Academy at 20: Speech Delivered by the Deputy Director of AUN Schools, Hajia Asma'u Atiku Abubakar, at the 20th anniversary Dinner of the AUN ACADEMY, on 9th DECEMBER 2022.

Our dear Founder, His Excellency Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, chairperson of the AUN Schools Board of Trustee, Dr Mrs Ebi Seimodei, other members of the AUN Schools' Board of Trustee, the parents of our most distinguished students, my fellow alums, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you all to the 20th anniversary Dinner of the AUN Academy.

My name is Asmau Abubakar, and I am the Deputy Director of the AUN Schools. In 2002, AUN Academy, founded as ABTI Academy, opened its doors to its first set of students. I am pleased to see that many members of that first set, which is the class of 2008, can join us as we celebrate our school's 20th anniversary this night.

I would like to recognize and pay tribute to our Founder for his decision to make the enormous investments he has made by building and equipping the Academy with world-class facilities comparable to the finest in the world. He poured his wealth where his heart is, and he has demonstrated through his actions that deep in his heart is the commitment to provide quality education to all, irrespective of one's background. In his own words, and I quote "Education is the greatest investment a nation can make to lay the foundations of liberty and freedom, the activation of individual, social and collective values as well as the achievements of the well-being of the people". On behalf of the management of the AUN Schools, it is my pleasure to express our gratitude to our dear Founder for his devotion and generosity, which has made the journey of two decades for this prestigious institution possible. He is true 'the gift that keeps giving. Your Excellency, your passion for education is yielding fruit. Indeed, the AUN Academy has gone on to produce and nurture some of the most brilliant kids our country has in stock. Because of the excellent foundation of knowledge and individual development the school emphasises, these talents are not only able to stand out, but they're also able to compete with the best in the world.

Amongst many of the alums making a difference with global footprints is Dr Rukaiya Bashir. She is board certified in Internal Medicine from Thomas Jefferson University Teaching Hospital in the United States. Dr Rukaiya is currently pursuing Gastroenterology and Hematology at the University of Maryland Teaching Hospital. She has a vision of eradicating hepatitis B in Nigeria. Upon completing her program,

her dream is to set up a state-of-the-art comprehensive endoscopy and haematology unit in Nigeria and hopefully join the AUN School of medicine.

Another great mind is Mr Joseph Ishaku. He is the Co-Founder of Kwakol, a global financial brokerage firm unusually headquartered in Nigeria, which has a vision of promoting the use of technology to help its clients sustainably build wealth, and I could go on and on. The AUN Academy, therefore, stands as a testament to success. Some might think or question what is so special about setting up a world-class private and relatively expensive school. Every student who goes through the AUN Schools is on our Founder's scholarship. Due to peculiar challenges, the school charges its students slightly less than half of the total cost of the education it provides. The AUN Schools has put in place a system that offers opportunities to children from the poorest of backgrounds, and this, ladies and gentlemen, is educational philanthropy.

It is not every day that you turn 20. It is a symbolic age that gives an idea of what you may become. In most cases, It is an age where your character has just taken shape, and it is no different for the AUN Academy. Today is a time to reflect on our memories and appreciate those who have contributed to what the AUN Academy has become. Today is also an opportunity for us to acknowledge members of the AUN Academy, both past and present, who have influenced the character and values of this great institution.

I would like to end my remarks by calling on all those who are able, especially my fellow alums, to strive to promote education whenever and wherever we may find ourselves. I'm sure we all know and understand the value of education in the modern world. The development or success of any society in today's contemporary world cannot be achieved without education. But without education, none of us would be here today. We should remember the 20 million Nigerian children that represent a whopping 20% of global out-of-school children, whose future looks bleak simply because they're unable to receive an education.

On behalf of the management of the Academy and AUN Schools, I thank every single one of you for taking time out of your busy schedules to join us this night to celebrate the AUN Academy. I wish us all a memorable dinner. May God bless the AUN Schools, and God bless Nigeria. Thank you.