

# **NIGERIA ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES (NATAIS)**

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) MEETING  
HELD AT FOUNTAIN UNIVERSITY, OSOGBO,**

**ON SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 2022, DHU'L-QA'DAH 26, 1443 A.H.**

**Speech Delivered by the National President, Prof. Musa Adesina Abdu-Raheem, on the Occasion of the National Executive Committee (NEC) Meeting Held in Fountain University, Osogbo, Osun State, on Saturday, June 25, 2022/ Dhu'l-Qa'dah 26, 1443 A. H.**

*Al-Hamdu li'l-Lāhi* for this unique opportunity to be here to hold this meeting as unanimously agreed upon when we met last in Abuja on March 5, 2022 / Sha'bān 3,1443 A.H. Despite all the odds and seemingly insurmountable challenges, we thank Allah for the grace of sound health, protection and mutual understanding among us to attend this crucial meeting. It is our fervent prayer that Allah, SWT, will grant us successful deliberations and safe return to our destinations after the meeting.

I warmly welcome you all to this meeting. I appreciate your dedication and commitment to the cause of this Association of ours to the extent of not minding the risks involved nowadays to move from one part of the country to another. I also bear in mind the negative effects the on-going industrial action of ASUU and some other unions has on our economy individually. More importantly, this is the time intending pilgrims are departing to the holy lands for the *Hajj*. Even if we are not involved personally, it is evident that we have relatives and friends who are taking part in the exercise and require our support especially in view of the challenges being faced in securing visas and airlifting some of them. We pray that Allah should make the *Hajj* operation successful and hitch-free. It is gratifying to see the house as full as this despite the hurdles.

May I seek your indulgence to appreciate the indefatigable efforts and immense contributions of our teachers and veteran NATAIS members, Profs R. D. Abubakre FASN and M. O. Opeloye FISN, for facilitating sponsorship to hold this meeting. Despite their busy schedules even as retirees, they have thrown their weight behind the Osun State Branch of our Association to have access to the State Government under the able leadership of our Brother, Alh Isiaka Adegboyega Oyetola. We also owe Dr. Morufu Ishola, the *Nā'ibu'l-Imām* of Osogbo land, profound gratitude and appreciation for lending support in this regard. We are equally grateful to the Management and staff of Fountain University, Osogbo, under the leadership of Prof Amidu Sanni FASN for the wonderful contributions to host this meeting, especially for making this beautiful environment and venue available to us. Let me also place on record the encouragement of Prof. R. I. Adebayo, Provost of the Federal College of Education, Iwo. More importantly, we sincerely appreciate the fabulous and generous financial assistance of the Executive Governor of this great State, his Cabinet and the entire good people of Osun State. Of course, the leadership and membership of our Association in Osun State deserve our gratitude for the efforts round the clock to ensure the success of this meeting. May Allah reward these distinguished personalities amply.

This meeting is to conclude arrangements for the forthcoming National Conference slated for Borno State to hold in collaboration with the Arabic Language Village, Ngala, now operating in Maiduguri. Based on the mixed reactions especially from those located far from Borno State, I carried out some investigations from those that are familiar with the proposed venue of the Conference. The fear being entertained was allayed, bearing in mind that security, *qua* security, can be guaranteed by Allah alone in any part of the country, and indeed the whole world. In the light of this, we look forward to an impressive turnout from all over the country. Of course, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) is leaving no stone unturned to make you as comfortable as possible in view of the proverbial hospitality of Kanuri people.

Efforts are on to break new grounds in organising and hosting the Conference. We are to take advantage of the internet facilities and social media to spread the invitation far and wide within and outside Nigeria. We are keen to attract scholars from outside Nigeria and Africa to attend the Conference. Distinguished members reputed for international exposure are hereby urged to guide us in achieving this laudable aim. Luckily, we have contacts and colleagues all over the world. Next time, *in shā'al-Lāh*, we may invite lead paper presenters from outside Nigeria. To this end, we are to schedule time frames for the submission of abstracts and their acceptance, submission of the whole paper, timetable for the presentation of papers in the plenary sessions, and preparation of the Conference proceedings in CDs for those who attend. More importantly, our journal must be indexed and other publications made available online. It sounds somehow too ambitious to us but I am convinced that it is achievable. We have capable hands among us to make a success of this. Let us give it a trial.

The Association is interested in taking advantage of the TETFund's call for books and journals to be sponsored. We benefited from this in the past. The National Editor-in-Chief in conjunction with the Editorial Board will take charge of this. In addition, I wish to urge all of us here and colleagues at home to harken to this call to tackle the dearth of textbooks in the twin disciplines of Arabic and Islamic Studies. Since the publication will be sponsored, there is no fear of how to market them any longer. The advertisement has repeatedly been posted on the various platforms of the Association. We have up to the end of December to put in applications.

It may serve a good purpose here to reiterate the fact that NATAIS is apolitical. It is not allowed, therefore to use the platform of the Association to pursue any partisan political interest. Of course, the Association owes it a duty to be loyal and support the Government at all levels. At the same time, there should be good rapport with Government in place to have necessary support to achieve the aims and objectives of the Association to further the cause of the twin disciplines as well as those who teach and learn them. This clarification is necessary in view of the developments on the political scene in Nigeria at present. We should also exercise restraint in commenting on security and social issues in the country.

In conclusion, I wish to acknowledge again the tremendous support and encouragement being received from the immediate past National President, Prof S. U. Musa. I am also grateful to the entire members of this Executive Committee and Chairmen of State Branches. I am indebted to those who have served as contact persons to ensure that funds meant for the Association are safely received. I seek your indulgence to request Dr Abubakar Kawu, Vice President (Islamic Studies), to stand up for recognition. Thanks for your sacrifice and assistance to get the payment from the Registrar, JAMB, being his pledge to launch the festschrift in honour of Emeritus Professor M. S. Zahradeen in Kano. The donation came at the nick of time when the Association was out of pocket. In fact, the financial challenge is still there. We urgently need funds to process and print the papers presented in Kano, service and update the website, print posters and banners, and carry out other expenses to keep afloat. In fact, we need to aggressively embark on efforts to raise funds to forge ahead. As a matter of principle, we will be careful to be frugal with funds available to the Association. It is in the light of this that we are looking into the possibility of sharing invitation to Conference electronically. This will save cost, time and exposure to risks. This means that we have to make more sacrifices to keep the Association moving. This is the legacy of our fathers and mentors who bequeathed the Association to us. May Allah reward Profs Opeyoye, Ajetunmobi, Kaura, Muhibbu-Din and Musa as well all other past leaders who have served in various posts too numerous to mention here for their exemplary life styles in steering the ship of the Association.

I appreciate you all for your rapt attention. We need your constant advice, guidance and corrections to further project the good image of NATAIS and move it forward.

Thank you.