

SPEECH BY ACEN PRESIDENT ENGR. GEORGE C. OKOROMA AT THE 2020 EGM VIA ZOOM  
WEBINAR ON 30 JULY 2020

I welcome you all to the 2020 Extra-Ordinary General Meeting of our Association which for the first time is being held virtually through the use of internet technology. I congratulate the newly admitted members and assure you of our commitment to the welfare of your businesses; it is quite unfortunate that your induction could not be done today as a consequence of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. I thank all Council and EXCO members for their support so far during my tenure. Together we hope to accomplish set activities for the upliftment of the Association.

I will like to thank those who have put in their best for the success of the Association between November 2019 and July 2020 through Committee work and active participation in our activities. I want to briefly talk about what we have done in the past seven (7) months, and then ACEN's Managing Director would give more details where necessary. I will also highlight some policy thrusts and plans for the future. We envision ACEN to become the number one adviser to the Government and private sector for sustainable, resilient designs, project planning, financing, supervision, and liaison.

ACEN ON COREN COUNCIL

Successive sitting President of our Association continues to represent her on COREN Council in line with the decision of Council at her meeting of May 30, 2019.

PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITIES

Apart from representing ACEN on COREN Council seat, I currently sit as: -

1. Chairman, Committee on COREN Regulations on Submission of Annual Practice Report by Engineering Practitioners and Firms and Publication of Annual Register.
2. Member, Committee on Investigation into Abnormalities in the COREN Professional Interview Process.
3. Member, Committee on Investigating Panel.

This year alone, I have led ACEN delegations to the under listed activities:-

- The Investiture of The President of the Nigerian Society of Engineers, Engr. Babagana Mohammed at the International Conference Centre, Abuja on Saturday 11 January 2020
- The 27<sup>th</sup> GAMA General Assembly Meeting (GAM) which took place via Zoom on Tuesday 21 April 2020
- The meeting between LACIAC and ACEN in preparation for the 2020 edition of Dispute Management in Africa Infrastructure Projects (DiMAP) training workshop which LACIAC and ACEN co-hosted the maiden edition in January 2019. This year's edition is scheduled to hold in October.

It is of note that I wrote a letter on behalf of the Council and the entire membership of our Association to the Secretary to the Federal Government proposing to support the fight against the COVID-19 Pandemic by volunteering some of our members as consultants for the setting up of the

Isolation and Testing Centres. The same gesture was extended to the Government of Lagos State and the service was to be rendered on a pro bono basis.

### ACEN ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION

I am pleased to inform you that ACEN ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION has been duly registered by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC). This is perhaps one of the most important legacies adopted to ensure the growth and sustainability of the Association. It should transform into a sustenance pillar of ACEN activities, in the long run. The Foundation is being run by a Board of Trustees made up of Past Presidents and its funding has been separated from that of the Secretariat and invested in Treasury bills. It is hoped that this Foundation will attract more donations from our friends and clients. I urge you to please join us in propagating the objectives of the Foundation.

### ACEN WEBSITE

The first point of call for an international audience and the general public for inquiry about ACEN is to search for us on Google and to be redirected to our official website. To this end, my first task was to give ACEN website a general facelift with a responsive on-the-click look and feel with the integration of essential functionalities.

Today, the site is up and running in sync with all of our social media handles, it has up-to-date reportage on proposed events and happenings in our Association, alongside upload of documents for firm members and the general public consumption.

Despite the standing proposal of ₦ 1,350,000 to do a general overhaul of the site, I took the project up with the technical support of Burnsley Technologies in collaboration with Gambeta News and we delivered this project on pro bono basis for the good of our dear Association.

### FIDIC CONFERENCE

The 2020 FIDIC International Infrastructure Conference scheduled to be held in Geneva, Switzerland in September has been postponed to next year. However, the FIDIC General Assembly Meeting (GAM) will be held on Tuesday 15 September during which elections into the FIDIC Board will be conducted.

FIDIC provides opportunities for Future Leaders to participate in international engineering activities. We urge members to encourage young engineers to come out in large numbers and identify themselves at FIDIC. They are to engage in online interactions and discussions which culminate at the conference. ACEN's Future Leaders should not miss out on this opportunity.

### ACEN E-LIBRARY

*As I said in my inaugural address, "for Nigerian engineers and consultants to be at par with their counterparts in the 83 member states of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers, we must provide facilities for engineering capacity development and fund platforms that would grant engineers direct access to latest documents and research journals on any issues that resolve round engineering and consultancy."*

To achieve this target, the ACEN e-Library and Engineering Capacity Development Centre was birthed to be the first place of call for engineers and aspiring engineers in Nigeria and all over the world for research papers, the latest information and professional online training and learning.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this as official documents show that great efforts have been made 15 years ago to register ACEN with a Virtual Library Organization to build the capacity of ACEN members through access to published materials in their various areas of interest. In this new administration, I can't afford to let this dream slide but to make it come alive and bloom at this time.

Today, the ACEN e-Library is up and running and it was officially presented to EXCO on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 2020 with 36 curated backlinks to ivy-league institutions and engineering resource database for the capacity development of our members and would-be engineers of the general public.

A lot of funds went down the line on pro bono basis to bring us to where we are today on this project and a lot more is needed to finish up and install all of the plugins and functionalities that is needed. Moving forward, we covet your corporate support and sponsorship to help us deliver fully on this.

#### GAMA CONFERENCE

The 2020 GAMA International Infrastructure Conference scheduled to take place in Gaborone, Botswana on 19-21 April was earlier this year postponed to next year with ACEB-Botswana being retained as host for the 2021 conference. ACEN accepted to host the 2022 conference in Lagos, Nigeria after GAMA pleaded with our Association to allow ACEB-Botswana to transfer her hosting right from 2020 to 2021.

GAMA had at its 27<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Meeting held on Tuesday 21 April 2020 changed her name to FIDIC AFRICA to align with FIDIC Regionalisation Strategy.

#### REVENUE IMPROVEMENT

The Corporate Partnership scheme remains the most formidable and viable source of extra income to the Association.

Presently, the Association has only one Corporate Sponsor, Messrs Cutix Plc, and are hopeful that we shall secure additional corporate sponsors before the end of this year to augment the revenue of the Association.

We have been very prudent and professional in handling funds of the Association and our hope is to improve on revenue generation in the future.

I wish all members a fruitful discussion at the EGM and success in all endeavours.

Thank you.

Engr George C. Okoroma, FNSE, JP  
President