



**AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY**

## **CITATION**

**Dr. Bukar Usman:  
An Outstanding Public Servant, an  
Accomplished Author and a Tireless  
Advocate of Cultural Authenticity**

**Being a Citation on Dr. Bukar Usman, OON  
presented at the 37<sup>th</sup> Convocation of Ahmadu  
Bello University, Zaria, at which he was  
conferred with the Honorary Doctor of Letters  
(D.Litt) Degree.**

**Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2014.**

The Chancellor Sir, it is my privilege to present this Citation on Dr. Bukar Usman a dignified personality with an enviable record of public service, a prolific and accomplished author and intellectual and an indefatigable advocate of cultural preservation for the conferment of the Honorary Doctor of Letters (D.Litt) Degree of Ahmadu Bello University. It is indeed remarkable that Ahmadu Bello University has identified for recognition and honour one of its illustrious products who through hard work, patriotism and courage has become one of its outstanding good ambassadors. In thus honouring Dr. Bukar Usman, Ahmadu Bello University affirms its well-known tenacity to recognize and reward achievers endowed with good leadership qualities, devotion and humane disposition. Due to his privileged background, Dr. Bukar Usman had the option to live a quiet, dignified and contented life. However, public spiritedness influenced his preference to serve his society and work for the well-being of other human beings with tenacity, dedication, humility and candour.

Dr Bukar Usman was born in Biu, Borno State on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December, 1942 and had his primary education in Biu and Maiduguri between 1951 and 1963. He then enrolled in the prestigious King's College, Lagos where he obtained his Higher School Certificate in 1965. In 1966, Dr Bukar Usman was admitted into the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, from where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Administration and international relations in 1969. Dr Bukar Usman started his career in 1965 when he was appointed a 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Clerk in the federal Civil Service. On the completion of his University education, he was made an Administrative Officer and subsequently rose through

the ranks to become a Director General/Permanent Secretary in the Presidency in 1988. He served in this capacity for over a decade and half until his retirement in 1999 after 34 years of meritorious service. It is beyond doubt that this is a unique achievement in the federal civil service. Due to the diligence and integrity of his distinguished career, Dr. Bukar Usman was a member or a part- leader of several Committees, Commissions and Delegations on National Security, Human Rights, Labour matters and Peace Missions.

Between 1972 and 1999, for instance, Dr. Bukar Usman was the Secretary, Committee on National Safety and Security; he became a member of the Organizing Committee of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Black and African festival of arts and Culture (FESTAC) in 1975; in 1986, he was a member, Committee on the Re-organization of the National Security Organization (NSO); between 1995 and 1998, Dr. Usman was the Chairman, Tripartite Committee on Labour Demands; from 1996 to 1998, he was either an Alternate Leader or member of two UN Commissions on Human Rights as well as a member of OAU's 3<sup>rd</sup> Government Legal Experts for the establishment of African Courts on Human and People's Rights. In 2001, Dr. Usman became a member, Presidential Panel on National Security. It is to the credit of Dr. Bukar Usman that the history of the Nigerian security system will not be complete without reference to his immense contributions at various levels.

It is in the nature of public spirited men that vocational feats are outward manifestations of deeper motivation and latent intellectual and visionary power and the two

converge in a manner most beneficent to society. It is not surprising therefore that Dr Bukar Usman deployed his skill and creativity to learning and writing. These are talents that served him well in his school days and later account for the high quality of the numerous papers and the memoranda he authored while serving in the cabinet office/presidency and in the Committees and Commissions. This cognitive capacity that enhanced his distinguished career culminated in the publication of over 30 books of polemical, historical, cultural and literary nature in English and Hausa between 1999 and 2012 some of which include: **Voices in Choir: Issues in Democratization and National stability in Nigeria** (1999); the autobiography **Hatching Hopes** (2006), **My Literary Journey** (2013) and **Girl-Child Education in Biu Emirate** (2014). He has accordingly been admitted as an honorary member of the Abuja Chapter of the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA), honoured by the 11<sup>th</sup> Nigerian Folklore Society Congress at Bayero University, Kano in April 2014 and elected President of Nigerian folklore Society. He was also recently honoured in Niamey, Niger Republic for his contribution to the development of literature.

So intense and passionate is Dr. Bukar Usman's love for learning and cultural preservation that he founded the **Bukar Usman Foundation** in 2008 with the Motto: **Service to Humanity**. With a set of seven objectives, the mission of the Foundation is to make Life more meaningful to others through charity and the promotion of learning and other philanthropic causes. Dr. Bukar

Usman's interest in scholarship is evident in the intellectual engagements of the Foundation which has distributed free of charge within and outside of the country the illustrated 627 page compendium of Folktales **Taskar Tatsuniyoyi** whose content is already the subject of many researches, undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

The Foundation has also commissioned the collection and translation of folktales from all parts of Nigeria and so far collections have been concluded for the Yoruba in the South West; the Igbo in the South East; the Hausa in the North West; the Fulfulde in the North East; the Tiv, the Idoma and the Itulu in Benue State, the Tera in Gombe and Borno States and the Zaar in Bauchi State. Collections are on-going in the South South and North Central Zones and the FCT. This is indeed a Mega pan-Nigerian collection drive which has not been undertaken or even attempted in the history of Folktales in Nigeria from the colonial times to the present. Dr. Bukar Usman is a colossus of a man with indelible footprints on the landscape of public service, learning and the preservation of culture in Nigeria, Africa and the World. In this regard, he has become one of the architects of knowledge production, cultural authenticity and identity formation.

The Chancellor Sir, I am privileged to present to you Dr. Bukar Usman OON, for the conferment of the Doctor of Letters Degree Honoris Causa of Ahmadu Bello University.

**Professor Tanimu Abubakar,**

Orator

*November 22, 2014*