2005-2009.

xviii. The President was elected a member of the Standing Committee of IFLA Africa Section, 2007-2011.

xix. The President was elected Secretary of IFLA Africa Section in August, 2009.

xx. The President was appointed a Board Member of National Library of Nigeria and Board Member, Nigerian International Book Fair Trust; 2005-2009.

xxi. The President facilitated the adoption of Nigeria as one of the few African countries where IFLA FAIFE projects were piloted. The FAIFE project on ‘Provision of HIV/AIDS Information’ which was started in 2009 in Nigeria is on-going.

xxii. The immediate Past President was elected Secretary of the Africa Section from August, 2007-August, 2009.

xxiii. The 1st Vice President was appointed the Country Representative for the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications.

CHALLENGES

All the enumerated achievements were not recorded without accompanying challenges! One of the key challenges we faced was the apathy of librarians towards the Association and the profession in general. By the time my EXCO came on board in July 2005, only about 8% of the estimated 5000 librarians in Nigeria attended the annual National Conference while about 16% paid their annual membership dues. As we leave office after five years, these numbers have increased to 20% and 40% respectively (an increment of over 100%). With such low level of interest and participation in the Association’s activities, it is imperative that the Association will find it more difficult to attain its full potentials and may be less able to compete favourably with other professional Associations.

Perhaps, the greatest challenge I faced was that most librarians were largely ignorant of how the Association functions and did not take the time to get informed by reading/understanding the Constitution. This put a lot of stress on the President and the Executive Committee to enlighten members, leading sometimes to a misunderstanding of the motives and decisions of the President, EXCO and Council. This issue which remains a great concern to me is one of the reasons why a session on “Management of the Library Associations: a case study of the Nigerian Library Association” was included in the 2010 conference programme.

Also, limited finances constituted another challenge. Some of the programmes that could have been hosted did not hold because of lack of funds. For instance, we could have had more capacity building programmes, employed more experienced staff to manage the Secretariat, engaged in more publicity, etc, etc if we had adequate funds.

Furthermore, another challenge experienced was that the concept of volunteerism (working without pay) has not taken deep roots among LIS professionals in Nigeria. It is worthy of mention that all members of the Executive Committee, including the President, render their stewardship to the Association on voluntary basis and without any payment. The implication is the tendency for the Association’s work to be put in the back burner while their full time paid employment takes priority, especially because most members of the Executive Committee hold management positions in their respective work places. Even, when the Committee system was used, most of the committees were largely non-functional. All of these put a lot of pressure on the President to devise other strategies to drive the activities of the Association successfully.

In addition, although the Association employs a full time National Secretary to manage the Secretariat, however, because the job is not pensionable and the career path is not streamlined, the position does not attract experienced librarians. Also, since the Association may not be able to afford paying the wages of more experienced staff, it usually employs staff with less than six years experience. This implies that, in reality, the President has to do more hands-on supervision and do a lot more work, thereby mounting undue pressure on the time of the President.

The low level of recognition of the Library and Information profession by the Nigerian government and the public in general is a key challenge. Consequently,
PIX OF THE IBADAN CONFERENCE

Dinner at Ibadan

The PRO with 2nd Vice President

Dignitaries at the Ibadan Conference

Delegates at the Ibadan Conference

Delegates at the Ibadan Conference

FCT Contingent at the Ibadan Conference
PIX OF THE IBADAN CONFERENCE

Delegates at the Ibadan Conference

The President Digging it on the dance floor

Prof. Aina and Mr & Mrs Sam Eyitayo

Delegates at the Ibadan Conference

A Foreign Exhibitor at the Ibadan Conference

Venue of the Council Meeting at Ibadan
The Association has many issues to advocate on, thereby dissipating energy on so many fronts whereas the manpower to achieve concrete results is limited. Issues that we have had to advocate on include: using non-professionals as Directors of State Library Boards; inclusion of libraries as a key aspect of government reform agenda; adoption of the Freedom of Information Bill; development and implementation of policies that promote increased funding of libraries, etc.

