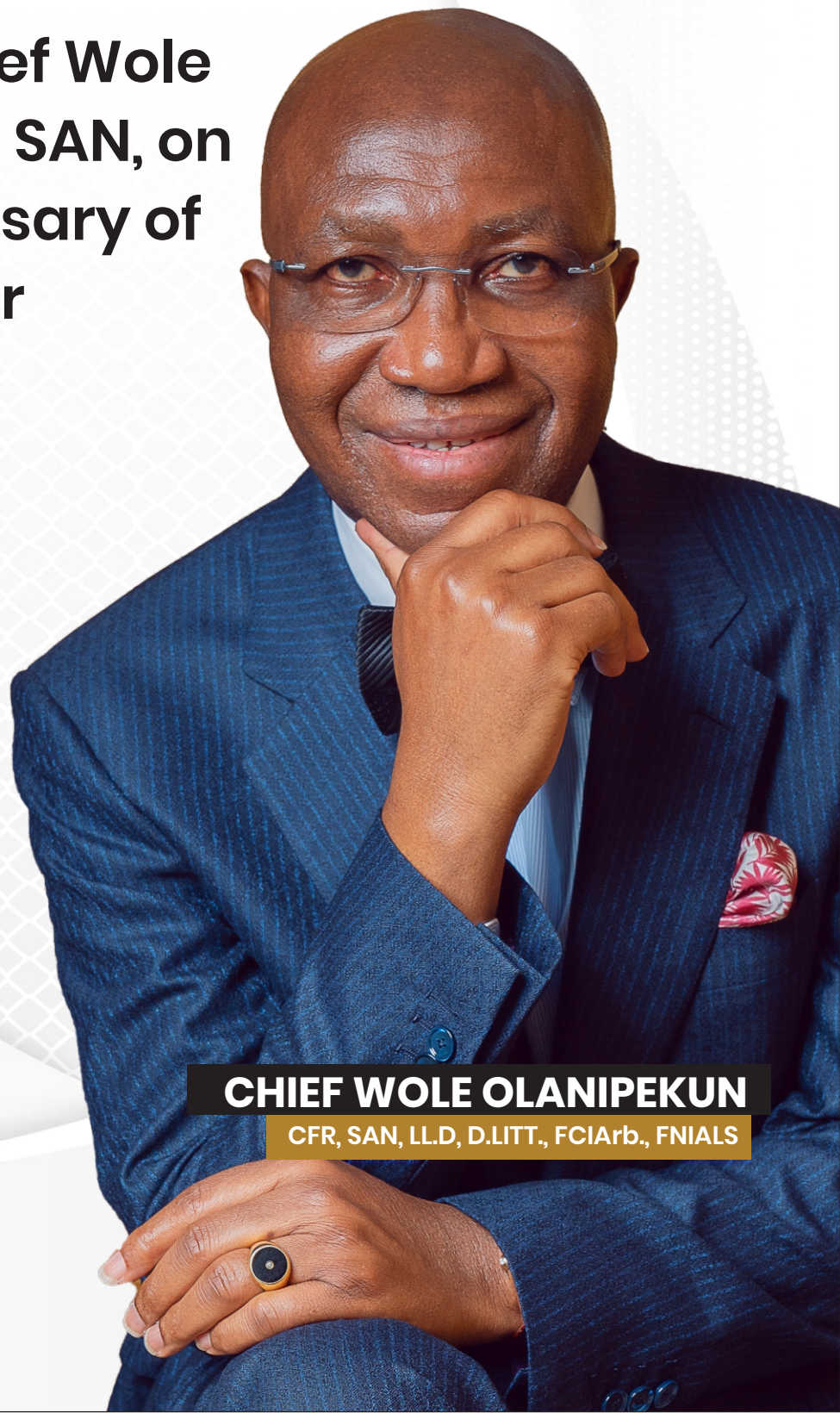


**Compendium of
Congratulatory
Messages to Chief Wole
Olanipekun, CFR, SAN, on
the 50th Anniversary of
His Call to the Bar**



CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN

CFR, SAN, LL.D, D.LITT., FCI Arb., FNIALS

GOLDEN JUBILEE AT THE BAR

*A Compendium of Tributes & Keynote Address in Honour of Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN,
CFR, OFR*

Commemorating 50 Years of Illustrious Service to the Legal Profession (1976 – 2026)

TRIBUTE BY DR. T. KAYODE AJULO, SAN

A GOLDEN JUBILEE AT THE BAR

A Tribute to Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, OFR, CFR, on Fifty Years of Illustrious Service to the Legal Profession

There are occasions in the life of a nation when the celebration of an individual ceases to be merely personal and assumes the character of history itself. Such occasions compel me not only to applaud achievement but also to contemplate the ideals that sustain great institutions and the extraordinary men who embody them.

The celebration of Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, OFR, CFR, on the auspicious milestone of Fifty Years at the Bar, is one of those rare moments.

Today, I elected to celebrate far more than the longevity of a legal career. I celebrate half a century of unwavering fidelity to the law, an extraordinary devotion to justice, distinguished scholarship, exemplary advocacy, uncommon philanthropy and steadfast service to God and humanity. I celebrate a man who has become, in every sense, one of the defining pillars of the Nigerian legal profession.

The history of civilisation teaches that the greatness of nations rests upon the integrity of their institutions, and the integrity of institutions depends upon the character of those entrusted with their preservation. The legal profession has always occupied that sacred space where liberty confronts power, where reason triumphs over passion and where justice becomes the guardian of civilisation itself.

