

A BRIEF CITATION ON CHIEF DON OBOT ETIEBET

CON, FNCS, FNMGS.

Chief Don Obot Etiebet, CON, FNCS, FNMGS, Academician, Businessman and Politician, holds many important Chieftaincy titles in Nigeria, some of which are: **Atu-Ekong Annang, Uko-Ke Ekong, Obong Unwana Akwa Ibom, Shettima Fune**, etc all depicting the leadership and developmental roles he plays in his profession and for the emancipation of his people in particular and his Country in general.

Chief Etiebet was born on 15th September, 1944 in Ikot Ekpuk, Oruk Anam Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. He attended Government School, Ikot Ibritam, where he obtained the First School Leaving Certificate in 1957. Thereafter, he attended Holy Family College, Abak (1958 –1962), where he obtained the West African School Certificate (WASC), College of Immaculate Conception, Enugu (1963 – 1964), for Higher School Certificate (HSC), Imperial College of Science & Technology, University of London, England (1966 – 1969), where he obtained the B.Sc. (Special Honours) Degree in Petroleum Technology, and the University of Western Ontario, Canada (1969 – 1971), where he obtained the M.Sc. Degree in Applied Geophysics.

He returned to Nigeria in September, 1971. He has been a Science Teacher, Petrophysicist, Petroleum Engineer, a University Lecturer at one time or the other, in overseas and in Nigeria including Universities of Western Ontario, Canada and Ibadan, Nigeria.

In 1972, he started a company called Earth Sciences Limited, a Resource Engineering and Geophysical Exploration Company that applies computer techniques for mineral exploration. That was the first ever indigenous Nigerian

computer services company. Earth Sciences Limited gave birth to Data Sciences Nigeria Limited (DSNL), in 1979. DSNL today is the foremost Information Communications Technology (ICT) company in Nigeria.

A hardworking and very successful businessman, Chief Don Obot Etiebet is also the Chairman and Director of many companies both in Nigeria and abroad which provide conducive environments for individual career developments, self actualization and opportunity for enterprises development in information technology, construction, power engineering, finance, Oil and Gas.

In the late eighties, one of his Companies, **OBODEX Nigeria Limited**, launched the first ever Nigerian brand name in Personal Computers THE OBODEX PC, assembled in Nigeria and which was also selling in Europe. His landmark office complex building – **ETIEBETS PLACE** in Ikeja, was completed in 1992 and it is one of the best finished office buildings in Lagos.

His pioneering effort in the computer field has made his company the mother-of-all indigenous ICT companies in Nigeria and in the industry, so much so that he is regarded by all in the industry as the “grandfather of IT” in Nigeria. He, together with two (2) University Professors started computer awareness and literacy programs in the country in 1977, through the initiation and founding of the Computer Association of Nigeria (COAN) which was inaugurated in May, 1978 and now known as the Nigeria Computer Society (NCS). This is the only professional computer body providing an umbrella for the practice of the profession in all its ramifications in Nigeria today and encompassing all other computer professional and trade organizations. It is backed by a law setting up the Computer Professional Registration Council of Nigeria (CPN). Chief Don Obot Etiebet is a life Fellow of the two computer bodies, Nigerian Computer Society (NCS) and The Computer Professionals Registration Council of Nigeria (CPN)

Chief Don Obot Etiebet, besides his strings of business successes, is an achiever who believes in results. He has been silently involved in policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria, since the seventies, including being:

- **Member** of National Sciences Research Council Of Nigeria 1974-1977
- **Member** of Governing Council, College of Technology, Calabar, Cross River State, 1976 – 1979
- **Chairman** of the Management Board of Inter-governmental Bureau of Informatics (IBI), Regional Training Centre for English Speaking African States (A UNESCO Agency for training of Government Personnel in Computer and Informatics), 1980 – 1983
- **Member** G-15 Economic Co-operative Council, 1990
- **Member** of the Board of Trustees of the National Science and Technology Fund, 1991 – 1993
- **Member** of the Board of Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC), 1993
- **Member** of Nigerian Economic Summit till date
- **Pro-chancellor and Chairman** – Governing Council, UNIVERSITY OF JOS.