Another very subtle but very critical challenge is the fact that there are no reliable statistics and data available for efficient and effective planning. This makes organisation of activities very difficult and their implementation, cumbersome. For instance, it is impossible to estimate the number of people who would attend the national conference because most delegates do not respond to the call for pre-conference registration, even when consideration was given for a reduced fee for ‘early birds’. Also, despite the encouragement to pay into the Association’s account prior to the conference and provision for online registration, delegates prefer to bring cash to register at the conference venue; perhaps because Nigeria still largely runs a cash economy. The implications of inadequate planning attributed mostly to the lack of accurate data and dearth of better statistics in slowing down the pace of NLA activities cannot be over-emphasized.

In spite of these daunting challenges, the many landmark achievements recorded are humbling and I wish to state unequivocally, that being the President of the Nigerian Library Association was a very gratifying and fulfilling experience for me.

APPRECIATION

I would like to express my profound appreciation to Almighty God without whom I could not have achieved anything in the last five years. Space would not permit me to mention all those who have contributed in great measure to the success of the current EXCO. Suffice to say that “I Am Because We Are”. However, I would like to single out for mention the following colleagues:

- Members of the Executive Committee for standing by me through thick and thin. They are: Alh. Rilwanu Abdulsalami; Dr. Mrs. Rose Okiy; Dr. James Daniel; Mr. Toyin Dina; Mrs. Gloria Matthew, Mr. Dominic Omokoro; Prof. Matthew Ajiboro, Prof. Zakari Mohammed and Ms. Tina Ogbonna. I particularly appreciate the National Secretaries who worked with me at different times: Ms. Anna Egoh and Ms. Omoh Atsenokhai; the drivers Mr. Usman Haruna and Mr. Wambai Shedul and, the LRCN staff, Mr. Daniel Ligie, Mrs. Lydia Ogedegbe and Mr. Nnamdi Ozoemen for their commitment and hard work.

- I thank all members of Council who served with me in the last five years and shaped the activities of the Association through robust debates that led to the enactment of sound policies for the Association.

- Mr. Sam Eyitayo, Mr. Ayo Onatola, Mrs. Ucha Mbofung, Mr. Bayo Oyegade, Liz Akinbolumo, Mr. Ezra Gbaje and Mr. Abraham Azubuike who volunteered to join my Think Tank and remained committed throughout the period.

- State Chapter Chairmen, my classmates (UI MLS Class of 1983), other librarians and friends too numerous to mention, who took time to encourage and reassure me of their support at all times.

- Prof (Mrs) Iyabo Mabawonku, Prof. Zakari Mohammed and Dr. (Mrs) Nancy Achebe who
reviewed the conference papers free-of-charge.

- Senior colleagues, Mr. Gboyeaga Banjo, Mr. M. O. Afolabi, Elder M. S. Onye, Dr. James Daniel, Dr. Linus Ikpaahindhi, Prof. & Dr. (Mrs) Sam Ifidon, Prof. Bunmi Alegebeleye, Prof. Morayo Atinmo, Mr. Henry Mendelsohn of the US Embassy, Mrs. Chinwe Agbakoba, Mr. Felix Ubogu; Prof. D. Elatuori, Barr. C. Onobunne, Mr. Tunji Okegbola, Prof. Olu Olat Lawal, Dr. (Mrs) Blessing Ahiauzu, Prof. Umar Ibrahim, Dr. Sam Jimba, Mrs. Taiye Odeyemi, Mr. John Nwogu, Mr. Joe Anafulu, Mr. Danladi Garba, Dr. Barbara Jones, Mrs. Martha Speirs, etc who gave words of wisdom and advice throughout my tenure.

- All Past Presidents of the Nigerian Library Association, especially the immediate past President, for providing the solid foundation on which I built.

- The Chairmen and members of Abuja, Akwa Ibom, Edo, Enugu, Imo, Kaduna, Kogi and Oyo State Chapters for successfully hosting our Council Meetings and National Conferences.

