

OBIORA IKE SPEECH

GLOBETHICS.NET HANDOVER CEREMONY ON 23RD JUNE 2016 AT THE ECUMENICAL CENTER IN GENEVA SWITZERLAND

Live for Something, Stand for Something, Die for something

Ladies and gentlemen,

“Omnia Tempus Habet
Everything has Its Time
Ihe Nine Nwere Oge Nke Ya”

Gathered from many countries, Institutions, groups and networks around the world at this year’s GLOBAL ETHICS FORUM (GEF) in Geneva on the very important topic: HIGHER EDUCATION – ETHICS IN ACTION – The Value of Values across Sectors” I feel a pulse of Joy, Challenge and Call (Mission) to stand up before this dignified audience at this moment of CHANGE and to accept the Responsibility to lead in sustaining, broadening, intensifying and continuing the work of Globethics.net as Executive Director.

I accept by God’s grace and help and your support, this responsibility with an utmost sense of awareness of our experiences today, seeing how far Humanity stands on the threshold of making a clear and firm choice between Doubt and Faith in something, between Freedom and Slavery; between Despair and Hope; between Fear and Courage; between Truth and its opposite – Untruth; between Knowledge and Ignorance; between Inclusion and Exclusion; and the choice between Peace and WAR.

THE SPIRIT SPEAKS – DO WE LISTEN? In June 2015, on the same date as today, I attended the GEF conference, here at this same hall on the theme – THE VALUE OF VALUES – RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP, GLOBAL ETHICS IN ACTION. I had made contribution to the topic of Accountability and the challenges of Religious leadership. Sitting next to me on the table during the evening session was the president of the Board of the GE Foundation, His Excellency, Ambassador Walter Fust. I recall that moment with trepidation as his voice still rings clearly in my ears, tapping me on the leg, looking into my eyes and dropping a question, calmly but clearly; Prof. Ike, would you not consider to accept the leadership of Executive Director of the Globethics.net as the current Executive Director, Christoph Stueckelberger shall retire and give up the post mid next year. I trust you can do it as you have all it takes and I urge you to think over it.

As I listened to this voice which was firm and clear, it was difficult to discern whether what I heard was a joke? A Teaser? A Trial? A Temptation? A Serious invitation? A Call to something noble and challenging? A Mission? Baffled and surprised at his inviting and friendly question, I gathered a smile and responded in the following words; “Sir, my

agenda for year 2015 and my resolutions made at the beginning of the year is “Let the Lord speak and I shall follow”. Year 2016 is my SPEN year of faith Possibilities of what the lord wants me to do.

Year 2016 was already scheduled in my life history as a year of anniversary sorts – 60th Birthday; 40th as a teacher, 35th Priestly anniversary; 30th as foundation of the first ethics Institute in Nigeria – the CIDJAP I founded and directed; 20th anniversary of the Bank I chair and co-founded in Enugu and 10th anniversary as President of the Club of Rome, Nigeria chapter.

As I returned to my 10 days retreat in the Benedictine monastery in Orselina, Lugano, a discernment process had started through the voice of the leading personalities of the GE Foundation, followed by visits to my base in Nigeria by the out-going founder and ED, Prof. Dr. Christoph Stueckelberger. The rest is history but the tacit support and encouragement, openness and approval of the Bishop of Enugu, Most Rev. C.V.C. ONAGA, confirmed my YES to the YES of the Board of the Foundation.

In 1858, the distinguished American sociologist EDWARD BANFIELD published a book titled – The Moral Basis of a Backward Society, and proved that in all countries of the world but particularly in the current tense, the Crisis of Social Values is at the Root fo the Economic Under-performance of the societies and Nations.

There is a correlation between High Ethical Standards and Economic Development.

A society which allows its people to indulge in massive corruption cannot develop economically

Curbing corruption requires political will, public confidence, adequate time, resources, dedication and integrity.

In 1997, Francis Fukuyama published his second book titled – Trust – the Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity. In this book, the polyvalent intellectual professor argues that the difference between poor and rich societies is the difference in the levels of Social Capital.

Social capital for Fukuyama are ht Stock of Values like Honesty, Loyalty, Trust and Integrity, discipline, hard work, to mention a few. Societies with substantial stock of these values are High-Trust and those where the values are absent are Low-Trust.

At the dawn of a new millennium in 1999, Harvard University organized a symposium to Interrogate the powerful place of Cultural Values in Societal and National Development. The book published of the papers appeared in 2000 entitled – Culture Matters – How Values shape Human Progress, edited by Lawrence Huttington who later wrote: the Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of the World Order.

It shows how South East Nations like Korea and Singapore make progress while Gnana and Africa don't.

ON VALUES AND ETHICS

Ethics is about values and values are not merely utopian. Values define us, and let it be said, whether we like it or not, whether we accept it or not, that values define Institutions, Cultures and Peoples.

The entire efforts of Industry, Economy, Politics and Societies towards worldwide construction in the name of Civilization may not work without a strong value driven orientation. These values are universal, across Religions and Cultures, often beyond time and space.

But they are values founded on Rock, considered from the point of view of sustainability as goal;

What is freedom if people cannot say the truth; is not inner liberty obtained if there is fidelity to truth? Is not a culture rich in values higher than a society rich in material wealth?

As I accept to head the Globethics.net and receive the trust of Board, Management and Partners, Friends and Contexts, let it be said over and over again; Building bridges to goodness with entire humanity through dialogue and value Driven Knowledge platform gives access in an unequal world to the most vulnerable and disenfranchised, many of whom live in the global south.

This is what Globethics.net stand for – a coalition of several women and men, at all levels, in all continents, across all sectors – with a desire to promote ethics and value driven conduct for humans/ leaders and followers in the promotion of World Peace; Knowledge Access; Poverty Reduction; Meaningful Life and a Sustainable Human Family.

GRATITUDE

To Walter Fust and the Board of the Foundation, To Christoph Stueckelberger, the fearless visionary, committed NETWORKER, Hardworking astute administrator, the innovator and motivator, Swiss time-keeper; the man whose dreams has become reality.

OUR CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

- Looking at the past with gratitude,
- Accepting the present as gift
- Working into the future which is challenge with clear vision, courage and action.

This future includes:

- Sustaining and retaining the tradition received from Globethics.net, 12 years since its foundation,
- Deepening and reviving the strategic vision if the foundation ad network
- Accepting the principle of TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP as key to success and growth
- Improving creativity
- Remaining loyal to the Heritage and legacy received and adapting them wisely under the signs of the times in a very fast world.
- Empowering people through access to Values-Driven Resources to Multiply valuable knowledge and reduce ignorance through teaching;
- To expand governance through Responsible leadership with values content;
- To encourage Research Dialogue and multi-sector engagement and inter-faith through the Globethics.net innovative materials and personnel, staff and friends.
- Finally, to implement Action in practice particularly in cooperation and National contacts and network, currently spreading in 200 countries
- To remain sustainable in finance through ethics products.

To staff of Globethics.net who have given of their time, talents, joy and skills to advance the aims of the organization as we enter the 2016 – 2020 strategy implementation.....

To the Regional and National contacts

To Walter and Ursula Linsi and the entire staff of the Linsi Foundation under Ms. Rita Aschfall for the Trust, Support and Belief in the course of Globethics.net

To partners all over the world at the United Nations, Institutions, Countries, etc

To friends.....

I WANT RESULTS.

NO IFs; NO BUTs; NO MAY-BE and/ or

OH, IT IS IN THE PIPELINE.....

PERFORM!!!

Obiora Ike