More than two thousand years ago, Marcus Tullius Cicero, perhaps the greatest advocate of the Roman Republic, proclaimed the immortal maxim: *Salus Populi Suprema Lex Esto*, "The welfare of the people shall be the supreme law." That principle has echoed through the ages, inspiring generations of lawyers who understood that advocacy is not merely a profession but a public trust.

Centuries later, Sir Edward Coke, standing before an English monarchy convinced of its own omnipotence, courageously declared that even the King must remain under God and under the law. His unwavering defence of constitutional liberty laid one of the strongest foundations of modern constitutional democracy.

In our own era, Lord Denning, whose judicial wisdom transformed the common law, reminded the world that "Justice is rooted in confidence." Confidence, he taught, flourishes only where judges and advocates alike remain faithful to truth, fairness and honour.

Nigeria herself produced such a giant in Chief Frederick Rotimi Alade Williams, SAN, whose brilliance at the Bar elevated advocacy into an intellectual art form and whose devotion to constitutionalism helped define the nobility of our profession. It is within this distinguished lineage of advocates that history has deservedly reserved an eminent place for Chief Wole Olanipekun.

For five remarkable decades, he has stood among the foremost custodians of the Temple of Justice. His advocacy has been marked by uncommon erudition, forensic precision and persuasive eloquence. His appearance before the courts has consistently reflected meticulous preparation, intellectual discipline and profound respect for the majesty of the law. Through countless landmark cases, distinguished leadership within the Nigerian Bar Association and tireless mentorship of younger lawyers, he has contributed immensely to the development of Nigerian jurisprudence and to the strengthening of legal institutions.

Yet the measure of greatness is never found merely in victories recorded or honours accumulated. Titles may adorn a life, but character defines it. Cases enrich the law reports, but service enriches humanity.

If one were asked to identify the most enduring monument erected by Chief Wole Olanipekun, it would not be found in the imposing architecture of legal precedents or in the distinguished offices he has occupied. It would rather be found among several philanthropic gestures come from him and more particularly, in the sanctuary he graciously donated to the Anglican Communion in his hometown, a house dedicated not to his own glory but to the worship of Almighty God.

In an age increasingly fascinated by monuments to self, Chief Olanipekun chose instead to build a monument to God.

Former Vice President Professor Yemi Osinbajo, SAN, captured the profound significance of that noble act with remarkable insight when he observed that the donation of that church represented Chief Olanipekun's greatest application to the Almighty. It was a profound metaphor. Indeed, no application is more certain of divine approval than one submitted through humility, faith and sacrificial generosity. Heaven has unmistakably endorsed that application, rewarding him with abundant grace, enduring relevance, remarkable influence and immeasurable blessings.

The Scriptures declare, "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty." (Proverbs 3:9–10). Again, our Lord Jesus Christ assures us, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over." (Luke 6:38)

Chief Olanipekun's life stands today as a living exposition of those divine promises. His generosity has not diminished him; it has enlarged him. His service has not exhausted him; it has elevated him. His humility has not weakened him; it has strengthened his influence. His faith has not limited him; it has become the source of his enduring greatness.

Permit me, at this point, to offer a deeply personal testimony. Public history will rightly celebrate Chief Wole Olanipekun as an exceptional advocate, an accomplished statesman of the Bar and one of Nigeria's finest legal minds. I have, however, been privileged to know another dimension of this extraordinary man; the mentor, the teacher, the counsellor and the father.

I remain profoundly indebted to him for his immense contribution to my personal and professional development. Few privileges have enriched my life more than the intellectual rendezvous we have shared at his residence in London. Those moments have never been ordinary visits. Every encounter has become an academy without walls; an executive masterclass in law, leadership, constitutionalism, public service and the philosophy of purposeful living.

In those quiet conversations, legal principles acquire deeper meaning, leadership assumes nobler dimensions and life's complexities become illuminated by wisdom distilled through decades of experience. One leaves not merely having enjoyed warm hospitality, but having been intellectually sharpened, morally strengthened and professionally inspired.

Seneca once observed that "One man teaches, another learns." Yet there are rare teachers whose greatest lessons are transmitted not only through formal instruction but through example, generosity and quiet conversation. Chief Wole Olanipekun belongs to that distinguished company.

For his confidence in me, for his invaluable counsel, for his fatherly encouragement and for the generosity with which he shares his wisdom, I remain profoundly grateful. Providence has been exceedingly kind in allowing our paths to intersect. I shall forever cherish the privilege of calling him not merely a leader of our profession but a mentor, benefactor and enduring source of inspiration.

Aristotle taught that the highest purpose of virtue is not the pursuit of pleasure but the pursuit of excellence. Chief Olanipekun's life beautifully vindicates that philosophy. He has consistently demonstrated that greatness is never an accident; it is the cumulative reward of discipline, sacrifice, integrity and service.

As we celebrate this Golden Jubilee at the Bar, we honour not only the advocate but the man; not only the jurist but the Christian; not only the accomplished professional but the compassionate humanitarian; not merely the Senior Advocate, but the faithful steward of God's abundant grace.

On behalf of countless colleagues, protégés, admirers and beneficiaries of your remarkable life, I extend my warmest congratulations.

May the Almighty God, whom you have honoured so faithfully, continue to honour you before nations and generations. May He preserve your health, renew your strength like the eagle's, enlarge your influence, establish the work of your hands and crown your remaining years with even greater glory than the former.

May your wisdom continue to illuminate the Bar, your voice continue to strengthen the cause of justice and your example continue to inspire generations of lawyers yet unborn.

As the Prophet Isaiah assures us, "Even to your old age and grey hairs I am He; I am He who will sustain you." (Isaiah 46:4). May that divine promise remain your daily portion.

