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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **ADDRESS BY FIDUO PRESIDENT, DR. GABRIEL S. BOMIDE AT A SPECIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 27, 2015**

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Fellow Compatriots:

I would like to welcome you all to this Special FIDUO General Assembly Meeting. This meeting is considered “special” because important decisions affecting the future and destiny of Ikun community will be made today. A time such as this in the annals of our history as a community calls for sober reflection and spiritual stocktaking. Our communal atmosphere has been rife with hostility, animosity and everything that defines a house divided against itself. In the events leading to the selection of the substantive Onikun, families have been divided, civil and criminal court cases have been filed, personal property has been vandalized, a precious human life has been lost, brothers have been pitched against brothers, friends have turned to sworn enemies, and even FIDUO members have not been able to speak with one voice!

Today is one of those moments that we have to work towards moving beyond diverse interests in our preferred candidate to respecting the will of God and that of the people of Ikun in the emergence of Prince Olusola David Olatunde as the Onikun-elect.

I would like to implore us to desist from heating up the polity with utterances and actions that could potentially undermine the peace, harmony and progress of our community. We can disagree without being disagreeable; we can have diverse opinions without throwing caution to the wind; and we can oppose an idea without being disrespectful to those who think otherwise. We should at this moment come together to preach love, peace, tolerance and harmony to ourselves and to our community. When it is all said and done, Ikun-Ekiti is the only place we all call home. It is the place where our roots go deep and our branches are far-reaching. Wherever we find ourselves in the world, Ikun-Ekiti still remains a home to all of us.

Needless to say, it is almost the norm in Yoruba land that the selection of a new monarch is often characterized by deep passions and emotions, therefore, our own may not be an exception. I strongly believe that these diverse emotional expressions and desires to have the best community leadership candidate stemmed from our deep love for Ikun-Ekiti, hence there was nothing wrong for anyone being on either side of the Obaship divide!

In line with the foregoing, we are here today to help rebuild our communal ties. Now that the protracted Onikun selection process has finally been completed, we have to find a means to engender peaceful unification of fractured relationships in our community. This we have to approach with all diligence and divine wisdom. It would be naïve to think that everybody will join our train of reconciliation but it is possible to mend fences and rebuild friendships. It is possible to bring our community together and restore her to a peaceful place it has always been.

FIDUO's position as a non-partisan organization is not without a full awareness of individual political persuasion; however, Ikun-Ekiti is bigger than any of us. I would like to implore us to put community ahead of self. We have a responsibility towards fostering unity and harmony in the community. In addition, FIDUO is undoubtedly one of the most respected Ikun community organizations with a strong voice and influence on community affairs. I therefore, appeal to us to please put our differences aside, unite behind the new Onikun-elect, and positively influence the community to ensure a strong, unified Ikun-Ekiti and a peaceful transition. As Ekiti State Governor, Dr. Ayodele Fayose (2015) rightly noted: "A town can be without a King, but a King cannot be without a town." The ultimate selection of Prince Olusola David Olatunde as the Onikun-elect is therefore

a win-win situation. It's indeed a victory for the entire Ikun-Ekiti community.

The Book of Isaiah 43:18-19a says "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!" Therefore, I want to ask you, my brothers and sisters, to come together, arms-in-arms as we leave the past behind us to embrace the greater and better future that God has in store for us.

Before I close, Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to use this medium to thank you all for the unique role FIDUO had played throughout the concluded Onikun selection process, especially in helping the Ruling House define the minimum eligibility criteria a prospective Onikun candidate should meet in this modern time, as well as our reconciliatory effort to appease the Kingmakers for a peaceful resolution. Let me conclude in the words of exhortation by Kanmi Aborisade (2015): "I want to encourage us to come together and be one again. There was nothing wrong in being on either side of the divide. Now, the 'thin line' dividing us has been broken. Let's unite again. Together we stand divided we fall!"

I pray for divine direction as we deliberate today on the role of FIDUO towards the reconciliation of our community, following the final selection of Prince Olusola David Olatunde as the substantive Onikun-elect. May his reign usher in unprecedented peace, harmony, prosperity and accelerated development to Ikun-

Ekiti. Thank you once again for being a part of this reconciliatory effort and may God bless you all!

**“Therefore, let's keep on pursuing those things that bring peace and that lead to building up one another” (Romans 14:19).**

Released by:

Rev. Canon Olufemi Olajide

FIDUO PRO

Ontario, Canada

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