

Farewell Messages to Professor Adebayo Olukoshi, Executive Secretary of CODESRIA (2000–2008) 31 March 2009

Mahmood Mamdani
President of CODESRIA
(1999-2002)

Bayo was asked to head CODESRIA in the midst of a deep institutional crisis. The record shows that Bayo successfully headed an internal reform of CODESRIA. His leadership confirmed and strengthened the character of CODESRIA as Africa's leading membership-driven intellectual organization in an era when more and more African organisations are driven by donors rather than members. It is fitting that this gathering salute Adebayo Olukoshi for his exemplary leadership at a critical juncture in our history.

Nouria Remaoun
CRASC, Oran, Algeria

Through these few words, the Executive Committee wants to pay a glowing tribute to Adebayo Olukoshi, the outgoing Executive Secretary of CODESRIA. This homage also goes to the team that worked under him, at his pace with self-abnegation and confidence.

Adebayo has been the man of the transition. A difficult transition which, were it not for his personality, might not have been achieved with such a success the scope and recognition of which we can measure today.

Adebayo has to be proud of his achievements and so are we.

He has been both a rescuer, a strengthening force and a builder over the 2001-2008 period. He has had to re-establish confidence and trust on two levels:

- 1- with donors,
- 2- with the members of CODESRIA and more particularly with the Executive Committee.

The qualities that Bayo demonstrated to achieve this transition have included:

- his commitment and passion for the Pan-African ideal,
- his professional management,

- his high sense of responsibility in relation to the historic mission devolved upon him.

CODESRIA has been able to find the desired answer in the man. His deep knowledge of the academic world in and outside Africa served him a great deal in his recovery, break off and continuity task, in the pursuit of CODESRIA's mission: serving the development of Africans and Africa.

As an Executive Committee, we duly appreciate this effort, that of someone who is charged with the mission of taking CODESRIA to new heights in Africa and elsewhere – an institution which is the pride of Africa. His action inside a team that he energised to serve this project arouses a dual feeling, one of admiration for both his intellectual capacity for formalisation and synthesis, but also fear for succumbing to the fascination.

He has been able, where it was absolutely necessary to bulldoze restore confidence, without which CODESRIA could not have survived institutionally.

Fortunately, his joviality, his sense of human relations and his sensitivity have mitigated to some extent what reason dictated him to do.

We are proud today to have assisted Adebayo, as an Executive Committee, proud of CODESRIA's leadership whose qualities of understanding, confidence and non-conflictual situations have been essential for the Executive Secretary to lead a successful mission.

I wish to thank all of Bayo's team to have been able to identify him as the man of the situation.

Lennart Wohlgenuth
University of Gothenburg,
Sweden

Dear Adebayo,

Now when your time at and with Codesria has come to a close, I wish to tell you how much I appreciate you and your tremendous work done for the research community of Africa, for Africa as a whole and for the world. From your earlier work and endeavours, we all had high expecta-

tions of what you might be able to do. Now, we can see that you have outdone all these expectations and much more – both as a scholar, a leader, an africanist and, perhaps most importantly, as a human being. I really hope that you also, in the future, will find a platform from which you will continue to contribute to Africa and mankind in the way you have done so far. With people like you, there is reason for optimism and hope for a better world in the future.

Adebayo, I hope always to remain your friend and brother.

Carin Norberg
Director of Nordic Africa Institute,
Sweden

Dear Adebayo,

On your last day as Executive Secretary to CODESRIA, we, at the Nordic Africa Institute, would like to pay tribute to one of our "sons", the elusive Prince, the much appreciated partner. Your period at the institute in the nineties was one of development and academic richness. In one of the many papers you wrote during this time, you put the question "Is there any basis for hope and optimism in the future of Africa?" Your answer then was yes, that the governments on the continent would have to contend with a more vigilant populace. It is my belief that it is people like yourself who have and will continue to contribute to this vigilance – through addressing the complicated questions and through being actively involved in the public debate. On behalf of all staff of the institute, I would like to wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Thandika Mkandawire
Geneva, Switzerland

To Bayo,

You have served the African social science community magnificently and with great dedication and sense of purpose. Under you, CODESRIA has attained unprecedented heights. I am confident that both your knowledge of CODESRIA and your intellectual capacity will remain available to us all.

I am proud and honoured to have been closely associated with you during all these years of hard work.

Carlos Lopes

UN Assistant Secretary General
UNITAR Executive Director
UN Staff College Director

The world is facing an exceptional moment. This is a sentence that has been repeated many times, in different historical moments and specific contexts. However, few will argue that what we are leaving is unprecedented, in many respects. One of today's most dramatic developments is the collapse of mainstream policy advice, so insistently offered to developing countries by the Washington Consensus experts. It is therefore reassuring to confirm that some of the high priests of alternative economics were right all along when they ferociously attacked the simplistic views of our continent. Our own Adebayo Olukoshi was perhaps a lonely voice in some quarters, but not so, within African scholars. He has rather been a respected leader, a prominent thinker, one that was pro-active in promoting alternatives that went far beyond the rebuttal of fashionable policy advice. He was capable of relating the unbundling of the latter with deep philosophical thinking. He writes beautifully, he is quick, and he is capable of explaining with convincing arguments the political economy behind our various crisis and challenges.

Adebayo was courageous in many respects as well. He took up the CODESRIA leadership challenge at a time when the organization was divided and lacked direction. He has succeeded in transforming CODESRIA. He introduced new themes and priorities, such as democracy, civil society, human rights, gender, identity and citizenship. This was not obvious. It was not easy either. But now they are part of the CODESRIA landscape.

Adebayo was also the promoter of the Lusophone initiative, the most serious attempt ever to integrate a rather marginal group of scholars into the organization. I remember the time, back in the early eighties, when I was almost the lone Lusophone voice participating in CODESRIA activities. The fact that one recent General Assembly took place in Maputo and one Lusophone, Teresa Cruz e Silva, became President of CODESRIA is a remarkable turn-around.

We have Adebayo to thank for this successful reach out.

Adebayo is generous. A respected colleague one looks for to exchange views and impressions in so many themes. He is rigorous, but without an inch of intellectual arrogance. This is remarkable and makes him one of the greatest. A Yoruba proverb says that the young cannot teach tradition to the old. Welcome to old Adebayo.

Jibrin Ibrahim

Centre for Democracy
and Development
Abuja, Nigeria

Dear Bayo,

Just a short message to say how proud we are of your achievements for African social science, not just because you are a leading African scholar with enormous research output, and not just because your scholarship has always promoted the interest of the African people, and not just because you have succeeded in revamping CODESRIA, but above all for your success in prioritising training and opportunities for young and female African social scientists. By so doing, you have planted the seeds for a greater tomorrow for African social science.

I thank you.

Elisio Macamo

University of Bayreuth,
Germany

Dear Ebrima, Dear Francis,

Thanks a lot for the invitation. Unfortunately, I'm checking my email in an internet cafe as I'm out of the office. I don't, therefore, have the right environment to compose a message that would be fitting. In any case, let me jot down a few lines to say how much of role model Bayo has been for me. I met him for the first at a conference in Portugal. This was in the nineties and my academic career was just starting. I think we sat on opposing sides of the substantive discussions and I remember him cautioning me against certain remarks I'd made that seemed to cast Africa in a somewhat bad light. At the time, I didn't quite understand him.