Yours is a life that has dignified the legal profession, ennobled public service and glorified Almighty God. Your legacy is already secure, not merely in the law reports, nor in the institutions you have served, but in the countless lives you have transformed, the profession you have elevated and the faith you have so nobly exemplified.

May history remember you among those rare advocates who understood that the true greatness of the law lies not merely in its eloquence, but in its service to justice, humanity and God.

Ad multos annos.

May the years ahead be crowned with peace, abundant grace, enduring relevance and everlasting joy.

- Kayode Ajulo

EKSU VC CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

EKSU VC CONGRATULATES CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN SAN ON 50 YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED LEGAL PRACTICE

The Vice-Chancellor of Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Professor Joseph Babatola Ayodele, has congratulated one of the Nigeria's foremost distinguished legal luminaries, Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, on the occasion of his 50 years illustrious service to the Legal Profession.

In a congratulatory message, Professor Ayodele described Chief Olanipekun, the Asiwaju of Ikere Kingdom as an outstanding legal icon whose influence in the past five decades has extended beyond law reports and courtrooms into wider spheres of justice, public service, education, health broadcasting, philanthropy and national development.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that Chief Olanipekun is a unique and outstanding lawyer who over the years, distinguished himself through unquantifiable contributions to legal profession, scholarship schemes for indigent students and major interventions in health, religious projects, ICT, and various empowerment programmes for widows, orphans and entrepreneurs.

Professor Ayodele further commended the learned silk's commitment to mentoring young legal practitioners, describing him as a father-figure whose path is worthy of emulation to many lawyers in Nigeria. He also described Chief Wole Olanipekun as a good example of Yoruba 'Omoluabi' and Ekiti 'Eni iyi, Eni Eye' whose accomplishments have brought honour and pride to the State and the nation.

The Vice-Chancellor stated that attaining fifty years of active and impactful legal practice is a rare milestone that reflects uncommon brilliance, resilience, professionalism and steadfast dedication to the noble ideals of the legal profession. He wished the eminent Senior Advocate of Nigeria a memorable and joyous golden jubilee celebration and many more years of continued excellence and impactful service.

TRIBUTE BY BODE VICTOR ADENIYI

CONGRATULATIONS TO CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN, SAN, CON, ASIWAJU OF IKERE KINGDOM ON HIS 50 YEARS AT THE BAR

Warm congratulations to an exceptional legal icon, Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, CON, on the remarkable milestone of his 50 years at the Nigerian Bar.

Your five decades of unwavering commitment to the legal profession have been marked by excellence, integrity, courage, and an enduring pursuit of justice. Through your outstanding advocacy, mentorship, and distinguished leadership, you have inspired generations of lawyers and contributed immensely to the growth of the legal profession and the development of our nation.

Beyond the courtroom, your remarkable philanthropy and unwavering commitment to community development have positively impacted countless lives, making you not only a legal luminary but also a true servant of humanity.

As you celebrate this Golden Jubilee at the Bar, may God continue to bless you with sound health, greater wisdom, renewed strength, and many more years of impactful service to the legal profession, our nation, and humanity.

Congratulations on this extraordinary achievement. Your legacy of excellence will continue to inspire present and future generations.

Bode Victor Adeniyi

TRIBUTE BY OLA ALONGE ESQ.

TRIBUTE TO ASIWAJU CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN SAN, CFR

Chief Wole Olanipekun SAN, CFR, a primus inter pares, the numero unum, our fabulosus et iconicus. A golden jubilee at the Nigerian bar (Africa's largest) is a milestone. More importantly however is the human capacity you have built across the globe through your philanthropy and humanitarian gestures in Ikere and beyond. The destinies you have touched positively, the career bridges you have built, the aspirations you have helped shaped successfully. You are, indeed and in truth, our ASIWAJU.

May God continue to preserve and protect you for this generation and the one to come.

Cheers to a mentor, role model and benefactor.

Gratias tibi ago, pro omnibus quae facis. (Thanks for all you do)

Ola Alonge Esq.

Pounpoun House, 93, Ado Road, Ise Junction, Ikere Kingdom.

ADESINA ADEGBITE (AA) PAYS GLOWING TRIBUTE TO CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN, CFR, SAN, ON 50 YEARS AT THE BAR

CELEBRATING AN ILLUSTRIOUS LEGAL ICON – A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO CHIEF OLUWOLE OLADAPO OLANIPEKUN, CFR, SAN, ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS CALL TO THE NIGERIAN BAR

Fifty years at the Bar is not merely the passage of time; it is the celebration of an extraordinary journey marked by excellence, sacrifice, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to the advancement of justice. Today, I pay glowing tribute to Chief Oluwole Olanipekun, CFR, SAN, as he marks the Golden Jubilee of his call to the Nigerian Bar, having been called to the Bar and enrolled as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria, on the 4th of July, 1976, a milestone that he attained with such distinction.

Chief Olanipekun's illustrious career is a testament to the boundless rewards of diligence, discipline, and intellectual excellence. Since his call to the Bar in 1976, he has remained one of Nigeria's most accomplished legal practitioners, earning the respect and admiration of the Bench, the Bar, and the wider society through his exceptional advocacy, profound legal scholarship, and impeccable professional ethics. His elevation to the rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria was a fitting recognition of his outstanding contributions to the legal profession. As a former President of the Nigerian Bar Association, he provided purposeful leadership at a defining moment in the history of the Association, defending the independence of the Bar while promoting the welfare and unity of legal practitioners across the country. As President of the Bar, Chief Olanipekun looked into the eyes of a sitting President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, and threatened to walk out with his delegation if the President would not show respect to the Bar. That was an exemplary display of leadership with integrity, courage, and conviction.

