TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR WOLE SOYINKA:
THE LIVING LEGEND

BY
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Professor Wole Soyinka needs no introduction. As a rare literary giant and a committed social critic, he is one of the distinguished global scholars who have made this nation proud. His brilliance, crystal image and sterling contributions to scholarship hover over our land like a ball of light that continues to illuminate the country and cleanse it of her ills.

This, his compatriots have acknowledged both within and outside Nigeria. It is not only in the field of academics that Professor Wole Soyinka has made his marks. He is also highly acknowledged as an astute social reformer who has justified this status on different platforms, such as the social and political formations, where he is an unignorable persona.

In fact, the thrust of his drive in creative writing is the unrepentant concern for equity and total distance from injustice. He has endeared himself to many hearts in this drama of individual decisions or self-actions for social and political order around the world. Nobody can remove this philosophy from Soyinka and make him a shell! This is what makes him his kind of man because he needs no partner in his adventures. All he needed is a self-balance conviction that no common man would be caused any pains then he moves.

Upon his acceptance and attendance to be the Keynoter at the 2nd MBA National Literary Colloquium without a second prompting in December last year, I expected no less an answer from a dramatic character of international impact to come home to where his contemporaries like Cyprian Ekwensi, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Mamman Jiya Vatsa, Abubakar Imam, Chukwu Emeka Ojukwu, and Ben Okri were born to the literary tradition - a noble engagement where Soyinka is naturally the chief oracle, priest, and worshipper in one bundle of artistic spirituality.

He was truly home to the thunderous ovation of Nigerlites who, without listening to him, only needed to see him as they did to commune with Kongi’s spirit of creativity and get inspired. The school children he stayed with during that brief visit will forever carry in them the creative vastness of the living spirit of the international dramatist.

Professor Wole Soyinka has always spoken with conviction and human redemption. His presence is a tremor to the guilty and a healing to the voiceless.

Wole Soyinka is a man like any other man, but this man is not in many ways like any other man. This kind of man does not come in multiples within a generation. No wonder, in wide cultural perspective and poetic overtone, the Nobel Foundation described him as fashioning the drama of existence.

The quintessential Soyinka is a guest; Nigerlites will continue to see as a reference point to the very essence of the written word and scholarship. Great to have come in our time! Carry on the living legend and opener of the honor list of the great sage!

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