However, with growing involvement with CODESRIA and several conversations and debates in informal and formal contexts on all sorts of subjects, I realized

Bayo had spoken to me as a pan africanist. As an African academic abroad, Bayo's perspective and insistence on it became an inspiration for me. Bayo's commitment to Africa and to the social sciences made in Africa by Africans for Africans fascinates me as a person, but also stimulates me in my own work. I often find myself, when faced with statements on Africa, wondering what Bayo would have said before I even dare to formulate my own opinion. Whatever Bayo does next after his CODESRIA mandate, I really hope that he stays connected with the African social scientific community and continues to inspire many young scholars like I was in the nineties for the benefit of our dignity. I have learnt a lot from him and I'm very thankful to him for all the opportunities which he gave me to come back to Africa and feel at home. My membership of the scientific committee owes as much to his encouragement and vigorous campaigning as to his very noteworthy commitment to the integration of the African academic community. In this respect, I must mention the Lusophone initiative, his brain child, and an excellent vehicle for the reintegration of Portuguese speaking African scholars into the wider African community. In the unlikely event that young scholars do not react to Bayo's enthusiasm the same way I did, there is still, for those who are who are aesthetically minded, a very good chance that they come to appreciate his taste for colourful African shirts. I'm also already wearing them. I wish him all the best!

Best.

Samir AMIN

Forum du Tiers Monde,
Dakar

Dear Ebrima,

I deeply regret that I shall not be with you for the farewell ceremony.

Here follows my personal message to Bayo:

We would have liked to organise, even in the simplest way, a ceremony where we can publicly voice FTM/FMA joint leadership's satisfaction during your two terms of office as Executive Secretary and CODESRIA's helmsman. But this has not been possible because of our busy schedules on both sides. Nevertheless, we would like to put on record our heart-felt and friendly congratulations for the work that you have accomplished.

While it is obviously too early to make an assessment of these two terms, there is no doubt, however, that some important achievements have been made. CODESRIA has made progress in the implementation of its initial project of actively participating in an effort to construct/reconstruct an efficient African-Asian and tri-continental intelligentsia. Your determination to strengthen ties with the Third World Forum and the World Alternatives Forum has made it possible to associate an excellent Pan-African institution like CODESRIA to global and tri-continental events such as the World Social Forum in the early phase of its development.

The impact of your policy on the sub-regional location of the institute is becoming increasingly visible and widely appreciated. The publications catalogue has been enriched with the monographs that are required to lead the necessary and parallel reflection and debate on the causes behind the success of the imperialistic projects seeking to maintain our continent in a state of under-development and the left-wing alternatives. The project on providing CODESRIA with the self-financing bases which are founded on the contributions of its network members has made significant progress during your tenure. In summary, you have been able to salvage CODESRIA which was on the edge of a disaster when you were elected for the first time.

Warmest regards.

Mirjam de Bruijn
African Studies Council,
Leiden, the Netherland

Dear Bayo,

I remember the first time we met when we held a meeting at CODESRIA in Dakar, where we discussed the ASC-CODESRIA partnership. It was with Leo de Haan, our then new director. I had worked before with Gerti Hesseling who was very determined to get to know CODESRIA better and to get the ASC linked to your organisation. However, we were really struggling to get it into a formal relationship.

Your style of leadership opened the door for a partnership between CODESRIA and the ASC, for which we are very grateful. Discussions we had on partnership and relations between institutions in the North and in the South were very fruitful. I realised that we were at the end of the epoch

where the North sets agendas and where the South had to take what was available. You gave CODESRIA the independence it deserves as one of the largest social science networks in Africa.

I would like to stress that our collaboration after the meeting in Dakar in 2004 has been very fruitful. A special marking point in our relationship was the establishment of the Consortium for Development Partnership (CDP), which started with a meeting in the Netherlands, in the 'bush', Eerbeek. This meeting that was initiated by Richard Joseph from Northwestern University (PAS) and the Dutch Ministry of International Cooperation was very outstanding in that leadership of a northern institute was really challenged with the leadership of a southern institute, i.e. CODESRIA. The following years were not easy but CODESRIA played a decisive role in consolidating the consortium. Our shared ideas about this type of partnerships will now lead us into a co-leadership where the ASC is sub-contractor of CODESRIA. Of course, our collaboration had also its downs, but this is a logical consequence of the many obligations CODESRIA has taken up under your leadership and the many projects that you are leading. I am very much involved in the supervision of PhD-scholars in West and Central Africa and most of these scholars have been involved in CODESRIA activities. It shows how active CODESRIA has become in the education of African intellectual elites that are so necessary for the future of the continent.

Dear Adebayo, after these 8 years of leading CODESRIA, it is time to take a rest. You can look back at a very fruitful period also for the development of CODESRIA. We are happy that we have reached this intense collaboration with you and hope that the new executive secretary will continue in this atmosphere of collaboration. I wish you a time of retreat and reflection and after that, a beautiful career.

All the best and I hope we will engage in other joint activities in the future and see you soon.

Hari Singh
Asian Political and International
Studies Association (APISA)
Kualalampur, Malaysia

Apisa's Tribute To Bayo:

When Ebrima Sall of CODESRIA approached me to write a tribute to my friend

and colleague, Adebayo Olukoshi, I had no hesitation, notwithstanding the short notice given. If anything, I consider it an honour to be given such an opportunity to put into words my thoughts and feeling about Bayo – as he is affectionately known.

I first came to know Bayo in my capacity as the Executive Secretary of the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA). We were the pioneers of the Africa-Asia-Latin America Scholarly Collaborative Program, the difference being that Bayo was in the forefront of creating a counter-hegemonic South-South academic consciousness, whereas I was rather skeptical of such an approach. But it did not take long for Bayo's powers of persuasion, tact and patience to win me over to the Southern side, and where I have since remained with steadfast commitment. Together, and without de-emphasizing Bayo's leadership role, the South-South academic movement began to build bridges and engage the wider academic community, particularly in Europe, but also in Australasia and the Caribbean.

Although senior to Bayo in age, I was very much Bayo's junior when it came to matters of academic collaboration, organization, networking and funding; no doubt due to the years of experience tucked under his belt. But to attribute Bayo's success – especially during his tenure as the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA – mainly to experience, does not capture the essence of the man and actually underestimate other qualities that Bayo brought into that role. Bayo is a solid academic which few, if any, will dispute. Not only is he well read and published, but Bayo also impressed me with his intellectual sharpness, his meticulous organization of an argument, and his ability to convince others. As one of my colleagues in APISA observed: "Bayo could easily walk into a meeting room, be told what the topic is about, and deliver a lecture or engage others in a discussion on the subject in a very coherent, logical and structured manner".

These qualities, however, tend to divert the spotlight away from an equally important aspect of Bayo: his character. I have had the opportunity to observe, first hand, Bayo's ability to relate to others on the humane level. This may be just an involuntary reflex like paying for taxi fare to make sure that someone gets home safely. But the mark of Bayo's character

was especially evident from CODESRIA's 12th General Assembly: Bayo did not forget his comrades in arms and benefactors who no longer are in positions of authority. He accorded them respect and honoured them.

