

REPORT OF VISIT TO C.K.C. ONITSHA & MEETINGS WITH CKC-AAA INTERLOCUTORS
22 -28 August 2011

Introduction: The undersigned visited Nigeria from 22 -28 August 2011, mainly to conduct CKC-AAA business. During the visit, I held meetings with several CKC-AAA interlocutors, either directly or by telephone and discussed various issues of mutual interest.

Dan Ngerem Sports Foundation, 22 August 2011: The envisaged meeting with Dan Ngerem (Class of '75), Founder/CEO of the Dan Ngerem Sports Foundation (DNSF), and one of the sponsors of the CKC 2011 New York Convention could not take place since he was traveling overseas. Efforts will continue interface with him and push for CKC Onitsha to be placed of the list of the beneficiaries of the DNSF. However, I was able to pick up the cheque he left for the New York LOC for the ad in the latest issue of *The Amaka Gazette*. The cheque has been mailed to the New York LOC.

Visit to CKC Campus & Meeting with Principal Fr. Charles Okwumuo 24th August 2011: On the heels of Prof. Alex Acholonu's visit to the college the week before, I spent most of the day (24/8) on the CKC campus meeting with the college principal, Rev. Fr. Charles Okwumuo, the President of the PTA, Mr. Emma Okafor, the college Bursar, Mr. Stan Ozua and several academic and administrative staff at the college. We used the opportunity to bridge the existing information gap on activities of the alumni and their collective efforts and interaction with the college principal. The breach arose partly from the recent school handover, but more so, from the fact that the past two principals never submitted their handover notes. Incidentally and relatedly, some equipment donated by CKC-AAA to the college (Principal's Office laptop by Emma Onua and Fax machine by Obi Ene) was missing.

From the outset, I informed Principal Okwumuo that his maiden State of the School Report had been well received by CKC-AAA during the 2011 NY Convention. I handed him copies of *The Amaka Gazette* and the consolidated 2011 Convention document. Apropos CKC-AAA's relations with the college, I informed Principal Okwumuo that the Association always operated in cooperation with the NEC on the basis of the 2000 MOU Establishing NAPOC, which he seemed unaware of. I urged him to review the old files and bring himself to speed and, that if need be, CKC-AAA could offer copies of the vital documents from our files. I underlined the need for him to work closely with the NEC and to be present at all NEC meetings, which presently are held on the college campus. I read him an email I had received from Ag. National President Joe Billy Ekwunife, on 21 August, in which he, inter alia, stated, "It is unfortunate that twice NEC has met since the new principal took charge; attempts to meet with him to get firsthand update failed because he was away or busy otherwise. What CKC-AAA is doing and you are doing a lot is always appreciated; however, it is also important that our Alma Mater authority knows there is something like the NEC." Principal Okwumuo undertook to proactively engage the NEC henceforth. (The next NEC meeting will be to elect National officers).

Noting that the handover of the school and the sporadic changes in leadership had delayed CKC-AAA redemption of its revitalisation contributions, I informed the Principal that the Association was committed to getting back on track and being engaged proactively with the college. As such, certain outstanding project pledges would be redeemed, while CKC-AAA ascertained from him the college priorities. The essence of the visit, therefore, was to undertake a survey of ongoing projects on the campus, in order to avoid duplication and confusion between branches undertaking different revitalization projects. I noted, for instance, that Prof. Alexander Acholonu had undertaken during the recent CKC-AAA convention, to continue funding the refurbishment of the college physics laboratory, which he initially funded under the auspices of CKC-AAA. This was the reason for his recent visit to the college.

I also urged Principal Okwumuo to bring up to date CKC-AAA's Motivational Award for the "Best Student" and Best Tutor". Thereafter, I presented him a cheque of N1 million from CKC-AAA to cover non-capital commitments for 2008-2010 (See photo). The amount was approved funds from the Association to the college for outstanding non-capital approved NAPOC projects for 2008-2010, namely, the CKC-AAA Annual Motivational Award for "Best Tutor" and Best Student"; the "School Principal's' Unforeseen Emergency Expense Fund, the one time university academic scholarship to the four (4) most deserving graduating seniors and CKC-AAA dues for 2010-2014. The breakdown of the funds is as follows: 2008, N300, 000; 2009, N300, 000 and 2010, N400, 000.

Principal Okwumuo was most appreciative of the donation and signed for the cheque. I also encouraged him to track down the best final year students from the years for which CKC-AAA offered scholarship to ensure they received the funds due to them. However, I made it clear to him that CKC-AAA project cheques were normally made out to the CKC Old Boys National Association in accordance with the provisions of the MOU. In the present event, he was given the cheque directly since the issues fell within his remit. The Principal indicated that the directive from the Archdiocese of Onitsha was for all funds coming to the college to be deposited with Oluchi Micro Finance Company, which was affiliated with Diamond Bank. I urged him to open an account accordingly and avail CKC-AAA of the account number. Finally, we toured the college campus, where drainage works, landscaping and routine maintenance work were ongoing. We took photos of ongoing projects, especially the school kitchen, which was a top priority for CKC-AAA. Principal Okwumuo provided CKC-AAA with a comprehensive Bill of Quantities for the "Reconstruction and Renovation of Dilapidated Structures in the College". He also provided an additional copy, which he asked that I convey to Governor Obi.