- Members of all the different sub-committees of the NLA, too numerous to mention, for their hard work and commitment.

- All our sponsors and partners over the years: The list includes: US Embassy; Mortenson Centre, University of Illinois, USA; Nigeria Delegation, UNESCO, Paris; UNCA; IFLA Africa Section; IFLA FAIFE; Goethe Institut; eIFL.net; ECOWAS, MDGs office, Nigeria; Microsoft; NetLibrary Nig. Ltd; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Wesleyan University, USA; Publishers & Booksellers (H.E.B.N., Spectrum, Mosuro the Booksellers, Havilah, UPL, Evans, The Book Company, Mafix books, Consolidated Books, EBSCO host, Non-COCL, etc); Library Software Vendors (Beram, LISS); iCML Zenith Bank; etc, etc.

- My friends Robo Orekoya, Wunmi Segun and Tolani Mosuro who worked with me on my original campaign document and have continued to be pillars of support even at great personal inconvenience.

- Members of my family who were turned into ‘professional librarians’ overnight and who stood solidly by me in prayers.

- Finally, I thank all colleagues in general, great librarians, you have all been wonderful!

If there are names of individuals or groups that I have omitted on this list, please forgive me; it was not deliberate but sincerely due to human error.

My esteemed colleagues, if in the course of serving you as President in these five years, I have offended anybody or stepped on any toe, I sincerely apologise and ask for forgiveness. Rest assured that all I did throughout my tenure as President was in my conviction that I was serving the best interest of the Association. However, I recognise that I do not have a monopoly of knowledge and therefore, I accept full responsibility for all lapses during my tenure.

Finally, let me congratulate the in-coming President and members of the Executive Committee. A lot more work remains to be done. This involves harnessing the work of the various committees already set up; doing more advocacy work; and giving more publicity to the activities of the Association. The NLA needs to become the main voice of the profession and engage more with both the government (by partnering with the LRCN and the NLN) and the public on topical issues. I believe the new Executive Committee will find the new assignment challenging and hope that they will find the onerous task ahead as fulfilling as I have.

Thank you and God bless you all.

Long Live the Nigerian Library Association!!!

Ms. Victoria Okojie, FNLA, CLN
President, Nigerian Library Association, 2005-2010

Ag. Registrar, Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria, 2009-
Secretary, IFLA Africa Section, 2009-
Secretary, West African Library Association, 2005-
Board Member, National Library of Nigeria, 2005-
Board Member, Nigerian International Book Fair, 2005-
Member, Standing Committee, IFLA Public Libraries Section, 2005-2009
Member, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Access to Learning Award Advisory Committee, 2006
Fellow, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Hamburg, Germany, 2007
The National Executive Committee (EXCO) of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) at its meeting of 8th May, 2010 noted with concern some recent postings on the NLA Online Forum which provided some misinformation about the NLA and LRCN. At the end of the meeting, the NLA EXCO resolved to set the records straight on these issues by providing clarification and facts in order to prevent history from being perverted.

Some of the issues noted are as follows:
1. The erroneous impression on the fusion of LRCN and NLA.
2. The dual role of Ms Victoria Okojie as President, NLA and Acting Registrar, LRCN.
4. The seeming lack of remuneration to former LRCN Council members for their contributions to the development of LRCN.
5. Absence of dedicated communication and feedback mechanisms for Chartered Librarians.

The EXCO also observed:

1. The propensity by some colleagues, especially in the Diaspora, not to examine issues and situations within the context of the Nigerian socio-political and administrative environment, specifically the public service culture in which the LRCN is embedded.

2. The chequered history of LRCN from its inception when it was established by Decree 12 of 1995. It took eight years for the Council to be inaugurated; and another five years for an acting Registrar/CEO to be appointed and for a budget to be provided.

