

## **Professor Adebayo Adedeji Lecture Series**

**14 May 2018**

### **Brief Tribute to Professor Adebayo Adedeji by his son, Mr 'Doyin Adedeji**

As has been said, I am the eldest child of my father, late Professor Adebayo Adedeji. I am honoured to once again being invited to this event (an event I have attended since it was first inaugurated in 2015 in Abuja Nigeria) and to be asked to this time, not to utter a Vote of Thanks, but to speak briefly about our father who died on Wednesday 25 April 2018.

What we, his children, most particularly remember about him is that he encouraged us all not only to have an opinion on any given subject but also to express it freely. It is very difficult for eleven opinionated siblings to easily reach consensus on anything, but the one thing we surely agree on without dispute is that Prof, the Ol' Man (as we affectionately called him) was a very fine father.

Not because he held high office, not because of his years as a University don, not because of his contributions as Federal Minister in General Yakubu Gowon's Government, not because of his work here at the ECA, not because of the various endeavours he found himself involved with in his post-ECA years, but because he was always there for us, no matter how busy or engaged he was doing other things. His letters and phone calls encouraging us, admonishing us, comforting us are things we all were used to as we grew up into adulthood .. and our becoming adults certainly did not stop the flow of these telephone calls and letters.

We remember his zest for life, his indefatigable energy. Tennis at 5.00am in the morning. Golf at a more reasonable hour of the day. His driving us to Church when we lived in Addis Ababa in at 10mph in his automatic Mercedes Benz car that sat patiently in the garage for the other six days of the week. His pipe smoking and beer drinking days. The length of his stride. The side parting in his hair. The twinkle in his eye when amused. The terrifying roar when displeased by bad behaviour or unimpressed by poor, not good enough grades. His unending challenge to us to be the very best that we could be in our respective professional lives. We remember much more but there isn't enough time to here begin enumerating them all.

We give thanks for his wisdom, his kindness, his generosity, his support and his unconditional love to us, his children and grandchildren.

Our father, to paraphrase the words of Georgia Harkness, was a magnificent giant pine who stood staunch against the sky and all around, and for us his children, was a towering landmark, erect and unafraid, within whose fold we were safely reared.

While we do now miss him and will always continue to miss him, we give thanks for his life.

Once again, thank you the opportunity to say these few words about the Ol' Man.

God bless.