Beyond the courtroom, Chief Olanipekun has been an institution in himself. He has mentored countless lawyers who today occupy prominent positions on the Bench, at the Bar, in academia, and in public service. His law firm has become a fertile ground for nurturing legal excellence, producing generations of advocates, including numerous Senior Advocates of Nigeria, who continue to uphold the finest traditions of the profession. His remarkable contributions to the development of law and nation-building have deservedly earned him national honours, including the prestigious Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON) and Commander of the Order of the Federal Republic (CFR).

Beyond national honours, Chief Olanipekun's excellence and competence were also acknowledged and rewarded through his appointment by the Federal Government of Nigeria at different times: Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council, UI (2009–2013); Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council, UNILAG (2024); and Pro-Chancellor of Ajayi Crowther University (2014–2024). Worthy of note is the fact that Chief Olanipekun has never received any form of financial reward or remuneration for rendering services to these institutions. Rather, Chief has always used his personal resources to construct buildings and roads and develop infrastructure within the universities.

Throughout five decades of legal practice, Chief Olanipekun has exemplified courage, humility, distinction, resilience, and an abiding faith in justice. One particular moment I will forever cherish is what happened in July 2022 after my victory as General Secretary-Elect of the NBA. Chief hosted me in London, gifted me an expensive suit from St John's Wood High Street with a designer shirt and bow tie, and took me to an exquisite lunch. Chief has remained a father figure to me ever since.

Fifty years at the Bar is a rare privilege. Fifty years at the pinnacle of the profession is even rarer. But fifty years of sustained excellence, impeccable integrity, selfless mentorship, and enduring national relevance is the mark of an exceptional man. I heartily congratulate you on this historic milestone, sir.

Adesina Adegbite, FICMC, MCI Arb

Secretary General, West African Bar Association (WABA)

Immediate Past General Secretary, Nigerian Bar Association (NBA)

TRIBUTE BY DR. MURITALA OLADIMEJI ABDUL-RASHEED, SAN

A GOLDEN TOAST TO CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN, CFR, SAN IN CELEBRATION OF AN EVENTFUL FIFTY YEARS AT THE BAR

July 17, 2026 | Loyal Nigerian Lawyer

There are lawyers. There are advocates. There are leaders at the Bar. And then, by the rarest providence of history, there emerge a few exceptional figures whose lives become inseparable from the evolution of the legal profession itself. Chief Wole Olanipekun, CFR, SAN, belongs unmistakably to that distinguished class. This quintessential Bar leader, who is also an elder statesman, has, in the past, been applauded for his services to humanity outside the legal profession, essentially in areas such as charity, philanthropy, educational interventions, community development, healthcare delivery, scholarship awards, youth empowerment, etc. I deem it fit, as one of his mentees whose life and career he has also positively impacted, to pen this laudatory appraisal of a very cherished mentor, role model and father figure.

Some years back, this living legend called me and swiftly admonished me: *“Murray, enough of Bar politics for you; you have all it takes to be a successful lawyer and to take the Silk. Stop practising Bar politics. Enough of that; aim for what matters most in the profession; prepare yourself to take the Silk.”*

I adhered to his command and started in earnest preparation to take the Silk, which materialised in 2021. Today, I bear eloquent testimony to the fact that he was the one who propelled me and through whom I was reawakened.

His philanthropy to lawyers and the NBA is unmatched: building and donating a Bar Centre to NBA Ikere Branch in 2014, paying practicing fees for all lawyers in the branch for 5 years, donating an 18-seater bus, building and donating a High Court Complex to Ekiti State Judiciary in 2023, providing COVID-19 palliatives across South-West branches, establishing computer sets and vehicle endowments for young lawyers in Lagos and Ilorin, and sustaining the Wole Olanipekun Scholarship Scheme since 1996.

As NBA President (2002–2004), his administration recorded landmark achievements: establishing the Section on Business Law (SBL) and Section on Legal Practice (SLP), incorporating NBA under CAMA Part C, introducing Stamp and Seal Scheme, and hosting Nigerian Night at IBA Durban 2002. He has served as Benchers since 1992, Life Benchers since 2007, and Chairman of the Body of Benchers (2022–2023), as well as being a pillar of Egbe Amofin.

May the Almighty God continue to strengthen, fortify, and rejuvenate this bountiful intellectual gift to mankind.

Dr. Muritala Oladimeji Abdul-Rasheed, SAN

Former National Publicity Secretary of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA)

TRIBUTE BY NASU, UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS BRANCH

A GOLDEN JUBILEE TRIBUTE TO AN ICON OF JUSTICE – CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN, SAN, CON

On behalf of the entire membership of the Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU), University of Lagos Branch, under the visionary and charismatic leadership of our indefatigable Chairman, Comrade Abiodun Olayinka Noah, and his Executive Committee, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to our esteemed Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council, University of Lagos, Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, CON, on the remarkable milestone of Fifty (50) Years of Distinguished Service at the Nigerian Bar.

Five decades at the Bar represent not merely a celebration of longevity; they signify the commemoration of an extraordinary legacy founded on integrity, courage, excellence, and an unwavering commitment to the cause of justice. Your life stands as a shining testament to the notion that the legal profession is a sacred calling, dedicated to defending the oppressed, upholding the rule of law, and providing hope to those whose voices might otherwise go unheard.

Through your advocacy, leadership, and profound legal scholarship, you have brought honor to the legal profession, Nigeria, and the University of Lagos. Your steadfast belief that justice must prevail irrespective of status, wealth, ethnicity, or social class continues to inspire generations of lawyers and leaders. Indeed, your illustrious career embodies the timeless principles upon which the law is founded: fairness, equity, transparency, and justice for all humanity, encapsulated in the adage that "an injury to one is an injury to all."

