

**ADDRESS BY PROF. SAIDU ONAILO MOHAMMED, THE
DIRECTOR GENERAL /CHIEF EXECUTIVE NATIONAL
SPACE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, AT THE
COMMISSIONING OF ASTRONOMY OBSERVATORY
COMPLEX OF THE CENTRE FOR BASIC SPACE SCIENCE,
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA ON 3RD MAY, 2019**

PROTOCOLS:

The Honorable Minister for Science and Technology,
His Excellency Dr Ogbonnaya Onu.

The Executive Governor of Enugu State, His excellency,
Rt Honorable Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi

Distinguished Senators here present

Members of the House of Representative

House of Assembly Members

The Vice Chancellor University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Members of the Academic Community

All Directors of NASRDA

Ndi Igwe

The Management and Staff of CBSS

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to this august occasion of the Commissioning of the Astronomy Observatory Complex of the NASRDA-Center for Basic Space Science (CBSS) and exhibition of some of her R&D products. CBSS is one of the activity Centers of the National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA). It is saddled with the responsibilities (as enshrined in the National Space Policy) to pursue capacity building that can address the developmental needs of the country in several areas such as; Astronomy and Astrophysics, Solar terrestrial physics, Cosmology and Origin of Life, Communication physics, Remote Sensing, Rocketry and Balloons, Planetary sciences, Satellite

Science and Technology etc. these the center has been pursuing with every amount of vigor and commitment.

Hence, today's occasion is in line with such mandate.

Therefore:

1. The building of this office complex by the Federal Government is in a bid to help the Center address its accommodation needs and also help her achieve these tasks assigned to it by the Government and people of Nigeria. It should be noted that this Observatory Complex had been under construction for over 15 years until the present Federal Government gave it a facelift. Therefore, we grateful to Mr President Muhammadu Buhari (GCFR) and the Honorable

Minister for Science and Technology Dr Ogbonnaya Onu for making it possible.

2. Today's occasion apart from the Commissioning of the Observatory Complex will afford the general public the opportunity to see for ourselves the milestone achieved by the Center which will be exhibited here today.

Honorable minister Sir, in the areas scientific research CBSS has conducted a lot of researches in the study of the Cosmos, Galaxies, the Solar System, Near Earth Objects etc. Further to this, CBSS has been playing key roles in the popularization of the Astronomy in the West African Sub-region hence, it is the designated regional node for the IAU office of Astronomy for Development called the

West African regional Office of Astronomy for Development (WAROAD). This Office has engineered the establishment of Astronomy in Gabon, Ghana, Senegal etc. Furthermore, CBSS has consistently organized Summer School in collaboration with partners from Canada, Europe, Ghana and South Africa every two years where young Astronomers are tutored on the best ways of conducting Astronomy and Space Science Research.

At this juncture Sir, I want to use this medium to thank the management of University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the Government and people of Enugu State for their generous support and hospitality. The support this Centre has received is highly appreciated.

The Centre on its own has ensured that all junior staff are recruited from the host community in line with Federal Civil Service Rule and Regulations, as part of her social responsibility whenever the need arises. The presence of the Centre has several positive economic implications on Nsukka town and the State in general.

Honorable Minister Sir, may I seek your permission to use this opportunity to inform you that today's event marks the phase one of the infrastructural development of the Centre and the commencement of the second phase which is to ensure that research facilities such as Optical and radio Telescopes are located in various parts of the Country.

I would like to specially congratulate you Sir for your enormous contributions in the Science and Technology subsector in Nigeria which can best be described as revolutionary, and I sincerely believe that as we enter the

second phase of our infrastructural development, similar care and attention will be extended to the Centre.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the presence of the Executive Governor of Enugu State, Distinguished Senators and House of Reps Members, Enugu State Traditional Council and other revered Traditional Rulers that took their time to grace this occasion and equally thank you, all our friends and colleagues who are present at this gathering.

The National Space Research and Development Agency has put Nigeria on global map of space fairing nations. We will not rest on our oars until we deliver a Nigeria where Space Science and Technology becomes one of the main tools for socioeconomic development.

Thank you for your attention, God bless you for being part of this epoch-making event.