

A message from EVI National President  
Dr. Joseph Ozigis Akomodi, Ph.D.

I am happy to join with you today as the National President of Ebira Vonya International (EVI), in what will go down in history as the greatest organization in Ebiraland, Nigeria, and the World at large. The series of events that led to the formation of this unique association cannot be overemphasized. Back in the early 80s this organization was gathering momentum to start its formation. Due to the circumstances beyond our control, we could not initiate such a global organization. However, the idea of uniting all Ebiras both at home and abroad has always been in the minds of our Brothers and Sisters. Suffice it to say that due to the commitment of the children of Ebiraland, this Association was born in March 2004. Thanks to God for the advancement in technology, the internet, which makes it easier to communicate ideas to all Ebiras all over the world for the creation of EVI. EVI was formed to promote unity, peace, and progress for the entire Ebira community, Nigeria, and developing Nations. Therefore, I believe in the adage that says, "Charity begins at home." We have initiated Charity to start from home. As a result, we will not fail. I would like to inform all members that we all are founding fathers and mothers of this organization. Therefore, We have a dream, just like Dr. Marthin Luther King Jr., had a dream for the United States in August 28, 1963, in Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C. in his "I have a Dream" speech, which brought about civil liberty and bill of rights. May his dream speech leave forever. Therefore, ours will also leave forever. The motto of this organization is "AVUVOBE", which means let us join hands in unity for the benefit of Ebiraland and the world at large.

As a child growing up in Ebiraland, I had always wondered and asked: Why do we have so much hatred for our brothers and sisters? Why are we so divided by clans? Why do we kill each other? Why will my parents warn me not to eat outside when someone offered me food? Why are we locked up as if we are in jail? Why the disunity among the Ebiras? Why? Why? Why? All of these Why questions have some validity. No one could answer the questions to my satisfaction. I have always been told that I asked too many questions you don't need to know answers to. As an adult, I still ask the same questions today. Perhaps that is why I am driven with passion to be part of the Agent of change.

The disunity, which has permeated into the core of our land has crippled our society. As a result Ebiraland thrives on a lonely, rocky region of poverty amidst the wealth and technological advancement in the rest of the world. Now, Ebiraland is still languishing in the corners of Nigeria society and finds itself isolated to its own land. Therefore, brothers and sisters the time have come when we all need to be awakened and "Get our feet and hands dirty" as the National Chairman has stated. Now the time has come, when we are not going to just watch as our land is being dragged down by politicians. Now the time has come, when we have to fight for the future of our generation just like our forefathers who shed blood in wars for the existence of our Ebiraland. Now the time has come to aid our youths that are tired of being used as thugs. Now the time has come to heed to the call for help of men, women and children of our homeland. Now the time has come to heed to the call for help of our people living in absolute poverty. Now the time has come to heed to the call for help of people infected with HIV and living with AIDS. Now the time has come to alleviate our brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers and children of our land of problems associated with deadly diseases. Now the

time has come to rescue the educational system in Ebiraland, which continues to deteriorate. Now the time has come, when we can no longer wait but act. Therefore, we must act peacefully, sensibly, and tactfully to ensure unity and prosperity in our land.

Again, we are not saying what we have to embark on, is an easy task. May our road be rough for our struggles to ensure quality of life. May our road be rough for our endurance to move Ebiraland to a higher standard. May our road be rough in bringing our community to understand what we stand for. May our road be rough to ensure quality of education. May our road be rough in dealing with our politicians and our leaders. May our road be rough in uplifting the spirit of our mother and fatherland. May our road be rough in all our struggles!!!

Dr. King said to the American people back in the sixties, I quote. "This is our hope. This is the faith that I will go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into beautiful symphonies of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing we will be free one day. This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning, my country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring! And if American is to be a great nation, this must become true:

And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire.

Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York.  
Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado.

Let freedom ring from curvaceous slopes of California.

But not only that.

Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.

Let freedom ring from the lookout Mountain of Tennessee.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics will be able to join hands and sing in the words of old Negro spiritual: Free at last! Free at last! Thank God almighty, we are free at last!"

Therefore, brothers and sisters having read the above quotation from Dr. Marthin Luther King Jr., who died for the struggle of freedom for all humanity, our plight and vision leading to the formation of EVI are a proof that Dr. Marthin Luther King Jr. did not die in vain. Therefore, I ask of you to be determined in your struggle as EVI's course is a noble one. I have decided to be part of EVI formation and together, to be able to lift it to the next level for generations to come.

Join us in the struggles for quality of life in Ebiraland, and in all developing nations.

We must commit to helping our people and giving back to our communities that instilled so much good things in us just like a heroic act performed by our brother, Ahmed Ogembe, who single-handedly drilled bore holes across the entire Ebira for fresh drinking water to be readily available to our people.

My message will be incomplete, if I failed to express my gratitude to the National Chairman who is the architect of this organization back in early 80s when he charged me with a task to form Ebira Association in former Soviet Union. I would also like to thank all the Executive members and Regional members for serving our motherland diligently. Above all, my sincere appreciation and gratitude to all EVI members and Ebira as whole for their trust in me to be the First National President of this unique Organization.

Long Live EVI!, Long Live Ebira!!, and Long Live Nigeria!!!

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