As you commemorate this Golden Jubilee, we salute your invaluable contributions to nation-building and your exceptional leadership as Chairman of the Governing Council of the University of Lagos. We are confident that your wealth of experience, wisdom, and unwavering sense of justice will continue to drive meaningful reforms, strengthen institutional excellence, and advance the welfare and development of every member of the University community.

Our earnest prayer is that the Almighty God will continue to bestow upon you abundant grace, divine favor, robust health, renewed strength, uncommon wisdom, and enduring peace. May He preserve you for many more years of impactful service, granting you the capacity and divine enablement to implement positive and lasting changes that will enhance the welfare, dignity, and well-being of the staff of the University of Lagos.

Congratulations on this historic Golden Jubilee at the Nigerian Bar. May your legacy of justice, integrity, and selfless service continue to illuminate the path for generations yet unborn.

Happy Golden Jubilee, Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, CON.

Comrade Otu, Obono Akpan

Secretary, NASU, University of Lagos Branch

A Tribute to Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, CFR

Celebrating 50 Years of Legal Excellence, Landmark Jurisprudence, Mentorship & Philanthropy at the Nigerian Bar

Wole Olanipekun at 50: Why All the Euphoria?

By Wale Ojo-Lanre, Esq.

Really why? My brother, imagine the excitement! Imagine the scramble. Imagine eminent jurists, learned silks, judges, academics, politicians, traditional rulers, clergymen, journalists, students, widows, young lawyers, community leaders and ordinary citizens falling over one another to celebrate one man.

Even my brother from Aramoko, that brilliant brand journalist, Raheem Akingbolu, has crafted an epistle on Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, CFR, the Asiwaju of Ikere-Ekiti.

But why all this euphoria? Is Chief Wole Olanipekun the only legal icon who has spent 50 glorious years as a minister in the Temple of Justice? What is extraordinary about practising law for 50 years? Is longevity now an achievement?

Apart from being a legal pundit, a courtroom wizard, a forensic advocate and one of the most successful lawyers Nigeria has ever produced, what else has he accomplished? Nothing? So why the drums? Why the songs? Why the tributes? Why the excitement?

Why are people disturbing our peace with celebrations because one village boy from Ikere-Ekiti was called to the Nigerian Bar in 1976, became a Senior Advocate of Nigeria in 1991, served as Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice in the old Ondo State, became President of the Nigerian Bar Association, rose to the rank of Life Bencher and later chaired the Body of Benchers? Is that enough reason to turn one man into a festival?

Perhaps not. He only participated in landmark constitutional cases that strengthened Nigeria's democratic jurisprudence. His advocacy in *Inakoju v. Adeleke* helped affirm that the impeachment of a governor must comply strictly with constitutional requirements and not be reduced to legislative brigandage.

He also played leading roles in major electoral and constitutional cases, including those connected with the restoration of mandates in Edo, Ekiti and Ondo states, as well as the legal battle concerning the attempted exclusion of a sitting Vice-President from a presidential election.

But what is there to celebrate in that? He merely helped to shape the law. He merely stood in courtrooms where history was being written. He merely deployed the law as an instrument for constitutional order, democratic stability and institutional sanity. Is that enough?

He merely built a law firm that has become a university of legal practice, producing and mentoring lawyers who have risen to become Senior Advocates of Nigeria, judges, academics, public officers, corporate leaders and respected practitioners. He did not keep his knowledge locked inside his wig and gown. He transferred it. He planted it. He multiplied it. He raised men and women who are also raising others. Is mentorship now an achievement?

Outside the courtroom, he only served as Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council of the University of Ibadan. He also served Ajayi Crowther University, pioneered the Chancellorship of Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere-Ekiti, and later became Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council of the University of Lagos. His intervention was also credited with helping to restore stability to the crisis-ridden Ladoke Akintola University of Technology.

Still, nothing extraordinary! At the University of Ibadan, he merely supported scholarships and constructed a 420-seater auditorium for the Faculty of Law. At Ajayi Crowther University, he funded scholarships for seminarians and donated a modern Vice-Chancellor's Lodge. In Ekiti State, he merely donated an ultra-modern courthouse to the Judiciary at Ikere-Ekiti, replacing an embarrassingly dilapidated structure unworthy of the dignity of justice. He followed this with the donation of a massive Senate Building to BOUESTI, complete with Senate and Council chambers, administrative offices, conference facilities and supporting infrastructure.

What is special about building institutions that will outlive their donor?

He only established the Wole Olanipekun Scholarship Scheme in 1996. By the time some people were still thinking of how to pronounce philanthropy, this man had already converted compassion into a structure. Thousands of students have benefited. Many have become lawyers, doctors, academics, engineers, administrators, entrepreneurs and professionals in different fields. His Foundation has also empowered widows, elderly citizens, indigent people and young entrepreneurs.

In Ikere-Ekiti, he merely supported hospital and maternity facilities, built educational and information technology infrastructure, established a radio station and created opportunities for people who might otherwise have been forgotten. Instead of abandoning his roots, he watered them. Instead of escaping from his community, he returned to develop it. Instead of using success as a fence, he turned it into a bridge.

He also built church facilities and vicarages, supported Christian education and demonstrated that faith should not merely be preached from the pulpit but translated into service to humanity.

Nothing, abi? Nothing—except lives rescued from poverty. Nothing—except students whose dreams would have died but for his scholarships. Nothing—except young lawyers whom he groomed into giants. Nothing—except widows whose tears he wiped away. Nothing—except elderly people whose dignity he restored.

Nothing—except entrepreneurs whom he empowered to stand on their own. Nothing—except courts, hospitals, churches, university buildings, information technology centres and other institutions that will continue to serve humanity long after the applause of this anniversary has faded.