Confirmation and Swearing in of Chief Justice Peter Umeadi, (CKC Class of '73): My visit coincided with some activities related to CKC alumni. On the morning of 25 August 2011, I attended confirmation hearing of Hon. Justice Peter Umeadi, an eminent old boy, and my childhood friend and classmate (Class of '73), as the Chief Justice of Anambra state. The following day (26th August), I also attended his swearing in ceremony at the State House. In this context, the role of CKC alumni and lofty positions they occupy in Nigeria and especially in Anambra State is noteworthy; in Anambra State, CKC alumni now occupy the positions of Governor, Head of Service, several State Commissioners and also, the Archbishop of Onitsha.

Discussions with Archbishop Valerian Okeke: (25 August 2011): I could not meet directly with His Grace Rt. Rev. Valerian Okeke, Archbishop of Onitsha, since he had been out of the country. However, upon his return he telephoned me late in the evening of 25th August and we had a lengthy discussion on issues germane to CKC. The Archbishop was most grateful for CKC-AAA's donation of N1m to the college and expressed the hope to attend the 2012 Dallas Texas convention. He sent his best wishes to CKC alumni in the Americas. I used the opportunity to pledge the Association's continued support for the college in line with our commitment to be part of the solution. I informed him that CKC-AAA was poised to commit additional funding to revitalisation projects, once the present round of consultations was concluded. He offered his unalloyed support for Principal Okwumuo, whom he called "energetic, diligent and focused."

Unscheduled Meeting with former Principal Emma Ezenduka, 26th August 2011: On the margins of the swearing in of Justice Umeadi, I met briefly with former Principal Emma Ezenduka, (Class of '73). We exchanged views on what had transpired at the college that resulted in his abrupt removal. He was convinced of his own side of the story, which I understood he had presented to the NEC during the last meeting on 16 July 2011. I told him that we were shocked that he did not take CKC-

AAA into confidence or communicate with us about his departure from the college. Furthermore, I made him to understand, that it was CKC-AAA's view that regardless of what happened, he was as a CKC alumnus, obligated by virtue of his *goodness, discipline and knowledge* to provide his successor with a statutory handover note in order to ensure continuity in our alma mater. He was non-committal, but indicated that everything would be sorted out in time.

Meeting with HE Gov. Peter Obi on 25 August 2011: Further to discussions CKC-AAA members had with H.E. Gov. Peter Obi during the 2011 NY convention Executive Breakfast Session on 31 July 2011, I met with the governor to discuss modalities for redeeming his 2008 pledge. I informed him of my visit to CKC and the N1million naira donation and told him also that we had identified a specific project (Raising and Fortification of the Entire Fence Around the College), valued at approximately N5million (N4,674,500.00) as the project he could support in conjunction with CKC-AAA, thus redeeming his pledge. Consequently, I provided him with a copy of Bill of Quantities for the "Reconstruction and Renovation of Dilapidated Structures in the College" and a copy of the cheque of N1million from CKC-AAA to the college. I promised that CKC-AAA will follow up.

Meeting with Actg. National Vice-President, Dr. C. Anyaeji, in Benin on 27 August 2011: On 24 August, ahead of my meeting with Principal Okwumuo, I spent two hours on the phone with Ag. National V.P., Dr. Charles Anyaeji, who could not make it down to Onitsha for the meeting with the college principal. He debriefed me on the key issues before the NEC and on the college campus. He reinforced the contents of the 21 August email message sent to me by Ag. National President Joe Billy Ekwunife about the need for the principal to continuously interface with the NEC.

On 27 August, I traveled to Benin-City to meet physically with Dr. Anyaeji. We met for about two hours. Among the issues discussed, were the forthcoming NEC elections, from which he hoped a robust and focused leadership would emerge. He also raised the issue of Fr. N.C. Tagbo's welfare, especially, his present residential quarters which entailed his climbing numerous stairs. He noted that CKC alumni were concerned that at his age, he should not be subjected to such stress. He noted that the matter had been discussed at the 16 July 2011 NEC meeting and that following the most recent NEC meeting, members of the NEC had visited the Principal Emeritus. He also indicated that several pledges made by some CKC alumni for the upkeep of Fr. Tagbo during his 80th Birthday Anniversary had not been redeemed. I undertook to raise this matter with my various interlocutors and to reflect same in my visit report, which would also be shared with those concerned. Regrettably, I was not able to see Rev. Fr. N.C. Tagbo in person during this visit.

Conclusion: Overall, I had a very productive week in Nigeria and came away feeling that much had been accomplished during this visit. Ongoing work on the CKC campus indicates that Principal Okwumuo is focused, energetic and committed to upholding the maintenance culture required to bring the college back to its glorious past standards. I was personally pleased with the added focus on horticulture and landscaping. He also understands the imperative of a partnership between the alumni, the college, the PTA and the Onitsha Archdiocese. All said the outlook for the college looks exceedingly positive under Principal Okwumuo's leadership. He will, however, need our continued moral, material and financial support to carry out his duties in our Alma Mater.

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Oseloka Obaze
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30th August 2011