Are we to say that Bayo has no faults? While I'm sure he has, but then, who has none? The test of true friendship is to overlook the weaknesses in the other and dwell instead on the more positive points. On that note, to know Bayo is to respect him, and to treat him as a friend. Reciprocity is not the issue here.

Putting friendship aside and coming back to my role as the Executive Secretary of APISA, I will take this opportunity to thank Bayo for being there for APISA. Over the years, Bayo has given me sensible advice with regard to a variety of matters associated with running an academic organization, and which has been helpful in the overall development of APISA as an academic organization. The fact remains that organizations come and go, and APISA itself is not immune to the vicissitudes inherent in the funding community's priorities, and has been forced to adapt to more pragmatic realities. APISA's resilience and its track record aside, very few individuals are aware of the instrumental role that Bayo has played behind the scenes in committing CODESRIA to APISA's continued prosperity. To Bayo, APISA would like to say formally: "Thank you".

Let me end by citing Henry Thoreau who once said: "The language of friendship is not words but meanings". Although this message is crafted in words, hopefully, the meanings are clearly conveyed. APISA and I wish that these meanings will continue to bind us together as we wish Bayo the very best in his future endeavours.

Adam Habib
University of Johannesburg,
South Africa

Comrades & Colleagues,

When I was invited to write a few lines for Bayo's farewell, I jumped at the opportunity. Bayo is not only a great friend, but a fellow activist in the struggle for transformation - a struggle, not only nationally bound and not only confined to the African continent, but also directed at revolutionising the global academy. Bayo has been one of the great leaders in this struggle. In the last few years he, in partnership with a fantastic team, has re-

vitalised CODESRIA, one of the institutional bulwarks in this struggle for academic transformation. But he has also been a leader who has demonstrated magnanimity. When I led an HSRC delegation to CODESRIA a few years ago, we experienced unparalleled hospitality and comradely solidarity from the Codesria team which enabled a true partnership to be developed between the two institutions. I experienced a similar attitude, a few years later, when I led a University of Johannesburg delegation to Dakar.

Bayo of course deserves a good rest in the next few weeks and months, given his arduous but exhilarating term as CODESRIA's Executive Secretary. But I urge him not to take too long a rest. After all, our struggle cannot let someone of his ability to be absent for too long.

Rest well my comrade, revitalize, but return soon, for our struggle for academic transformation continues.

Best.

Said Adejumo
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA),
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Bayo, Africa is Proud of You, Well Done and God Bless !

The stage was Dakar, the scene was the CODESRIA General Assembly and the year was 1998. The soul and future of CODESRIA were at stake. One of the foot soldiers of that battle was Adebayo Olukoshi, amongst both the old and young generation of CODESRIA activists. The battle was fierce, the struggle was total, but the forces of change and progress prevailed. It was at that moment that the struggle for the rebirth of CODESRIA, begun.

Bayo, you came to CODESRIA at a very dark moment in the history of the organization. The lights were almost out, the house was divided and Africa's social science research was in difficult times. As a committed Pan-Africanist, you took up the challenge to rebuild and rewrite CODESRIA's history and place the organization back on the world stage.

A few years down the line, you have achieved your aim. CODESRIA is back on its feet, much stronger than it was even in the old good times. Africa is proud of you.

In achieving your aim, I am sure you would have bruised several hands, offended

some friends and colleagues, and did some unconventional things. Success comes with some pains. I hope those friends will have a space in their hearts to forgive and forget, for you have made us all proud.

Bayo, as you move on in life, we shall record your role and contribution to Africa's social science and CODESRIA in gold! You came, you saw and you conquered! We wish you every success in life, for Africa is proud of you.

To Ebrima Sall, we wish you greater heights than Bayo achieved. For, to put it mildly, you are another illustrious son of both CODESRIA and Africa.

Jacques Tshibwabwa Kuditsini
University of Kinshasa, RDC,
Member of CODESRIA

Dearest BAYO,

At the end of your term of office as the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, allow me to express, from the bottom of my heart, all the respect and esteem that I have for you. It was during the preparatory sub-regional conference on the Council's 30th anniversary in 2003 in Douala that I had the chance to know you. Since then, my frequent participations in CODESRIA's activities have allowed me to be in a position where we have come across each other in different African capitals where CODESRIA often organises activities. In the course of time, we have come to establish friendship and fraternity ties beyond our intellectual relationship. This close relationship has enabled me to know you and to discover many of your qualities, especially that of an exceptional scholar with an unbelievable capacity to articulate the theoretical and empirical challenges of research. Soft, but with an unquestionable rigorous orientation, great and yet humble, your capacity to establish contacts and to reach out to the community of African researchers which you know so well, make you a genuine pan-Africanist, an emblematic figure who has been able to mobilise, throughout his successful tenure, researchers from different linguistic, geographic and generational backgrounds around the Council's programmes and activities. You are a worthy son of Africa in many respects: you are leaving behind you a robust CODESRIA which you have saved from wreckage and doom and elevated it

to the rank of a respectable, pan-African and world research institution which one can proudly associate with.

And thanks to you, dear Bayo, CODESRIA has become again a public space, a place for constructive confrontations and debates, a place for intergenerational and gender dialogue, a platform for the expression of intellectual pluralism, and in short, a tool for the democratisation of learning and knowledge. For the researchers of my generation who have known you, you are a model of humility, a knowledge icon, a scientist and a polymath, a unifier, someone who loves the work to be well done, almost a workaholic, a staunch advocate of gender studies and a first-class born leader.

How could one be reluctant to acknowledge your managerial skills, your high sense of responsibility, your sense of honour, duty and initiative, and your creative capacity, as evidenced by the great accomplishment that you are leaving behind you? Your name which is already engraved in the excellence and performance register, has gone down in the intellectual history of CODESRIA and Africa, it complements the list of pan-Africanist researchers of the generations before you: Samir Amin, Thandika Mkandawire, Guy Mhone, Archie Mafeje, Joseph Ki-zerbo, Mahmood Mamdani, Zenebeworke Tadesse, to mention only those. Allow me also to recall all the efforts that you made during your term of office in order to re-integrate the DRC into CODESRIA's activities. "As long as the DRC is absent from CODESRIA, I shall never be at rest", such has always been your concern whenever we met. Today, despite the many crises that the DRC is going through, its researchers are increasingly visible in the Council's activities. This visibility is largely the result of your impulse and "unrelenting effort".

Dear Bayo, I wish I had the talent, skill and eloquence which characterise you in this type of circumstances. Unfortunately, I am far from possessing these qualities to be able to duly judge a person like you and your action at the head of CODESRIA Executive Secretariat. Therefore, it would be wise for me to end here and to reiterate my unfailing friendship. I thank you for having rebuilt this institution which you are leaving in other equally expert and skilled hands.

Cordially.

Adigun Agbaje
University of Ibadan,
Ibadan, Nigeria

Dear Ebrima,

Many thanks for the privilege of being invited to chip in a word or two to mark the end of Bayo's term as Executive Secretary of our CODESRIA. Bayo's term as ES started at a point in time when the horizon for CODESRIA was very bleak. He leaves CODESRIA as a solid organization, Africa's respected voice and key player in the global community of Social Science and Humanities scholarship, with a very bright and secure future. He has transformed the Council from an organization unfortunately weakened by poor leadership just prior to his assuming duty to a very strong institution built on solid structures, processes and the best human capital that Africa could offer.

