



REMARKS

BY

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HIGH COMMISSIONER OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED KINGDOM**

**AT THE RECEPTION TO CELEBRATE THE KINGDOM OF IFE:
SCULPTURES FROM WEST AFRICA:**

BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 3RD MARCH 2010

Director General, British Museum and other officials of the Museum,

**His Imperial Majesty
Alayeluwa Oba Okunola Sijuade, Olubuse II
Ooni of Ife and his Entourage**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am greatly honoured to be here this evening in the company of His Imperial Majesty, the Ooni of Ife.

My task on this momentous occasion is two-fold. First, to welcome His Imperial Majesty and his royal delegation to London and second, to briefly introduce His Imperial Majesty to this august audience.

While the first task is easy, the second is not so simple. Though His Imperial Majesty is very well known to us, I doubt my competence to properly introduce him. Briefly put, His Imperial Majesty ascended the throne of his fore fathers in 1980 at the age of 50, becoming the 50th Ooni of Ife. He celebrated his 80th Birthday on 1st January this year, with pomp and pageantry. We congratulate him, most heartily, on that memorable and joyous occasion.

Not being a Curator, I can also not truly introduce the rich culture of Ife, which is the cradle of Yoruba civilisation. Without any doubt however, His Imperial Majesty is the sole embodiment and a worthy progeny of this cultural heritage. From all accounts, Ife culture is one that dates back to thousands of years, some would say, to the origin of creation. This is the much I know and can confidently say about our Guest of Honour of this special occasion.

Today's event therefore offers us the privilege of witnessing the historic exhibition of sculptures of Ife Kingdom. It is even a rare and greater honour to have His Imperial Majesty grace the occasion in his personal capacity. I therefore wish to thank the organisers and host of this Exhibition in this year of Golden Jubilee Anniversary of Nigeria's independence.

With these few remarks, it is with the greatest sense of humility that I now invite His Imperial Majesty, to deliver his address in celebration of this Exhibition.

I thank you for coming and for your kind attention.