"Chief Wole Olanipekun's story is not merely about what he acquired. It is about what he gave. It is not merely about the heights he reached. It is about the hands he lifted. It is not merely about the cases he won. It is about the institutions he built."

His celebration is not about the number of years he has counted at the Bar; it is about what he has made those years count for. It is about professional excellence without intellectual selfishness. It is about success without abandonment of one's roots. It is about wealth with compassion. It is about influence deployed in the service of institutions. It is about a man who climbed to the summit and refused to pull up the ladder behind him.

So, why the euphoria? Why celebrate Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, CFR? The proper question is not why. The real question is **Why not?**

Congratulations to the legal colossus, institution builder, mentor, philanthropist, benefactor, bridge-builder and pride of Ekiti State on 50 glorious years of outstanding service in the Temple of Justice. May God bless Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, CFR, the Asiwaju of Ikere-Ekiti, beyond his imagination.

Tribute on the Golden Jubilee of Call to the Nigerian Bar

By Hon. Justice (Professor) Alaba Omolaye-Ajileye (Rtd) — Monday, 27th July 2026

It is with profound admiration, immense gratitude, and a deep sense of privilege that I join family members, friends, colleagues, members of the Bench and Bar, and countless admirers of Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, OFR, CFR, across Nigeria and beyond in celebrating him on the historic occasion of the golden jubilee of his call to the Nigerian Bar. A consistent period of fifty years on any job is spectacular, and to have him in active service at the Bar for that long period calls for celebration and thanksgiving.

Chief Wole Olanipekun's journey through the legal profession over the past fifty years has been one of uncommon distinction and enduring impact. Through his exceptional advocacy, intellectual depth, courageous leadership, scholarship, and fidelity to the highest traditions of the profession, he has written his name indelibly in the history of the Nigerian Bar.

Chief Wole Olanipekun is not merely an accomplished legal practitioner; he is an institution, a legal colossus, a bridge between generations, and a shining embodiment of the finest ideals of the legal profession. His courtroom brilliance, formidable command of the law, eloquence, depth of legal reasoning, and mastery of advocacy have earned him immense respect within Nigeria and beyond.

I count myself exceptionally fortunate and deeply honoured to have Chief Wole Olanipekun as my mentor. His guidance has extended far beyond the technical knowledge and practice of law. Through his words,

conduct, discipline, generosity, and personal example, he has taught me that true greatness is founded upon integrity, humility, diligence, courage, compassion, and service to humanity.

Chief has consistently deployed his experience, wisdom, influence, and resources to advance the legal profession, strengthen institutions, promote education, encourage young lawyers, and support worthy causes. He has shown that the law is not merely an instrument for winning cases or attaining personal recognition, but a noble calling through which justice may be defended, society protected, institutions strengthened, and human dignity preserved.

May the years ahead bring you renewed strength, sound health, greater fulfilment, abundant joy, and the continued love and admiration of your family, colleagues, protégés, and associates. Congratulations, Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, OFR, CFR, on your fifty remarkable years of distinguished service.

Ode to Asiwaju (Chief) Wole Olanipekun, CFR, OFR, SAN

By Dayo Akinlaja, SAN, FCI Arb.

A legal colossus, legend, success personified. All these are, I dare say, inadequate to describe the astounding greatness of Asiwaju Wole Olanipekun, CFR, OFR, SAN et al. A legal exemplar and world class icon. I count myself exceedingly lucky and bountifully blessed to have had the fortune of being disciplined by him in the course of my professional career. Needless to mention that my relished association with him has been of immense treasure over the years.

Marking 50 years of Call to the Bar is, doubtless, a monumental feat. This is particularly so that the 50 years have blossomed into a sublime legal career laced with global renown and astonishing accomplishments on multidimensional fronts. The Bible has taught us *that man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.* (John 3:27). Unarguably, the heavens have been exceedingly kind and magnanimous to Asiwaju Wole Olanipekun, CFR, OFR, SAN.

Yet, it is only fair and charitable to acknowledge his avowed virtues of hard work, diligence, assiduity and unflagging professionalism as the very hallmarks of his success story. In compendium, his predilection and passion for industry in the practice of law are matchless. His talents, acumen and sagacity are uncanny in magnitude. I felicitate Chief Wole Olanipekun on achieving the legendary and phenomenal milestone of fifty years at the Bar.

Goodwill Messages & Press Statements

Compiled Statements from Political, Local & Civic Leaders

PASTOR PRAISE AYODELE (LEADER, ÀTÚNSE EKITI MOVEMENT)

Described Chief Olanipekun as a distinguished legal icon whose 50 years of exemplary service to the legal profession have been defined by excellence, integrity, courage, and an unwavering commitment to justice. He noted his immense contributions through exceptional advocacy, mentorship, and philanthropy touching countless lives across Ekiti State and Nigeria.

HON. (SQN. LDR. RTD.) OLU-EGBEJODA ADAMOLEKUN (CHAIRMAN, IKERE LOCAL GOVERNMENT)

Congratulated the Asiwaju of Ikere Kingdom on his Golden Jubilee, describing the milestone as a celebration of five decades of legal excellence, integrity, and exceptional service. He commended his outstanding humanity, philanthropy, and lasting footprints of hope and empowerment across the nation.

HON. RUFUS IGE OLORUNFEMI (CHAIRMAN, IKERE WEST LCDA)

Extended heartfelt congratulations to Chief Olanipekun, describing him as a towering figure in Nigeria's legal history who has shaped generations of lawyers through mentorship, scholarship, and visionary leadership at the Bar and on the Bench, while transforming Ikere land through selfless giving.