Bayo, we are all proud of your achievements, not only because of the excellence of your scholarship, of your person and of your governance skills, but also because in doing so much, you inspire those who refuse to believe that nothing good can come out of Africa, that, indeed, their faith is not in vain. As the CODESRIA door formally closes for you, I have no doubt that the next set of doors will lead you further up the path to higher responsibility for scholarship, pro-development practice, and human-centred policy for our peoples, our continent and our world. Thank you, my friend, my colleague and my brother.

Abdalla Bujra
DPMF
Nairobi, Kenya

Dear Ebrima and Francis,

Bayo deserves a great ceremony in honour of his great achievement. The Executive Secretary before your predecessor had begun to change towards the right, the ideological direction of CODESRIA, its intellectual constituency, its financial credibility and its integrity as a great Pan-African institution. Most of us had thought that CODESRIA had achieved stability and developmental direction which could not be changed. We were wrong. Within five years CODESRIA was in a shamble. Bayo became Executive Secretary at this point in CODESRIA's history. Under his steady leadership, and with the support of his colleagues both

in the Secretariat and the Executive Committee, he restored the direction and integrity of CODESRIA, greatly expanded its activities, re-established its stability and sustainability, and enhanced its reputation within the continent and internationally. We honour his great achievement. Let us also honour and recognise Bayo's personality - his modesty, his honesty, his sharp intellect, his sense of humour and his disarming behaviour towards all who encounter him.

Malika Benradi
AFARD Chairperson

Brother Adebayo,

Brother ADEBAYO, the man of all noble causes.

A committed researcher, you are deeply convinced of the desire for change.

Beyond research, training and creating numerous institutions, your overriding interrogations and concerns, have clearly remained the development of Africa, but over and above all the citizenship and dignity of African men and women.

Your permanent smile expresses the meaning that you confer on human relations.

Brother Olukoshi, whom fate has put across my path as Chair of AFARD, has marked my tenure from the very first day by his warm welcome, his listening capability and his encouragements.

AFARD, the leading pan-African feminist organisation was created within this prestigious institution known as CODESRIA which accompanied its initial steps into research and has always overseen its development and bloom.

I took the leadership of AFARD at a time when the organisation started to lose its breath, going through countless organisational and financial hardships in an extremely difficult regional and international environment. Like a sister beset by numerous difficulties, I sought guidance and support from my brother: CODESRIA and brother OLUKOSHI, the Executive Secretary, made it a personal affair and his priority.

Your guidance and availability, your mobilisation of CODESRIA's skills made of you a brother who can reach out and give when called upon for help by a sister ... a brother who is convinced of the women's solidarity and cause...

You supported AFARD in its uphill effort, you injected a new dynamism into its members. Your advice soon translated into the results that have materialised hope, ambition and the will to overcome all the difficulties and to keep up the fight.

This testimony will certainly not express all the gratitude and appreciation of AFARD towards Brother Adebayo who supported it, keeping the struggle and fight going in order to lead Africa into a better future.

This struggle torch, that lights up the African skies, will certainly continue to fly high and will always constitute Brother Olukoshi's top priority wherever he may be.

On behalf of all AFRAD members, I wish him full success in all his activities, a lot of happiness and long life.

Olive Shisana

Human Sciences Research Council,
South Africa

Bayo's intellectual depth makes him a distinguished African scholars who has dedicated a greater part of his working life thinking about what matters. His critical and sharp mind has rubbed on many of us who worked with him. The relationship we built between CODESRIA and the HSRC will grow because he planted a lot of seeds that will germinate long after his departure from CODESRIA.

Paschal Mihyo

OSSREA,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Dear Bayo,

This is definitely not one of the occasions most of us were looking forward to. But we are sure you have been looking forward to it yourself. You came, you restructured and reinstated CODESRIA. Bowing out when it is still at its best is exemplary. We shall miss you, not only for what you did in institution building in Africa, but mainly for what the situation would have been had you remained at CODESRIA. We are consoled by the fact that you leave behind a solid team of highly skilled and exceptionally motivated operators under the leadership of the person you have worked with at very close range. I personally have enjoyed working with you since my days at AAU and now at OSSREA. I can only assure you that, given the foundations we have built to-

gether, the future relations between CODESRIA and OSSREA will no longer be what they used to be! They will get stronger and warmer and grow as we go. All the best from me and from the Executive Committee and Secretariat of OSSREA.

Leo de Haan

African Studies Centre,
Leiden, the Netherland

Farewell and Appreciation Message

Dear Adebayo,

On behalf of the management and all other colleagues of the African Studies Centre Leiden, both research and library support staff, I sincerely thank you for the way in which you encouraged and reinforced the collaboration between CODESRIA and the ASC.

Ever since you headed a strong CODESRIA delegation to the ASC in 2004, we felt confident that our cooperation would be fruitful. Numerous interactions followed, such as feed back on each other's strategic agendas, research cooperation and library/e-publishing exchanges and conferences.

For the ASC this is an important step forward and we hope for CODESRIA, too. We will continue our close cooperation under the leadership of your successor.

Thank you again. Enjoy your sabbatical and hope to see you soon (in whatever capacity)

Souleymane Bachir Diagne

Columbia University,
New York, USA

Bayo, as I know him.

There is no doubt that Bayo Olukoshi has profoundly marked the recent and already rich history of CODESRIA. Our community was lucky enough to have found in him, at a time when our institution came under sharp criticism, a researcher of quality and a leader who has been able to embody immediately and throughout his two terms of office, the single thing that crystallises the force of CODESRIA: credibility.

The desire for credibility has topped the list of Bayo's concerns. As the Chair of CODESRIA's Scientific Council, and having worked closely with him in the preparations for our General Assemblies, in particular, I know he attaches so much value to the establishment of transparent

and efficient procedures for selecting the guest researchers who are expected to ensure the scientific success of these periodic meetings and to be representative of all African researchers.

It is with delight that one works with Bayo. The soft and friendly way in which he sought the collaboration of all is a model of leadership: this is because he was very demanding on himself and always generous in his effort and will to serve others. He relied on the best instincts of those he called upon to assist him in his mission. As he passes on to the new General Secretary the mission of leading an institution which today boasts the confidence that the community of African researchers place in its capacity to face up to future challenges, and convinced that he would be around and continue to put his experience and commitment at the service of the institution that I say to him "well done, my friend and thank you for all what I have learnt working by your side"

Jimi O. Adesina

Rhodes University,
Grahamstown, South Africa

A Tribute to Adebayo Olukoshi

The 12th General Assembly of the Council in Yaoundé must have looked bizarre and self-congratulatory for those unfamiliar with the state of the Council. In December 2000, two months before Adebayo Olukoshi took office as the Executive Secretary, whether in fact there was going to be a CODESRIA going forward was not guaranteed. A high point of the General Assembly was the session that marked the farewell address of Adebayo Olukoshi, and I had the privilege of giving a tribute on behalf of the Executive Committee. If 2000 marked the absolute low-point in the history of the Council, three presidents and executive committees, and one executive secretary later, CODESRIA, like the proverbial sphinx, rose out of the ashes.