It is therefore no surprise that at the most trying period of the nation, he was invited to serve our country in 1993, first as Secretary of Petroleum and Mineral Resources in the Interim National Government (ING) and then Minister of Petroleum & Mineral Resources till February, 1995. He brought his spirit of honesty, dedication, transparency, accountability, enterprise and excellence to bear in Government during the period he served.

He handled the series of crisis that engulfed the Petroleum Industry during this period with tact and tenacity and initiated some bold decisions which hitherto has

been regarded as impossible and politically suicidal, to position the industry to contribute optimally to the economic development of the country.

Some of his achievements during his tenure as Minister of Petroleum include bringing the refineries to work, the re-launching and actualization of the 29 year old Moribund LNG project by then and the construction of the first 2-Trains of the NLNG which is now being expanded to Six Trains. The timely re-launching of that Project in 1994 put Nigeria up in the map of LNG Producers. Together with other gas utilization and conversion projects, they have become the economic pillars of the Country today other than crude oil.

Another big feat at that time was his successful campaigns carried out throughout all OPEC member countries for the election of a Nigerian to the exalted position of the **Secretary General** of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for the first time.

Arising from the copious smuggling and diversion of petroleum products due to their cheap prices in the West African sub region, Chief Etiebet despite mounting pressure against petroleum product price increases, defied all odds to increase the price of PMS from N3 per Liter to N12 per Liter in 1994. That culminated in the establishment of the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF), which impacted positively in developing, resuscitating and revamping of our social infrastructures, utilities, educational and health institutions, for the benefit of the generality of Nigerians. It is safe to say that until its dissolution in 1999 it was accepted and appreciated as the best all infrastructural development agency the country ever had.

As a Minister, he served his Country sincerely, honestly and without blemish. Under his tenure, the working conditions of NNPC and DPR staff were greatly improved and enhanced in order for them to face the challenges of the oil industry squarely, enthusiastically and without corruptive influences. During his tenure as

Minister of Petroleum Resources, he plugged the loopholes of waste, abuses and corruption which had plagued the industry by closing over thirty (30) foreign accounts of NNPC stopping product's diversion, completing the pipeline systems and designing new products delivery systems to cause petrol to flow at the pumps instead of from jerry cans at the road sides and surface tanks as before. No wonder that in a letter of appreciation to the Atu-Ekong, after the dissolution of that cabinet, the Head of State wrote "I write to express my profound appreciation to you for the support which you gave to this administration during your tenure of office as Minister in the Federal Public Service and commend you for your contribution, sense of commitment and spirit of nationalism".

This entrepreneur, academician, politician and holder of many chieftaincy titles has also quietly touched the lives of many Nigerians by his numerous philanthropic activities, including donations of computer systems to Nigerian Universities, institution of endowments and prizes in our Universities, award of scholarships to Nigerian students and other sponsorship programs at all levels of education and health.

In order to continue, sustain and enhance his philanthropic activities, Chief Don Obot Etiebet, in 1996 instituted the **OBOT ETIEBET FOUNDATION** as a philanthropic organization for **SERVICES TO HUMANITY**.

This Foundation is today promoting the establishment of the DON ETIEBET UNIVERSITY (UNIDONE) in his village of Ikot Ekpuk, Oruk Anam Local Government Area Of Akwa Ibom State.

Chief Don Obot Etiebet, a firm believer in free enterprise, equity, justice and accountability, is one of the leading politicians in Nigeria. He successfully founded and nurtured a national political party, the **National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN)** in 1995. The Party was one of the five (5) registered political parties in

1996 by the then military government to start the democratic process of enthroning a civilian government in 1997.

The Party entered the March 1997 Local Government election and won massively throughout the Country but was cut down through cancellation of the results and his arrest, detention and threats to his life by the Military regime. He was made to renounce his Presidential ambition to pave way for the self-succession plan of the military junta. The ramification of that action occasioned by the Atuekong's insistence to participate in the presidential election, while others resorted to the "siddon look" position and what followed thereafter are well known history, which shaped the political landscape of the country to what we have today.