HON. MUYIWA JULIUS OLORO (MJO) (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO, NCAM)

Saluted the legal titan, stating that 50 years at the Bar is a monumental achievement. He praised Chief Olanipekun's unyielding integrity, landmark legal victories, and deep commitment to community development, calling him a national pride.

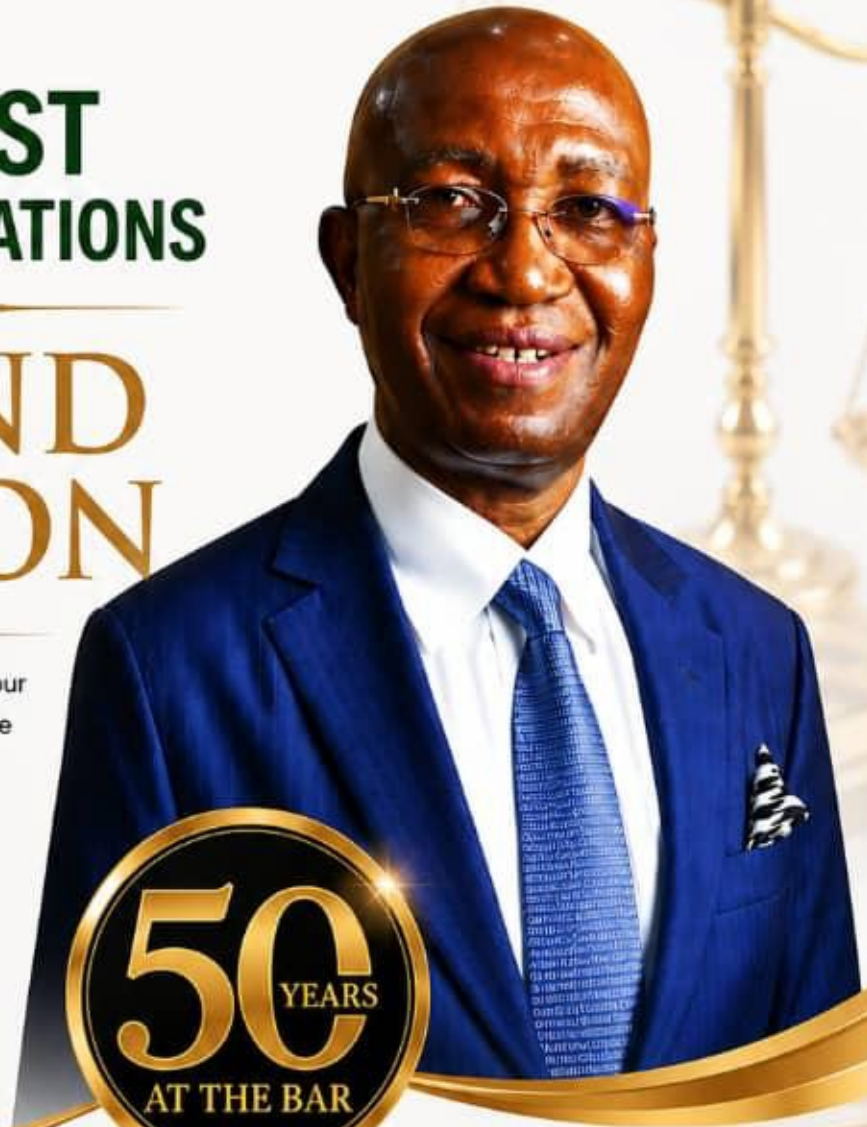


NBA AKURE BRANCH (SUNSHINE BAR)

HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS

TO OUR GRAND PATRON

On the momentous occasion of your **50 Years at the Bar**, we celebrate an extraordinary life of purpose, principle, and profound impact. Your unwavering commitment to justice, the rule of law, and the advancement of our profession has inspired generations and strengthened the foundation upon which we all stand.



CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN, CFR, OFR, SAN

—♦♦ A TRUE ICON. A LASTING LEGACY. ♦♦—

May this golden milestone be filled with joy and pride,
and may your legacy continue to illuminate
the path for many more years to come.

Signed:

ONIMISI FRIDAY UMAR ESQ
CHAIRMAN
NBA AKURE BRANCH (SUNSHINE BAR)



TRIBUTE

Olanipekun's 50th Year at the Bar: The Man, The Bar, The Institution

Raheem Akingbala

Great lawyers win cases. Exceptional lawyers shape the law itself. The rarest, however, leave footprints far beyond the courtroom. They build institutions, mentor generations, defend constitutional democracy and redefine the standards of professional excellence. For fifty years, Chief Wole Olanipekun, CFR, SAN, has remained firmly within that distinguished league.

As he marks half a century since his call to the Nigerian Bar, Nigeria is celebrating far more than an accomplished advocate. It is celebrating a legal institution whose influence has extended beyond law reports and courtrooms into the wider spheres of justice, public service, education, philanthropy and national development. Few lawyers have combined forensic brilliance with institution-building as consistently and successfully as Olanipekun.

His remarkable journey is not measured simply by the number of landmark cases he has won or the prestigious offices he has occupied. It is reflected in the constitutional principles he helped shape, the democratic values he defended, the minds he has nurtured, and the countless lives transformed through his philanthropy. Over five decades, he has demonstrated that the true measure of greatness lies not only in personal achievement but also in the enduring impact one leaves on people, institutions, and society.

Ironically, the legal profession almost lost him before it found him.

As a young student, Olanipekun's first love was English Literature. Inspired by the brilliance of the renowned poet and scholar, Professor Niyi Osundare, he dreamt of studying English and followed a similar academic path like role model, who incidentally was his senior in Secondary School. When he eventually shared that ambition with his mentor, Osundare gently redirected him, insisting that the future belonged to professional courses and therefore encouraged the young Wole to study Law instead. It was advice that would alter the course of Nigerian legal history.

