

2015 INAUGURAL SPEECH OF IMO STATE GOVERNOR, OWELLE ANAYO ROCHAS OKOROCHA

PROTOCOLS

To God be the glory for a great day like this, now the battle is over, the campaign of hate is over, I speak to you with the spirit of love, peace and atonement. I speak to you with a hearty spirit, in remembrance of what the lord has done in Imo state in the past four years. We give Him thanks.

Let me declare that this period shall be a period of development we shall develop the resources of our land to make Imo better.

In times of political conflict and disagreements, let dialogue take the front stage. In times of difficulties, let us make supreme sacrifices that would make our people better.

Four years ago on this same place I took the first oath of office as your governor, four years later I am here to take another oath of office as the governor of your state.

If you may recall, all my elections were characterized by inconclusiveness and supplementary, not because I didn't win the election, but because there is always an attempt to steal the peoples` mandate. Situations and circumstances in Imo State have made me stronger. I thank all of you for giving me your mandate. Power is a trust and privilege which can only be justified when you use it for the good of the common man.

In this my second tenure, we guarantee the safety and security of the common man. In my first tenure we promised that we shall give free education. Today, education is free from primary, secondary and university level in Imo State. We promised that we shall change the face of civil servants, today; Imo civil servants are wearing a new look, incessant strikes seen in the past regime and other states were not associated with Imo State. We promised that traffic congestion will be a thing of the past, today we have the first, second and third Inland roads all linking

the Old and New Owerri. I did promised you that kidnapping will stop in Imo State, today the ugly experiences of kidnap activities have stopped.

It is pertinent to point out that infrastructures were not left out in the giant strides taken to make Imo better, you have seen the Akachi Road, the 27 General Hospitals and the 305 model schools. Nobody in Imo State believed that the child of a poor man could climb upstairs while going to school, today; the new class room buildings at the Akwakuma Girls' Secondary School, Owerri City School and Emmanuel College were all eloquent testimonies of that promise.

Before I go into the euphoria of self-praise singing, let me remind us that we have a task ahead to make Imo better. I know all the troubles you took against the political cabals who want us to continue doing things the old way, but doing things the same old way will give us the same old result. We should thank God there is a new Imo - more focused, more dedicated and more result-oriented.

At this point the question for your governor should be, what do you have in stock for us? I promised that this period will experience factory, industry and job creations. Industry plus factory, plus job, plus employment equal to wealth creation. What I am saying is that this regime shall embark on wealth creation for our people. Let also reassure you that all the on-going projects will be completed. We are not going to abandon any project of our people, the Oguta Blue Lake of Treasure, the Aboh/Ngor-Okpala University of Agriculture, Imo European University and all other projects will be completed. We shall ensure that free education does not lose its pride of place in my regime, for those who think free education will come to an end you are not right, on free education I stand.

I am Sure you are mindful of the challenges we have as a nation, the current APC regime at the federal level inherited a weak economy from the former PDP regime. Today, most states cannot pay workers' salaries, it is unfortunate that we have an economy that is nose-diving day by day. Despite all these challenges, I declare that Imo is the richest in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

My challenges; we are going to embark on policy revolution that might not be comfortable with the same Imo indigenes I called my people, my challenge is how

do I develop the political will to carry on with this revolution particularly as it affects those who worked for me during the election, therefore I will embark on policy revolution that looks inwards and makes sure that commercialization takes its pride of place. We must make government agencies more productive and any unproductive one will not be in existence.

My people I apologize to those who may be affected because I want to move Imo State forward, my challenge is that I want to make Imo State a more befitting international city, but how do I cope with my people who put on shanties, the tricycle operators, the Wheel barrow pushers and the street traders, they are part of my challenges, but let me tell you, I have developed the political wheel to embark on political revolution, I will apologize to those who may be affected.

I have the challenge of giving political appointments to my faithful followers and those who worked for me during the election, how do I carry them along and satisfy them? but I must overcome.

At this point, I think it is proper to give honour to whom honour is due, for my creator who made it possible for me to win this election, especially when who-is-who in Imo State were against me. I owe God a lot of appreciation. To you Imo State Executive Council members, you worked hard. The success and failure of this administration rested on my shoulder. To all political appointees and members of Imo State Expanded Executive Council Members I say bravo!

The Imo State House of Assembly members, people call you rubber stamped because you believe in the Rescue Mission, today you can see the good works of this regime. To Imo Chief Judge, you remain my partner to move Imo State forward, I thank you with your team. To the army, police, State Security Services, the Immigration, the customs, the Civil Defense, the Imo Security Network, the Imo Civil Guard, the Imo Community Watch, all your contributions towards making Imo better cannot be quantified, we shall continue to work together.

To Imo State Deputy Governor, I call you my political son in whom I am well pleased, you remain my co-pilot in the Rescue Mission, to whom much is given much is expected. We shall work together, when I am weak you must continue to

work hard, when I am not around you must continue to work harder, you must not let this government down. I thank you for been a very good deputy governor.

To my wife, if reincarnation is anything to go by, I will come back a million times your husband. To my brothers and sisters who have joined us, Senator Ifeanyi Ararume, Chief Felix Idiga (JAFAC) Chief Jerry Chukwueke, who saw the light and left darkness, there is no new comer, we are all old comers. Let me correct an impression that Igbo are not in support of APC, the problem is that most of our leaders never saw it coming, our doors are now open to welcome everybody because I cannot do it alone .

To my traditional rulers, I recognize all of you. The traditional rulers have played prominent role to reduce insecurity in their various communities.

To the clergy, prophecies have come and gone, it is now time to move Imo forward, we nearly missed it.

Interestingly, as I am taking oath of office today, President Muhammadu Buhari is also taking oath of office today in Abuja. Am glad I now have a president I can put calls across to, Imo will be better than what it used to be. As your governor, I believe one day there will be no more poverty in the land, I believe one day you will beat your chest and proudly say I am an Imo Indigene because everything is working well in the state.

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