The EXCO being mindful of the history, other pending issues as well as recent developments within the LRCN states as follows:

1. The perceived fusion of NLA and LRCN on the part of some members of the Online Forum is regrettable as the two bodies are clearly distinct and tasked with separate mandates as contained in the NLA Constitution and LRCN Decree respectively. NLA is a non-governmental organisation while LRCN is a federal government parastatal (a copy of the LRCN Decree, application form and procedure, as well as that of NLA are available on the NLA website www.nla-ng.org and Secretariat). For the record, however, it must be pointed out that NLA gave birth to LRCN and has since been playing a supportive role to ensure that the LRCN grows to achieve its set goals and objectives.

2. The dual role of Ms Victoria Okojie as NLA President and Ag. Registrar: the NLA Constitution does NOT prevent an NLA President from taking up any other appointment. Indeed, there are precedents, for example - Alhaji M. Wali was NLA President and National Librarian while Dr. Daniel was NLA President and Chairman/CEO of LRCN at the same time. NLA EXCO is rather dismayed by the attempts to discredit our President, Ms Okojie who, curiously, has been singled out for vilification; considering that her predecessor-in-office, Dr Daniel, presided over the NLA and LRCN, and the decisions made by the Council as Chairman/Chief Executive Officer from May 2002 - May 2005 as well as stood in as Chairman/Chief Executive Officer from May 2005 to October 2009. EXCO wishes to place on record the fact that Ms. Okojie was elected President in 2005 and in addition, had acted as Acting Registrar/Secretary to Council, LRCN since 2002 without any salary, remuneration nor allowance with no Secretariat support, and during which period landmarks achievements were recorded. In other climes, where individuals are recognized for their hard work and impressive, selfless contributions, Ms. Okojie would have been lauded for her role rather than being demonized for it.

3. The lull in the activities of the LRCN coincided with the end of the tenure (as set out statutorily by the Decree) of LRCN Council members; Council at its last meeting in 2005 resolved that it would be illegal to continue to function beyond its statutory tenure (which was clearly stated in the letters of appointment of members) as any decision from that point onwards would have been in nullity. This was a collective decision taken by Council members. Since only the federal government can authorise the appointment of new Council members, letters were...
written by the Chairman, LRCN to the various Ministers of Education between 2005 and 2009 requesting that the Council be re-constituted. The Acting Registrar/CEO has since her appointment in October, 2009 written a reminder to the new Minister of Education to re-constitute the Council and we are confident that this will be done in the not too distant future but at the discretion of the Federal Government. EXCO also wishes to place on record that in spite of the fact that the tenure of the first Council ended in 2005, advocacy and lobbying for the proper functioning of Council never stopped. Indeed, the collective and tireless efforts of the Ag. Registrar, the National Librarian, Dr. Daniel and many other librarians ensured that the LRCN was included in the 2009 budget and an acting Registrar appointed. EXCO appreciates the efforts of everybody who demonstrated their commitment to the profession by ‘walking their talk’.

4. Issues concerning the unacknowledged benefits of former Council Members and the non-implementation of decisions taken on them can only be addressed by the new LRCN Council whenever it is re-constituted. The LRCN is a federal government agency with extant rules, regulations and code of conduct guiding it; no reasonable person runs the business of such agencies on the Internet!

5. LRCN is still very much in the embryonic stages without any secretarial support or other staff. As soon as some of the challenges of establishing a system from the scratch are overcome, more channels for communication and feedback mechanisms to Chartered Librarians will be provided (a three year strategic plan that gives more details was developed in December 2009). However, since the primary constituency of both the NLA and LRCN are mostly librarians, EXCO is of the strong opinion that relevant information on the LRCN should continue to be disseminated through both NLA and LRCN channels.