More than any one person, the African social science community has Adebayo Olukoshi to thank for not only a recovery of a collective patrimony, but ensuring that we passed on the torch to a new team at the Executive Secretariat and the Executive Committee in full confidence of a guaranteed future. That this was done with absolute integrity, and true to the highest ideals of the Council, was particularly heart-warming.

No one person makes history alone; True. But each generation and community, village or nation has always needed its best and brightest in its most pressing hour of need. To possess enormous capacity for defending the patrimony of the community is one thing. To combine that with outstanding personal integrity, immense sense of history, brilliance and dedication in the process of rebuilding—these are indeed given to a select few in history. In this, we have been exceedingly blessed in the African social science community to have in Bayo someone who commands this rare combination.

For someone I knew for the better part of two decades before he became the Executive Secretary in 2001, I was constantly astonished at the extreme extent to which Bayo drove himself to ensure that the work of the Council was done and done to the highest degree of excellence that one can possibly expect of anyone. In his eight years as Executive Secretary, Bayo went not only beyond the call of duty, but often beyond the call of reason—putting his health and comfort on the line. Dedication, passionate defence of the integrity of the Council, and creatively leading the work of the Council were the consistent hallmarks of Bayo's tenure. His own immense sense of humility and service combined with outstanding personal probity and decency. For these and much more than one can put together in a very short tribute, we—all of us in the African social science community—owe Bayo a world of gratitude.

As much as we owe Bayo, we equally owe Hussaina, Iyamide and Akbar who shared their husband and father with the world and gave him the environment to serve with utmost dedication. This tribute is as much to them as it is to Bayo.

"Each generation" Fanon wrote, "must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it." Of Bayo it will be said: out of the relative obscurity of the 1998 General Assembly, he with others discovered the mission of this generation; not only did he not betray the mission; he fulfilled it!

Fatima Harrak
Rabat, Morocco

Homage to Bayo Olukoshi

I came to know Adebayo Olukoshi during the Cairo sub-regional conference,

held in preparation for the celebrations of CODESRIA's 30th anniversary which debated the theme of: "Northern Africa and Panafricanism".

It was on this occasion that I discovered Bayo's pan-African passion and his determination to see CODESRIA achieve its ideal of unity and indivisibility of the continent, no matter what efforts it takes to overcome geographic, linguistic and gender barriers. Coming from the Institute of African Studies – a newly-established Moroccan multilingual Africanist research institution, sharing the same calling with CODESRIA – I was immediately impressed by Bayo's "unitarian" and "unifying" fervour from which he never departed.

This is how I was lucky and privileged enough to have somebody like Adebayo Olukoshi as my mentor within CODESRIA. It was by his side on the Scientific Committee and on many other committees, where I was invited to sit, that I learnt how to know and appreciate this great CODESRIA family.

What I admire and respect most in Bayo is not only his dynamism, his determination or the scope of his learning and knowledge of Africa and CODESRIA, but especially his subtleness, his ability and his alertness. And if I have to mention the features that have impressed me the most with this lively personality and for whom I have a lot of affection, three stand out clearly:

First, his extensive knowledge served by his prodigious memory, a fabulous physical resilience and an extraordinary gift – that of making the most complex ideas accessible in a simple and concise language.

Secondly, his allergy to all forms of status quo and mental lethargy. While assuming a firm leadership and working determinedly towards achieving the ideals of CODESRIA, Bayo never departed from his pen. His love for writing can only be matched by our own joy to read him.

The third feature is friendship. Bayo has all what it takes to maintain or make friends: communicative warmth, affective hypersensitivity, spontaneous sociability, unfailing generosity and curiosity about his fellow human. He has found this friendship with the CODESRIA family where my impression is that he has spent eight years of happiness.

Lastly, Bayo's laughter - odd remark or the slightest humour and there it goes! This warm and heartily laughter which cheered up our meetings and relaxed our minds after tough and sometimes protracted meetings, this laughter will continue to resonate in CODESRIA's halls!

Issa Shivji
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

For Bayo,

Affectionately, we know him as Bayo

Rarely could I say, pronounce Adebayo. CODESRIA he saved and served, our Bayo,

Pan-Africanism runs in the blood of Bayo.

Adebayo Olukoshi, with or without *uprofesa*,

will remain CODESRIA's Bayo.

Tunakutakia kila la heri, mpenzi wetu Bayo,

Umajumui wa Afrika uwe maisha na malengo, Bayo.

Zenebeworke Tadesse
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Bayo will be remembered as the Executive Secretary who saved the Council from the precipice and one who managed to take it to new heights. Among his numerous qualities, I will always remember his unstinting commitment to hard work, his sharp analytical mind and his sense of humor. He is a great asset to Africa. I wish him and his family the very best, as they embark on a new adventure.

Shahida El-Baz
Giza, Egypte

To my dear Bayo...see you soon..!

Dear friends, comrades and others,

Please forgive my confusion...! Although the end of Bayo's contract as CODESRIA's Executive Secretary was a known fact to all of us, announcing his actual departure came to me as a disturbing surprise, which makes it difficult to express my feelings as sober as one is supposed to be in such an occasion.

Bayo, to me, was always: a brilliant intellectual, an inexhaustible and dynamic leader, and a committed worrier for the liberation of Africa. More importantly, Bayo,

to me, was and always will be, a brother, a comrade and my virtual son-in-law..! It is within this context that I discovered Bayo's humane abilities for being extremely loyal, considerate, generous and highly supportive to Archie and me, as well as to African scholars and members of CODESRIA.

Under Bayo's leadership, CODESRIA was not only saved from being hijacked, but also became a knowledge powerhouse, a dynamic intellectual and political agent for African integration and development, and a safe home for African scholars of different generations.

While I am sure that Bayo is leaving CODESRIA in good and competent hands which will certainly keep the flame burning, I am sure that my dear Bayo will always be present with us in CODESRIA, our home..! Therefore, I shall not say farewell, I shall say : See you soon Bayo, and thanks for everything.

P.S. Dana joins me in all what I've written.

Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja
University of North Carolina,
Chapel Hill, USA

Hearty Congratulations and Best Wishes to Adebayo Olukoshi.

Dear Bayo,

I would like to join the chorus of congratulations and thank you for the outstanding work you did in reviving CODESRIA and re-establishing its preeminence as Africa's umbrella social science organization. During the more than 25 years in which I have known you, I have been greatly impressed by your intellect, the clarity with which you grasp Africa's realities, and your keen commitment to Pan-Africanism and the future of the continent and its peoples. I am certain that these personal and intellectual qualities will continue to guide you as you move on to new challenges.

Please accept my hearty congratulations for your accomplishments and best wishes for a bright future.