Even then, the decision was far from settled. His father, Pa Isaac Olanipekun, a devout Anglican, initially opposed a legal career, believing as many parents of his generation did that success at the Bar was tied to secret cults. He preferred that his son study Mass Communication. Providence, however, intervened. An admission to study Law at the University of Lagos, reinforced by timely counsel from respected mentors, finally settled the matter. Looking back today, it is difficult to imagine what Nigeria's legal profession might have lost had events unfolded differently.

Called to the Nigerian Bar in July 1976, Olanipekun quickly distinguished himself through uncommon diligence, meticulous preparation, and an exceptional command of advocacy. Those qualities have remained the defining



Olanipekun

features of a career that has endured for fifty years, earning him a place not merely among Nigeria's finest lawyers but among the enduring institutions that have shaped the country's legal profession.

It did not take long for Olanipekun to establish himself as one of the country's most formidable advocates. Elevated to the rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria in 1991, he steadily built a reputation for intellectual depth, painstaking preparation, and courtroom discipline. Whether handling constitutional matters, commercial disputes, or politically sensitive cases, he approached every brief with the same meticulous attention to detail. That consistency earned him not only victories but also the enduring confidence of clients, colleagues, and the Bench.

His imprint on Nigeria's constitutional development is unmistakable. He led the legal team that secured the restoration of the mandate of former Oyo State Governor Rashidi Ladoja in the landmark *Irakoji v. Adeleke* case, a decision that fundamentally reshaped Nigeria's constitutional understanding of impeachment by affirming that governors could not be removed through procedures that violated due process. He also successfully led the legal battles that restored the electoral mandates of former Edo State Governor Adams Oshiomhole, former Ekiti State Governor, Kayode Fayemi and former Ondo State Governor Olusegun Mimiko. Those cases remain defining milestones in Nigeria's democratic evolution.

Olanipekun's constitutional

advocacy reached another high point in 2007 when he successfully challenged the attempted removal of then Vice President Atiku Abubakar by the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo. The Supreme Court's decision reaffirmed the supremacy of the Constitution over executive discretion and reinforced one of the cardinal principles of democratic governance, that no public office, however powerful, exists above the law.

As a serving vice president, Atiku joined the then Action Congress of Nigeria and Obasanjo declared that he had been sacked as VP. He challenged it in court through Olanipekun and he won when SC said he could not be so casually sacked.

Over the years, he has also led other senior Lawyers in several presidential election petitions and other nationally significant disputes, further cementing his reputation as one of the country's foremost constitutional lawyers.

Yet, reducing Wole Olanipekun's legacy to courtroom triumphs alone would tell only a part of the story. His influence within the legal profession has been just as profound. As former Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice in old Ondo State, former President of the Nigerian Bar Association, Life Bencher, former Chairman of the Body of Benchers and member of several strategic legal institutions, he has consistently championed judicial independence, professional ethics and institutional reform. Those leadership roles reflected not merely professional recognition

but the confidence reposed in him by the legal community over several decades.

Perhaps his greatest investment has been in people. Through his chambers, hundreds of young lawyers have passed under his guidance, many of whom today occupy distinguished positions at the Bar, on the Bench, in academia, government and the corporate sector. Significantly, a remarkable number have themselves attained the prestigious rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria. His approach to mentorship has always reflected his belief that the strength of any profession lies in the quality of those who inherit it. In nurturing future leaders, he has quietly ensured that his influence extends well beyond his own generation.

Outside the courtroom, the same philosophy of service has shaped his contributions to education, healthcare, faith and community development. From scholarship schemes for indigent students and major educational endowments to hospitals, church projects, ICT centres, Bar facilities and empowerment programmes for widows and young entrepreneurs, his philanthropy has remained both deliberate and enduring. Long before corporate social responsibility became fashionable, Olanipekun had embraced giving back as a personal obligation, demonstrating that the finest lawyers are remembered not only for the cases they win but also for the lives they touch and the institutions they leave stronger than they found them.

If the law is ultimately about building a just society, then Chief Wole Olanipekun's legacy extends well beyond the courtroom. His life demonstrates that professional excellence finds its highest expression in service to others. Whether through landmark constitutional advocacy, principled leadership within the legal profession, generous investment in education, healthcare and community development, or his unwavering commitment to mentoring younger lawyers, he has consistently shown that influence is most meaningful when it outlives personal success. The institutions he has strengthened, the professionals he has nurtured and the countless lives touched by his philanthropy together form a legacy that no law report can fully capture.

As Chief Wole Olanipekun celebrates his fifty years at the Bar, Nigeria honours far more than one of its finest advocates. It celebrates a statesman of the law, a guardian of constitutionalism, and a builder of enduring institutions whose contributions have become woven into the nation's democratic and legal history. In an era yearning for principled leadership and lasting values, his journey stands as compelling proof that the greatest lawyers are remembered not for the verdicts they secure, but for the institutions they strengthen, the people they inspire, and the generations they prepare to carry the torch long after they leave the courtroom.



HONOURING CHIEF WOLE OLANIPEKUN, SAN, CON ON HIS HISTORIC 50 YEARS AT THE NIGERIAN BAR

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“Fifty years at the Bar is a monumental achievement. Chief Olanipekun is a pride not just to Ikere Land, but to the entire nation. We pray that God continues to bless him with abundant health, wisdom, and strength to keep serving humanity.”

— HON. MUYIWA OOLORO, ED/CEO, NCAM.



CONGRATULATIONS, SIR!

SIGNED
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, NCAM