The Atu-Ekong, by the grace of God survived that horrible political era and in 1998 he joined other Leaders to found the Peoples Democratic Party and was one of its Presidential Aspirants in 1999. A Trustee of the Party and Deputy Chairman – Mobilization and Contact Committee of the Party, he became a frontline Presidential Aspirant but lost to a preferred aspirant backed by the Military government. Thereafter in the spirit of Party Unity of purpose he served as a member of the PDP Presidential Campaign team and campaigned throughout the country successfully to enthrone the PDP Obasanjo Government in the Country on May 29th 1999.

Due to the intrigues in the Party in agreeing to handover the Party structures to the Governors to control the Atuekong Annang knowing the danger in such action to governance left the Party with other notable Leaders and eventually became the National Chairman of the opposition Party, ANPP in 2003. Towards the end of Obasanjo regime in 2007 he returned to the Party, and was received back into the PDP with all his rights and privileges restored as Founding Father and Permanent Member of the Board of Trustees of the People Democratic Party (PDP).

He is happily married with children and keeps fit through hard work, tennis, swimming, current affairs in politics, science, economics and technology. He is presently working to establish the DON ETIEBET UNIVERSITY (UNIDONE) in his village of Ikot Ekpuk, Oruk Anam Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State as a legacy to humanity.

Our Atiakong has several national and international awards, membership of professional bodies and chieftaincies, some of which are: -

- (i) CON : COMMANDER OF THE ORDER OF THE NIGER – A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA NATIONAL AWARD
- (ii) FNCS : FELLOW OF NIGERIA COMPUTER SOCIETY – A PROFESSIONAL AWARD BY THE NIGERIA COMPUTER SOCIETY
- (iii) FCPN : FELLOW OF COMPUTER PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION COUNCIL OF NIGERIA (A COMPUTER COUNCIL REGISTERED BY GOVERNMENT TO REGULATE THE PRACTICE OF COMPUTER INDUSTRY IN NIGERIA)
- (iv) FNMGS : FELLOW OF NIGERIAN MINING AND GEOSCIENCES SOCIETY – A PROFESSIONAL AWARD BY THE SOCIETY
- (v) MSPE: MEMBER, SOCIETY OF PETROLEUM ENGINEERS
- (vi) MNAPE: MEMBER, NIGERIAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM EXPLORATIONISTS
- (vii) MAAPG: MEMBER, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM GEOLOGISTS, USA
- (viii) MRSM: MEMBER, ROYAL SCHOOL OF MINES, LONDON
- (ix) ATUEKONG ANNANG – THE GENERALISSIMO OF THE ANNANG NATION IN AKWA IBOM STATE OF NIGERIA
- (x) SHETTIMA FUNE, YOBE STATE

- (xi) OBONG UNWANA AKWA IBOM – THE CHIEF OF LIGHT IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF AKWA IBOM
STATE, NIGERIA
- (xii) EXCELLENCE IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP BY GOVERNMENT OF AKWA IBOM
STATE, NIGERIA
- (xiii) DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD BY THE SOUTH SOUTH PEOPLES
ASSEMBLY OF THE NIGER DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA
- (xiv) ICT LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD BY THE NIGERIAN INFORMATION
SOCIETY
- (xv) MERIT AWARD AS GRAND DEFENDER OF EDUCATION BY THE
STUDENTS UNION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF UYO
- (xvi) INDUSTRIAL GIANTS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE BY ONDO STATE
COUNCIL OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY, MINES AND
AGRICULTURE, NIGERIA
- (xvii) MEMBER, BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NATIONAL SCIENCES AND
TECHNOLOGY FUND, 1991 – 1993
- (xviii) MEMBER, NATIONAL SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL OF NIGERIA,
1974 – 1977
- (xix) PIONEER DIRECTOR, BOARD OF NIGERIA COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION (NCC), 1992 – 1993
- (xx) PRESIDENT, NIGERIA COMPUTER SOCIETY, 1983 – 1987
- (xxi) TRUSTEE, BOARD OF NIGERIA INTERNET GROUP
- (xxii) MEMBER, PETROLEUM CLUB, NIGERIA
- (xxiii) PRO-CHANCELLOR, CHAIRMAN OF GOVERNING COUNCIL UNIVERSITY
OF JOS