



**WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT/CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL, THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF BANKERS OF NIGERIA (CIBN), PROFESSOR 'SEGUN AJIBOLA, PH.D, FCIB, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2017 FELLOWSHIP INVESTITURE HELD ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2016 AT HARBOUR POINT, VICTORIA ISLAND, LAGOS**

**Protocol**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I welcome you all to the 2017 CIBN Fellowship Investiture. It is not presumptuous to state upfront that this year's Investiture is unique as twelve eminent personalities, one of the highest in the Institute's history, will be honoured with the Honorary Fellowship of the Institute. These are individuals that have contributed immensely to the growth of the banking and finance industry and other allied sectors both within Nigeria and outside the shores of the country. Indeed, the Institute is pleased to welcome Mr Milton Alvin Weeks, HCIB, Executive Governor, Central Bank of Liberia who is one of the Honorary Fellows at today's auspicious event. This is the first time CIBN will be electing into the Honorary Fellowship cadre, someone from outside the shores of Nigeria.

It is also noteworthy that a total of one hundred and nineteen (119) bank professionals, academics, consultants, civil servants amongst others would be elected as Fellows of The Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN). These are seasoned individuals who have passed through the Institute's prescribed examinations and have been tested for years in their various capacities to make them deserving of election into the Fellowship Status of our great Institute. Similarly, a total of sixty-two (62) top executives in the banking industry, other financial institutions and the academics would be awarded Honorary Senior Members of CIBN (HCIB).

I must at this point commend the Institute's Board of Fellows ably led by the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Dr Uche Olowu, FCIB, for a well done job aimed at ensuring that only



professionals who have demonstrated integrity and character in their various vocational callings are elected into this cadre of the Institute.

Esteemed audience, I am particularly delighted this morning to have in our midst Mr Amine Mati, Senior Resident Representative & Mission Chief for Nigeria, African Department, International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the Guest Speaker on the very topical theme of this year's Investiture – **Coherent Set of Policies for Greater Exchange Rate Flexibility**.

While Nigeria as a country has experimented with different exchange rate regimes, opinions are still polarized among economic experts on the best policy option in the management of the country's foreign exchange. Principally, there are two extremes of exchange rate regimes – fixed and floating – with different shades of combination. The choice of exchange rate regime depends on a country's level of development and the policies governing the monetary and financial fundamentals of such economy. Most developing economies tend to adopt fixed exchange rate regimes in order to build confidence in their economic policies whereas the more advanced ones lean towards a flexible regime as they become more active in international financial markets.

When Nigeria transited to what I call "a managed floating exchange rate regime" in June 2016, questions were raised on the appropriateness and timeliness of the policy. In the past few months, the country has witnessed some stability in the foreign exchange market especially with the interventions of the Central Bank of Nigeria in the market since February 2017. I imagine, however, that in order to achieve a more sustainable transition to a flexible exchange rate regime there is the need for a religious commitment to transparency and



accountability in the management of the country's foreign exchange market by all stakeholders.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I implore you all to pay rapt attention to Mr Mati's presentation on the theme of this Programme. I am confident that he would avail us invaluable insights borne out of years of hands-on experience on the subject matter across jurisdictions.

Foreign exchange management remains a key enabler as Nigeria strives to improve on the citizens' Human Development Index, adjudged at the moment to be below the international minimum benchmark. With over-reliance on imports of basic needs and export of mono-product, oil, the challenge of absolute and relative poverty remains very much with us. What more, we are, as a people, still exposed to the vagaries of the foreign exchange market. Once again, it should be reaffirmed that the macro-economic objective of exchange rate stability and equilibrium balance of payments position can be achieved if only we tame our high propensity to consume imported consumer durables and non-durables, promote non-oil exports and pursue the age-long import substitution strategies.

As we listen to Mr Mati's perspectives, there is no doubt that the success of any policy initiatives towards repositioning Nigeria's foreign exchange management template would depend largely on the quality of the human minds to implement such policies. And, as you are aware, the banking and finance profession plays a central role in any country's foreign exchange value chain.

As the Institute pursues its core mandate of building capacity for the industry, it also remains committed to recognizing unimpeachable ethical and professional performance



among its members at all times, including the members conduct as dealers in the foreign exchange market.

I like to conclude by specially recognizing the families and friends of our would-be Fellows. The sacrifices you have undoubtedly made for the success of today's honour can never go unnoticed. Nobody travels the road to success alone and, arguably, there are no self-made individuals.

Once again, I say hearty congratulations to all the new Fellows and Honorary Senior Members of today. This additional feather to your cap comes with the responsibility for you to continue to espouse good ethical and professional conduct and to serve as shining examples for upcoming banking and finance professionals.

Thank you for your attention and God bless.

**Professor Segun Ajibola**

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**President/Chairman of Council**

**The Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria**

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