Ali El-Kenz
Université de Nantes,
France

A historian of ideas who would decide to work on post-colonial Africa would very quickly be confronted with this special

institution known as CODESRIA. It is different from universities which are national and have mostly an academic calling; it is also different from expert associations which, more often than not, work on programmes commissioned by foreign organisations and businesses. It is obviously an academic institution, though its knowledge is resolutely committed to the service of the continent, to freedom and development. It is integrated into a complex network of ties with foreign countries and is continually irrigated by this opening as it strives to control it in order to build its own scientific autonomy. Pan-African and committed is one way to describe this "collective intellectual" known as CODESRIA. But the position is a difficult one and requires both exceptional intelligence and will. A decade ago, CODESRIA was short of being swept away by the worst crisis of its history: beyond financing which kept shrinking and even academic freedom restrictions which constrained intellectual output, and in short, beyond anything finally external, the crisis especially hit the core of the institution, its politico-cognitive position. The proponents of disorder and chaos, individualism vs. holism, informalisation of social labour as a way of pulling out of poverty, etc. almost diverted it from the path it had painfully carved out over the past twenty years of its existence. It was then that I saw the new team of the Executive Secretariat, led by Adebayo Olukoshi, at work. I had known him as a young post-doctorate student in the 80s. When I met him this time, he was the young leader of this prestigious institution, yet on the "brink of collapse". It was an overwhelming task to put things back on the right track: first, restoring confidence with its researchers, its African and foreign partners and its donors while simultaneously reorganising the different administrative services and, last but not least, establishing diversified and autonomous scientific activity monitoring and evaluation structures for the scientific council, methodological and thematic workshops, workgroups, documentation and publication. The new architecture took form thanks to the admirable work carried out over several years. Today, CODESRIA has become again a committed "collective intellectual", but it has grown in stature and complexity and gained more pan-African and global recognition. We owe all this to Adebayo and his team which devoted

their youth to this reconstruction work, this sense of commitment in the noblest sense which they displayed and went even beyond.

Björn Beckman
Stockholm University,

An appreciation on the occasion of the changing of guards, with Adebayo Olukoshi going and Ebrima Sall coming as the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, on 31 March 2009.

I have been privileged to follow CODESRIA's development into the leading organisation for committed African scholarship, primarily from a Nigerian perspective, watching its remarkable progress together with colleagues at that end. Africa's public institutions, including its universities, are yet to liberate themselves from colonialism and new forms of foreign penetration. New local ruling classes are prone to manipulate these relations for private gains, but have failed miserably to provide social welfare and national development. Social progress depends heavily on the ability on forces on the ground to reform these institutions from inside and from below. CODESRIA is an outstanding example of such an alternative source of institution-building. However, even such achievements are under threat of being hijacked and submerged by factional divisions. This was the case when Adebayo Olukoshi took over in the year 2000 and his extraordinary contribution has been to ensure that the organisation has emerged even stronger and more committed from its temporary decline. Having been asked in 2007 to head an evaluation of the organisation by some of its funders, I can vouch for this impressive achievement. Of course, the quality of the whole Secretariat has been crucial. It is therefore also comforting to note that the able Head of the Research Department, Ebrima Sall, is now taking over as the Executive Director. We wish Ebrima the best of luck in continuing the good work. As for Bayo, I am convinced that he will keep up his commitment to Pan-Africanism and concerned African scholarship.

Long Live Codesria! Long Live Committed African Scholarship!

Carlos Cardoso
CODESRIA

On behalf of pan-African Colleagues at the CODESRIA Secretariat in Dakar

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

I have the honour and great pleasure to say, on behalf of the CODESRIA international staff, a few words on the occasion of the farewell ceremony organised in honour of the departing Executive Secretary, our colleague Adebayo Olukoshi. I must confess to you that this is no easy task at least for two reasons:

First of all, the moments of separation are always overloaded with emotions, as clearly expressed by a Cap-Verdian poet and singer who said:

Oi Partida, só bó podia séparanu!

Oh departure, you can but do us part !

Oi partida bó ê um dor profundo !

Oh departure, you make me suffer deep pain !

Séparaçon ê sufrimentu!

Separation is suffering !

Oi partida, bô ta leban,

Oh departure, you take me away from loved ones,

Bô ta torna trazem!

But fail not to bring me back someday !

We already had an advance taste of these difficult moments in Yaoundé and even here in Dakar. In Yaoundé, I said to some friends that you ought to have a strong heart and be in good shape to be able to bear the good and beautiful moments that we experienced during the General Assembly because they were so filled with emotions. I also admit that emotions are an integral part of life; and why not, of organisations as well.

CODESRIA and its Secretariat are well known for their working capacity, staff dedication to their mission and work. However, I am convinced that this dedication and work that we have accomplished would not have been done with the same dynamism and reached the same magnitude if they did not combine emotion with enthusiasm, on the one hand, and reason

and know-how, on the other. Didn't somebody say that *emotion* could create a change in state in the living world, something that is synonymous with *motion setting*?

Next, this is a difficult moment because it prompts us to express our attachment and the great work accomplished by one of the most eminent product of CODESRIA, someone who has always believed that it was possible to have great dreams while keeping one's eyes wide open and one's feet on the ground with a view to building things that would enhance the influence and image of our continent.

Dear Bayo !

During the past eight years, you have proven to us that it was possible to conciliate emotion, enthusiasm, the feeling of being part of a community with the spirit of sacrifice; in short, personal commitment with reason, logic, know-how and first and foremost with modern management to be able to carry out such a complex task as leading an organisation of intellectuals covering a whole continent and even beyond. If, in 2001, the philosophy on which the Council's activity programme rested was to send a strong signal to the community of intellectuals announcing the institutional reforms under way and also recalling that CODESRIA was the leading university interaction network in Africa; in 2009, as you are about to leave the Secretariat, the message can only be that the Council not only remains an excellent pan-African institution adapted to the essential needs and to the highest aspirations of African academics and scholars, and that it is also an institution that sufficiently innovates in carrying on its mission under the best conditions that can empower it to consolidate the historic achievements made by the social science and humanities research community and to look to breaking new grounds in knowledge.

I have no doubt that if you have been able to mobilise all these energies and know-how during your tenure, this is because even before becoming the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, you were fully aware of the greatness of the tasks devolved upon an organisation like ours. I remember your interventions in General Assemblies and other CODESRIA fora during the 80s, supported by those of other young CODESRIA activists such as Jimi Adesina, Sam Moyo, Ebrima Sall, Eric Asseka, Aisha Imam and many others. I

have been deeply marked by the relevance and strength of your arguments in your interventions which helped me to understand that CODESRIA was not simply made up of eminent personalities of the African scientific community such as Samir Amin, Joseph Kizerbo, Archie Mafeje, Issa Shivji, Claude Ake, Thandika Mkandawire, Wamba Dia Wamba, Okwudiba Nnoli, Emanuel Hansen, Abdoulaye Bathily, Mahmood Mamdani, Zene Tadesse, Teresa Cruz e Silva, Carlos Lopes and many others whom I am used to hearing; they have convinced me, in particular, of the usefulness and necessity for an organisation like CODESRIA on the continent.

When you became the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, you inherited an organisation beset with numerous problems and on the brink of bankruptcy. This was a key period in the Council's history, a time when strategic reflection on past achievements, current challenges, opportunities and prospects was required. You have been able to set up and lead a team of women and men capable of facing up to the challenge of not only returning the situation to normal and most importantly taking CODESRIA to the level where it can today occupy an enviable position in the humanities research world, to the extent of turning it into one of the most outstanding organisations on this matter across the continent.

For all this, CODESRIA and the entire African research community are most grateful to you, Bayo.

We have always dreamt of it now we have achieved, it and we maintain our ambition to always fly high CODESRIA's flag !