6. On publicity of the activities of the LRCN: Committed and paid-up members will attest to the fact that communication channels have been put in place to disseminate information to all members and the library community since the inception of the LRCN. These channels include the NLA Newsletter, the NLA Website, the NLA Online Forum, the Presidential Addresses at all Council/Annual General Meetings of the Association and the national newspapers. As noted by the Webmaster, a simple search on the Online Forum or Website will reveal all the information on LRCN since 2002, including Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). In addition, the cover page of the current NLA Newsletter, December 2009 distributed at the last Council meeting to paid-up members carries the bold headline “Victoria Okojie now Ag. Registrar, LRCN” with detailed information on the history, ‘the journey so far’ and the future plans/strategic plan of the LRCN. The appointment was also published in some national newspapers. It is, therefore, surprising that some colleagues would raise issues with information already available in the public domain.

Members of EXCO are aware of expectations of the generality of members of the Association for quick results from the LRCN. We remain committed to our responsibility of ensuring that members are regularly informed about the NLA and LRCN. We thank all members for their patience, support and understanding for both the NLA and LRCN and hereby assure everyone that there is light at the end of the tunnel. In the very near future, the out-going NLA President, who is also the Acting Registrar of LRCN and who continues to work selflessly for the success of the LRCN, will provide detailed information on the forthcoming induction of the next batch of Chartered Librarians. At present, the modalities for collecting internally generated revenue by the Accountant General’s office are being worked out and the plan is to induct the next batch in 2010. As mentioned in the NLA Newsletter, as soon as the required systems are in place, registration will commence. Please be assured that the information will be widely publicised in the national newspapers and other media, and all NLA communication channels.

EXCO strongly appeals to all of us to work together, to leverage on our strengths, for the development of our profession. Rather than embark on writing things that are likely to cause unnecessary division, disaffection, distraction and misinformation; as leaders in the profession, let us all resolve to re-commit ourselves to the development of both the NLA and the LRCN. Certainly, the NLA and the LRCN have come a long way and they are bigger than any individual. Let us rise above our individual interests, bury the hatchet and work together for the collective good. Posterity will judge us kindly or otherwise for the part we play today.

On a final note, members should please address further enquiries on the LRCN directly to:

lrcn.info@yahoo.com.

Thank you.

Long Live the NLA! Long live the LRCN!!
Long Live Nigeria!!

DA Omokaro, PRO[NLA]
NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY (IT) SECTION

The Information Technology (IT) Section of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) held its 3rd Library and Information Technology Today (LITT) 2009 national workshop. The workshop which had as its theme: “Building and Managing Digital Collections”, took place at the MTN NET Library, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Enugu State from 12th to 16th October 2009.

The workshop was declared opened by the Vice Chancellor, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Professor Barth Okolo who was ably represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Administrations), Professor A. Asuzu. The workshop which was hands-on, interactive, and very educative attracted participants from across the country.

The Section also organized a workshop in collaboration with DeiCarina International Limited and with support from EBSCO. The workshop on E-Resources and E-Books: Access and Usage was held at the Gateway Hotel, Ota, Ogun State from Wednesday 6 to Thursday 7, 2009. The keynote address was delivered by the Polytechnic Librarian, Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Ogun State, Dr. (Mrs.) O. A. Olamigoke who thereafter declared the workshop opened. The resource persons at the workshop were Dr. James Daniel (FNLA), Ms. Omowunmi Segun and Mr.
EXCO MEETS IN BENIN CITY

The executives held their first meeting of the year on the 27th day of January, 2010 at the Bishop Kelly Memorial Centre in Benin City to deliberate on matters affecting the Association. The EXCO took far reaching decisions that were taken to the Council for consideration. Some of which includes the constitution of an LOC for the 48th Conference and Annual General Meeting holding in Abuja later in the year.

COUNCIL MEETS IN BENIN CITY, APPROVES THE CONSTITUTION OF LOC

The Council of the NLA met in Benin City on 28th day of January, 2010. The meeting was declared opened by the President, Ms Victoria Okojie who welcomed members to her home state for the meeting. The meeting discussed the venue of the 48th Annual Conference/AGM and approved the constitution of an LOC for the Conference. The LOC chair for the Conference is Alhaji Rilwanu Abdulsalami and all Exco Members are members of the LOC. They were mandated to organize the conference and can also co-opt members to serve in their various sub-committees.

