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Special Release

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OBITUARY

PROFESSOR MOSUNMOLA AYINKE OMIBIYI-OBIDIKE, *FANIM* (1943-2016)

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor A. I. Olayinka, FAS, announces with deep regret, the transition of Professor Mosunmola Ayinke Omibiyi–Obidike (rtd). Prof. Obidike was born on January 20, 1943 in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria to the family of Deacon John Otunla Omibiyi and Mrs. Ruth Mojirade Omibiyi.

In 1956, she was admitted to the Reagan Memorial Baptist Girls' School, Lagos where she learnt the rudiments of music, singing and piano playing. She also belonged to the Schools choir, which featured her in singing competitions at various Baptist Conventions, concerts and radio programmes. She was the first female to be admitted to the Fela Sowande College (now Department) of Music, University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1963 and completed her university degree programme at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1968, majoring in ethnomusicology and music education. She obtained her master and doctoral degrees in African music education in 1969 and 1972 respectively from the UCLA.

She joined the services of the University of Ibadan as a Research Fellow I in the Institute of African Studies on 2 January, 1978; was promoted Senior Research Fellow (Musicology) on 1 October, 1981 and promoted to the rank of Research Professor (Musicology) on 1 October, 1989. Popularly referred to as "Mama African Musicology", Professor Omibiyi-Obidike became the first female professor in music in sub-Saharan Africa. Professor Omibiyi-Obidike was appointed Director, Institute of African Studies from 1995 to 1998, and again from 2001 to 2004.

She was a distinguished scholar of international repute with over 70 publications in her field of specialisation, with majority of them focusing on development of music education, documentation of Nigerian music and musicians and cultural reconstruction.

Professor Omibiyi-Obidike was a recipient of several awards, scholarships and fellowships, including the University of California Regents and the Alexander Von Humboldt-Stiftung Foundation from 1981 to 1982 and between 2006 and 2007.

The Late Professor Omibiyi–Obidike was a consultant to several academic and professional bodies, including, the Creative Arts of Africa, Black Music Studies Project, Department of

Music, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee, USA and ethnic heritage project, Bowie State College, Bowie, Maryland, USA. She served in various capacities including: Member, National Committee on Music for the Festival of African Arts and Culture (FESTAC' 77) Chairperson, adjudicating committee for music events of the national arts festival, 1989; Chairperson, National Committee on Nigerian musical instruments; Co-ordinator of the National Secretariat of the International Centre for African Music and Dance (ICAMD) located in the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan.

Professor Mosunmola Omibiyi-Obidike was elected President, Association of Nigerian Musicologists (ANIM), where she served meritoriously from 2004 to 2008. She was inducted into the Fellowship of ANIM in 2015. She retired from the service of the University of Ibadan in 2008 but continued to render her services to the institution in many respects, including supervision of students on higher degree programme in Musicology, She joined the Faculty of the Performing Arts, Ifa Heritage, Oyo, where she taught African music.

Professor Omibiyi-Obidike died on 6 May, 2016 at the age of 73. She was survived by children and grandchildren.

May her gentle soul rest in peace. Amen.

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