Today, we can say that thanks to your decisive contribution and to the contributions made by all those who have worked by your side in the Secretariat and the social science research community, CODESRIA holds a decisive position in that it is one of the most famous pan-African networks of intellectuals reflecting on all aspects of social science research, whether on methodological or theoretical concerns and disciplinary prospects with a view to encouraging and maintaining a culture of debate within the higher education and research world in Africa.

It is true that our task is not simple and is far from being complete. There is still a long and thorny road to building the fu-

ture of CODESRIA such that as an organisation, it can live up to the challenges awaiting us and even imposed on us so to speak, by the new Millennium, by this unjust globalisation and by the aspirations of African Peoples.

What gives us courage, and this is one of the strengths of our organisation, is that all those who went through the Council, in one way or another, have drunk from the "CODESRIA water fountain", a sort of magic potion that turns our relationship with the organisation into an almost indissoluble one not to say an eternal one. In this spirit, we have no doubt and remain convinced that your passage at the Secretariat was just an administrative phase but your marriage with CODESRIA will last forever, as is the case of many other colleagues who happened to have served it.

Now that you are about to leave the Secretariat but not CODESRIA, we all wish you a safe journey to where destiny puts you next and wish you in advance safe journey back here in Dakar. As a Portuguese saying goes: "The good son always ends up returning to his parents' home". And with the poet, we repeat:

*Oi Partida, bó ta leban
Bó ta torna trazem*

Oh departure, you take me away from loved ones,

But fail not to bring me back someday !

Virginie Niang

On behalf of the CODESRIA
Secretariat Local Staff in Dakar

Distinguished Guests,

Allow me to address, on behalf of the local staff of CODESRIA, the Executive Secretary, Professor Adebayo Olukoshi who has managed the Council for the past eight years.

Mr. Executive Secretary, when you took office eight years ago, CODESRIA was facing a rather grim future. The institution was going through a deep crisis that threatened its very existence. You have been able to invert the trend by pooling the Council's core dedicated resources: its staff and members. Under your leadership, we moved from an institution on the brink of bankruptcy to a booming one by all accounts. This titanic task called for

the contribution of every one of us, and on top of all, your leadership.

This was no easy task for us and for you either; but I believe we share, you and us, the same love for CODESRIA and for its community. You have run the institution with easily applicable principles. As a member of CODESRIA, you knew what its community could expect from it. As the Executive Secretary, you made of it a tool designed for the integration of regions, languages, generations, genders, disciplines to the extent that it has now become our home-made label.

In a period of eight years, we have seen our institution grow in Africa and in the world. Our members are being recruited across all African sub-regions and the Diaspora. Through our activities and programmes, we can reach out to the academic communities who have had so far a marginal presence on our networks. Two years ago, we welcomed a programmatic and administrative evaluation of CODESRIA. This evaluation reinforced our position as the leading institution promoting social science research in Africa.

As CODESRIA's staff, with decades of experience in the service of CODESRIA for some of us, we can measure the progress that has been made so far. For some of us, you are the fifth Executive Secretary of CODESRIA we have worked with. We have followed the peregrination of the Council from the IDEP office building to our current headquarters. The past 35 years of CODESRIA are irremediably intertwined with our lives. We have walked along, side by side with the institution and we know where it comes from. But more importantly, we know where it is heading.

Some may think that it is not our role to thank you for your contribution to CODESRIA because like you, we are serving it. But we ought to thank you to have been the engine that has been pulling a team of people whose ultimate goal is to put their knowledge and energy into an exhilarating work like ours.

I wish you, on behalf of all my fellow local staff, good health and even more successes in your future undertakings. We have no doubt that we shall come across you again in the future, as previously, within the framework of CODESRIA's programmes and networks.

Thank you.

Kouassivi Abdon Sofonnou
CODESRIA

Needless to repeat your intrinsic value and qualities. You are known to be a hard worker, dynamic, rigorous, committed, humble, indefatigable....

I met Mr. Olukoshi during my first stay in CODESRIA in 2000-2001. He had just been appointed Executive Secretary then and his mission appeared to me as one of putting in place a Structural Adjustment programme. This was a period when the Council was going through a historic crisis which was both structural and financial in nature. The challenge was a sizeable one; the objective of the mission was worthy and salutary, but the work that needed to be done to achieve that goal has not been easy both for the Executive Secretary and staff. There have been frustrations, departures, bitterness and threats. This notwithstanding, the young Nigerian has remained undisturbed. Reform implementation required raising awareness, more dedication and on top of all, significant sacrifices.

Mr. Olukoshi, I know you to be very hostile and very allergic to the World Bank's options, but let me say this, you borrowed a lot from S.A.P in terms of management style and reform. I have been a victim of the first emergency measures in implementing your reform. As a research assistant to the Education & Finance Programme, my contract was not renewed. But surprisingly enough, three years later, it was still during your term in office that I was recruited again into the same Research programme. This is an evidence of the rigour with which you have led the necessary major reforms. Today, I spend most of my time supporting you within the framework of the implementation of the collaborative programme which you particularly value. I have learnt, during this close collaboration, to know you better, to take initiatives without waiting for you, to work under pressure, to face up to the demands of the financial partners and, to put it short, this collaboration was a new experience, a new school to me.

The time of separation is often a moving, disturbing, emotional moment. Be reassured that your mission has been a successful one and you can be proud of that and especially of your intellectual and managerial capacities. Before I conclude, I would like to express my sympathy and

esteem and reiterate my sincere gratitude for your contribution to the development of the Council. I wish you good luck in future and perhaps where you'll land next to perform the next adjustment mission.

United we remain!

See you soon.

Eléonore Diouf & Francine Adade
CODESRIA

Farewell Speech by the Staff of the Office of the Executive Secretary

Dear Professor Olukoshi,

Eight years have elapsed since your appointment to the Council in February 2001, eight years during which you served the Council with self-abnegation, courage and dedication.

Having worked by your side during these years, we have been particularly impressed by your dynamism, your very rigorous spirit, your strength of character and your exceptional working capacity, coupled with your clear-sightedness which have enabled you to manage the female and male employees of this institution with guts and uprightness, despite the workload weighing down on you.

This has not been an easy task for us either; but there was no doubt in our minds that we were making sacrifices for a good cause, as you served as role model in many respects for all of us.

Another lesson which we have learnt from you is that, by willing to elevate CODESRIA to the highest level of excellence, you have shown that one of the noblest ambition of a person is to serve others and not to be served by them.

Professor Olukoshi, your success and that of the whole CODESRIA is the result of an unfailing determination, a relentless effort and this thirst for knowledge transmission, cooperation and sharing which characterises you so well.

Now that you are leaving CODESRIA for other places, we want to thank you for your teachings and wish you all the best in discharging your new responsibilities. We have no doubt that wherever you are, you will always keep some connection with CODESRIA, your home where you can come as you please.

We shall miss you a lot, Professor Olukoshi.

Georges KOBOU
University of Yaoundé II-SOA
Vice President
Outgoing Executive Committee

Dakar, March 30, 2009

It is with great pleasure that I am taking part in this farewell ceremony organised in honour of he who will be perceived henceforth as one of the rare emblematic figures of the community of social science researchers in Africa. This is a ceremony which is at the antipodes of a tradition that seems to punctuate institutional and social life in Africa where people have developed an annoying habit of paying homage to illustrious personalities only once they are dead and, therefore, may no longer hear us.