NLA ACCESS TO FREE RESOURCES WORKSHOP

The Nigerian Library Association (NLA) held a workshop on “Access to Free Resources in Library and

Information Services Provision: Open Source Software, Open Access and Book/Computer Donors” from 26th April, 2010 at the Computer Centre, Kaduna State University, Kaduna, Kaduna State. The workshop attracted librarians from all over the country and resources persons from within and outside Nigeria. The objectives of the workshop was for librarians to be able to identify free options available to them in automating their library services, understand the guidelines/criteria for choosing softwares, identifying the readily available websites hosting free databases and also to identify various book and computer donation sources and how to access them.

COUNCIL APPROVES BALLOT PAPERS TO BE SENT TO STATE CHAIRMEN FOR DISTRIBUTION

The Council of the Association at her Benin City meeting of January 28, 2010 considered the merits and the demerits for sending ballot papers for the 2010 Elections to members through their state chapter chair persons and approved that ballot papers for the 2010 elections be sent through the state chapters chair persons for onward distribution to their members and members are to return the ballot papers to the electoral officer on or before Friday 16th July, 2010.

COUNCIL APPROVES THREE NEW FELLOWS FOR NLA

The Council of the NLA has approved the recommendation of the awards committee that 3 distinguished and very senior Librarians be upgraded
to the fellows status at her Benin City meeting of January 28, 2010. The new fellows are; Prof Felicia Etim of the University of Uyo, Barrister Chris Onebunne of the Anambra State Library Board and Dr. Umunna Okpara of the Federal Polytechnic, Nekede. They will be honoured at the Annual Dinner on July, 22, 2010 at the International Conference Centre (ICC), Abuja.

EDO STATE CHAPTER HOST EXCO AND COUNCIL TO CULTURAL NITE IN BENIN CITY

The Edo State Chapter hosted the Executive Committee and Council members to a cultural Nite offer a long day meeting at the Bishop Kelly Memorial Centre, Benin City. The Edo State Chapter chair welcome all to Edo State and wished members safe trip to their homes. The President, Ms Victoria Okojie used the evening to thank members for taking time to attend the meeting. The state chapter presented souvenirs from the chapter to all who were in attendance.

RETURNING OFFICER RELEASES LISTS OF CONTESTANTS

The Returning Officer, Dr. Balarabe of the Usman Danfodio University has released the list of candidates vying for the various posts in the Association. The candidates are:

1. Alhaji Rilwan Abdul Salami - President
2. Prof. Lenrie Aina - President
3. Dr. (Mrs.) Rose Okiy - 1st Vice President
4. Alhaji Sanusi Nasara - 1st Vice President
5. Dominic Omokaro - 2nd Vice President
6. Dr. (Mrs) Nancy Achebe - 2nd Vice President
7. Dr. Umunna Okpara - 2nd Vice President
8. Ms Justina Ogbonna - Fin. Secretary
9. Dr. (Mrs.) Ifeoma Echezona - Treasurer
10. Princess Adekunbi Obasi - Treasurer
11. Mr. Chimezie Ndukau - Publicity Secretary

NIgerian Library Association

UWelcome All to the 48th NATIONAL CONFERENCE & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ABUJA 2010

Theme: “KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT”

Date: 18th - 23rd July, 2010

Venue: International Conference Centre, Abuja

A Forum for all LIS Professionals in Nigeria
AKWA IBOM STATE
The Akwa Ibom State Chapter has elected a new executive to run the affairs of the Chapter for the next 2 years. The new Chairman is Dr (Mrs) Emem P. Udofia. The Chapter has also held her Library Week with a one day workshop, Town Rally and a visit to the Commissioner of Education. The Chapter is happily awaiting the commissioning of the e-library built by the State Government.