If we consider that someone who is leaving the service of an institution is an example, a model, a reference, then to me, it is only natural and logical that he be paid homage while he/she is still alive among us in the flesh. In my view, this approach offers a dual advantage: first, it allows him or her to fully appreciate the work accomplished, something that is otherwise impossible to do, given the pace and succession of activities. Secondly, it allows his/her collaborators and other people to find out about his/her experience.

I would like, as the Deputy Chair of the outgoing Executive Committee, to try to pay a glowing tribute to someone who is so plural and multidimensional as a person that I do not really know from which angle I should proceed to grasp his personality and decipher his impressive achievements during his two terms of office at the helm of CODESRIA. As I am constrained by time to make my speech as simple as possible, I will just outline three aspects of our illustrious character to whom we are today paying homage: first, the *Professor*, secondly, the *Executive Secretary* and lastly, the *friend*.

1. Abebayo, the Professor

On this tone, I would like to formally confess here that I have never ceased to be marvelled by the intellectual extremely committed to the cause of Africa whom

you exemplified. How wouldn't one be seduced by your posture as an apostle of a standing Africa, better armed and not shying away from competition with the other continents? This is not an incantation, but a factual reality reflected in the ideals having underlined your mission at the heart of our cherished institution.

It is important to recall that your appointment at the head of CODESRIA occurred at a time when Africa got mired in economic crisis in addition to a crisis in thinking, particularly when it comes to seeking a specific way of promoting development. Without giving in to the surrounding afro-pessimism and armed with your usual courage, you incited vigorously and with a dose of subtleness, the social science research community to lead a critical approach to mainstream thinking. With this in mind, you developed the research activities that would lead to the design of programmes offering alternative and relevant options for the sustainable development of the continent.

With fervour, pugnacity and boldness you made it possible to create a receptive framework for alternative ideas by federating methodically and harmoniously the work conducted by African researchers from the continent and the Diaspora as well as the work of Africanists in Europe, Latin America and Asia. Deciphering these different studies shows that development does not only rely on physical wealth which is basically encouraged by the marketplace.

Such aspects as culture, arts, sociology, context, etc. are additional parameters that must be taken into consideration, as they contribute to questioning the economic programmes designed by international institutions in the early 80s. Your programmatic orientations which are based on a multidisciplinary approach have made it possible to outline an innovative and innovated African research during this last decade in CODESRIA. Yes, Professor, your work is gigantic and far-reaching and I can see once again how you so masterfully brought us to follow you with your strong will, perseverance and determination. Of course, you've always had this determination which helps me shed light on the second angle from which I'll attempt to grasp the second level of your personality:

2. Olukoshi as Executive Secretary

From this standpoint, I can see two outstanding features which impressed me very much while I closely watch your management of current affairs: a charismatic leader and a committed pan-Africanist.

Your charisma as a leader is stamped with rarely paralleled professionalism and as a role model you have always aroused our admiration and pride. You are an organiser at the controls, always present at CODESRIA whether in or outside Dakar. You are not the type of leader who issues instructions and orders from the distance. On the contrary, you are close to your collaborators, working relentlessly with them in search for a collective result. The nickname “*Bayowork*”, which your collaborators have affectionately conferred on you, goes a long well in telling the type of your relationship with them.

As a man of action, you were able to establish a pragmatic management embodying a managerial philosophy based on humanism in which the stage is set for the development of the individual values and human qualities and capacities of your collaborators. With your usual vigour and dynamism, you have integrated a style, that of a solidarity and participatory spirit. It is no surprise therefore that these elements coupled with the cohesive environment that you were able to carefully set up, contribute to the high-performance of CODESRIA which we are implicitly commending during this ceremony.

I cannot end it here or regrettably overlook another strong feature that is, the spirit of pan-Africanism, the overriding concern in your daily management of CODESRIA. I can witness here that despite the powerful rise in false nationhood that marked the 2000s, as the Executive Secretary, you have successfully elevated the large family of researchers to new heights without showing at any point in time, your individual or national preferences.

Throughout your tenure, the key-idea that has dictated your decisions is a diverse and borderless Africa. Incidentally,

I would like to allude to the Nigeria-Cameroon conflict, which could have aroused the patriotic instinct of a citizen like you of a great nation which has proven means to impose itself by force in this conflict. Having teased you on many occasions on the subject, you have always remained impassive, as you kept saying that on either side of the frontiers you only find the same and single people! Thank you, Mr. African for this lesson which I am borrowing by the way to describe your third level characteristic.

3. Bayo, the Friend

Bayo, I have known you since the end of the 90, and I should say how many times you have remained as the mathematicians say an identity. You don't consider friendship a triviality but rather something precious and sacred, and you know too well how to make the distinction, as you strive not to taint it with professional reality. You are not only sincere but you also know how to rid yourself of that strong personality of yours to become a common man with your friends. I would like to really insist on this in the light of two major occurrences that moved me.

The first one dates back to December 2008 during the preparations for CODESRIA's 12th General Assembly, organised in Yaoundé. Following my misunderstanding of some aspects of the organisation, I approached you for some explanations. You not only gave me the explanations that I needed but you also moved me as you burst into tears. I finally realised that you did not understand why I could not understand you. I was so moved and shaken by such a situation which was nothing less than the reflection of deeply rooted friendship.

There was a second major instance which took place following a sad event more specifically when one of your brothers died in Lagos. On that occasion, I had been mandated by CODESRIA to assist you during the funeral. On my arrival, as I was preparing to put up at a hotel, you spontaneously asked me to stay at your house and make myself at home. While I was there to share in your grief, I realised

that you were actually trying to make my stay as pleasant as possible.

There is no doubt that you naturally featured a very strong character that allows you to cope well in the face of adversity. But it was first and foremost the demonstration of deep and sincere friendship which never failed no matter where we met. You would always listen to everyone with your usual simplicity.

In the light of the foregoing and to make things short, I can describe our illustrious character using a lapidary expression: *Bayo the visionary*. This vision is tantamount to a note of hope for Africa in quest for credibility. And I think that by his courage and determination, Bayo has shown that it is possible. I would also like to add that Bayo taught me to cardinal virtues that characterise great figures: hard work and humility. Thank you for this brilliant teaching.

Before concluding my address, I would like to share with you Ladies and Gentlemen, this reflection borrowed from Seneca: “...there is no favourable wind for someone who does not know where he is heading”. Referring to this reflection, I am proud to say that by knowing exactly where he wanted to take CODESRIA to, Bayo has now become the compass which the institution needs to navigate confidently. After having just written an important chapter in the Council's history, by a happy coincidence, he is succeeded by one of CODESRIA's staff member, Ebrima SALL, whose hard work over time has earned him everyone's recognition. Characterised by humility and the sense of duty, I believe he will make CODESRIA's flag fly even higher thereby giving us another opportunity in a few years to organise an even more important and more magnificent homage ceremony. To conclude, I say:

Thank you my friend Bayo,

Thank you Professor Adebayo,

Thank you Mr. Outgoing Executive Secretary,

Good luck Mr. New Executive Secretary,

Thank you for your kind attention.