DELTA STATE
The Chapter held her AGM/Conference on 17th December, 2009 at the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe, Oghara. The keynote address was delivered by the Vice Chancellor of the Western Delta University, Oghara, Prof H. O. Hugo. The Chapter also gave two awards to outstanding members of the Chapter. The Chapter also commemorated the WorldBook and Copyright Day on 23rd April, 2010 at the Central Library, Asaba.

FCT CHAPTER
The Chapter had successfully organized a one day seminar and quarterly General Meeting on 25th November, 2009 with the theme: Writing Peer Review Article: The Role of a Mentor. The Seminar was held at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital.

KADUNA STATE
The Chapter has elected a new EXCO to run its affairs for the next 2 years. They are:
1. Mr Bello Samuel Itop - Chairman
2. Mrs Hanna Mamman Daudu - Vice Chairman
3. Mr Ezra Gbaje - Secretary
4. Mal. Salmanu Aliyu - Asst. Secretary
5. Dr Sanusi Kareem Adekunle - FinSec/Treasurer
6. Mrs Esther Gani - Asst. Fin. Sec / Treasurer
7. Isiyaku Ibrahim - PRO
8. Dr Kosoko Adu Momoh - Editor-in-Chief
9. Mr Emmanuel Olu Ayeni - Asst. Editor-in-Chief

KWARA STATE
The State Chapter has held several activities since the new Executives came on board in April, 2009. The Chapter is presently co-hosting a radio programme, Librarians on Air”. The publications of the Chapter are regular and on time in the last five years. The Chapter also held a student seminar in two institutions during the period under review. Some appointments were also recorded in the Chapter. Mr I. A. Alao was appointed the University Librarian of the newly established Kwara State University. The Chapter is making arrangements to host their own web-site.

NLA LAGOS HOLDS WORKSHOP
The Lagos State Chapter has successfully held a workshop on the ABC of web based information tracking, Archiving and Dissemination. The workshop was held between 30th June 2nd July 2010 at the Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Victoria Island, Lagos. The following topics were discussed and treated at the workshop:
 a. Open Source Software for Library Services
 b. Library of Congress Online Cataloguing and OCLC Training
 c. JSTOR and EBSCO HOST training
 d. Web Search and Web Archiving
 e. Social Media in Library Service
 The keynote address was delivered by Dr. O. O. Adediji (Ag University Librarian of UNILAG).

CATALOGUING, CLASSIFICATION AND INDEXING SECTION
The Section held her 29th Annual Seminar/Workshop at Lokoja between 26-30 October, 2009. The Section was also blessed with a parcel of land by HRH Oba J.P. Idowu, Bayana of Obajana during the section’s homage to his palace, while on tour of the cement factory. The Section has also published 2 more proceedings of its past conferences.

ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT LIBRARIES (AGOL) ELECTS NEW EXECUTIVES
The Association of Government Libraries has elected a new executive to run its affairs for a period of 2 years. The new Executive that has since taken the oath of office are:
 a. Miss Chiemela Evuruonobi - Chairman
 b. Mr. Aminu Abubakar Sadiq - Gen. Sec.
 c. Mrs. Taupyen. G. Joshin - Treasurer
 d. Amowayagi Dada Johnson - PRO

The new executive have been engaged in giving the Association a new sense of direction since taking over in June 2001. The Association held its 17th Annual Training Seminar with the theme “setting standards for Government Libraries in Nigeria” at the Kaduna Polytechnic from the 16 20 November, 2009. The Seminar was organized against the backdrop of the vital role of information dissemination and delivery in the Nigerian Public Service. The Seminar/Workshop came out with a communiqué that requires immediate Government’s attention. AGOL is also intensifying efforts at challenging all negative circulars and rules designed to truncate the easy access to information within the Government Ministries Department, and Agencies (MDA’s).
To God be the Glory

“Being the National President of the Nigerian Library Association was a very gratifying and fulfilling experience for me”

Thank you all for your unflinching support.

You have my very best wishes!
Long Live NLA!!!