

TRIBUTE TO OUR LATE NATIONAL CHAIRMAN **ENGR. FRANCIS ORIAKHI,** FNSE, FNIHTE, KSM

“A distinguished engineer, a leader of integrity, and a passionate champion of professional excellence.”



The Nigerian Institution of Highway and Transportation Engineers (NIHTE) mourns with profound sadness the passing of our dear National Chairman, **Engr. Francis Oriakhi, FNSE, FNIHTE, KSM**, a distinguished engineer, accomplished professional, exemplary leader, gentleman, and passionate advocate for engineering excellence and the continuous professional development of engineers.

Engr. Francis Oriakhi was a man of excellence, humility, kindness, integrity and purpose. His passion for engineering was evident throughout his remarkable career and professional service. He strongly believed in advancing professional standards, continuous learning, capacity development, and the responsibility of engineers to contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's development.

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL CAREER

Born in Sapele, Delta State, Engr. Oriakhi began his education at St. Francis Primary School, Sapele, and subsequently attended St. Malachy's College, Sapele, where he obtained his West African School Certificate in 1975.

In 1980, he began his undergraduate studies as a direct-entry student in the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ilorin, and later attended the University of Port Harcourt, where he graduated with a B.Eng. in Civil Engineering. He subsequently obtained an M.Tech. in Highway and Transportation Engineering from the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, now Rivers State University.

His professional career commenced in 1985 with Elf Petroleum Nigeria Limited, now TotalEnergies, where he served in various engineering and management capacities in Nigeria and France. His career included positions as Maintenance Engineer, Civil Works Engineer, Head of Civil Works, Project Engineer, Project Manager, Manager of Sustainable Development Projects, Manager of District Administration, and Deputy General Manager, District Administration, Port Harcourt. He retired from TotalEnergies in 2017 after a distinguished career.

He subsequently remained actively engaged in engineering consultancy and business through Arcade Consult Ltd., Port Harcourt, a civil engineering consultancy firm, Wellman Construction Company Ltd., and as a Director of Oceanequest Petroleum Nigeria Ltd.

A LIFE OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Engr. Oriakhi was a COREN-registered Engineer, a Fellow of the Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE), Fellow of NIHTE, Fellow of the Nigerian Institution of Civil Engineers (NICE), and Fellow of the Institute of Management Consultants (IMC).

His commitment to professional service extended across both NIHTE and the Nigerian Society of Engineers. Within NIHTE, he served as Chairman of the Port Harcourt Chapter, National Vice Chairman, Deputy National Chairman, and ultimately the 6th National Chairman of the Institution.

Within the Nigerian Society of Engineers, his contributions included service as Chairman of the NSE Port Harcourt Branch Membership Review Committee; Chairman of the NSE Port Harcourt Branch Annual Lecture and Awards Committee twice; Member of the NSE Codes and Standards Committee; and Chairman of the NSE Port Harcourt Branch International Tours Committee.

These appointments reflected not only his professional competence but also the confidence that colleagues and fellow engineers placed in his judgement, integrity and leadership.

As National Chairman of NIHTE, Engr. Oriakhi brought to the Institution a leadership style characterised by wisdom, humility, inclusiveness, professional integrity and a genuine desire to see engineers grow and excel. He was particularly passionate about professional development, mentoring, capacity building and the advancement of engineering practice.

A MAN OF MANY INTERESTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Beyond his professional life, Engr. Oriakhi was a man who valued friendship, fellowship, community, sports and service. He was actively involved in several social and sporting organisations and was a polo player.

He served as National President of St. Malachy's College Old Boys Association (SMOBA) and was the immediate past Chairman of ESAN Club 30, Port Harcourt. He was also actively involved in sporting clubs, having served as a former Captain of the Lawn Tennis Section of Warri Club and a two-time Vice Captain of Python Golf Club, Port Harcourt.

His involvement in these organisations demonstrated another dimension of his personality: a man who believed in building relationships, promoting fellowship and contributing to the communities and associations to which he belonged.

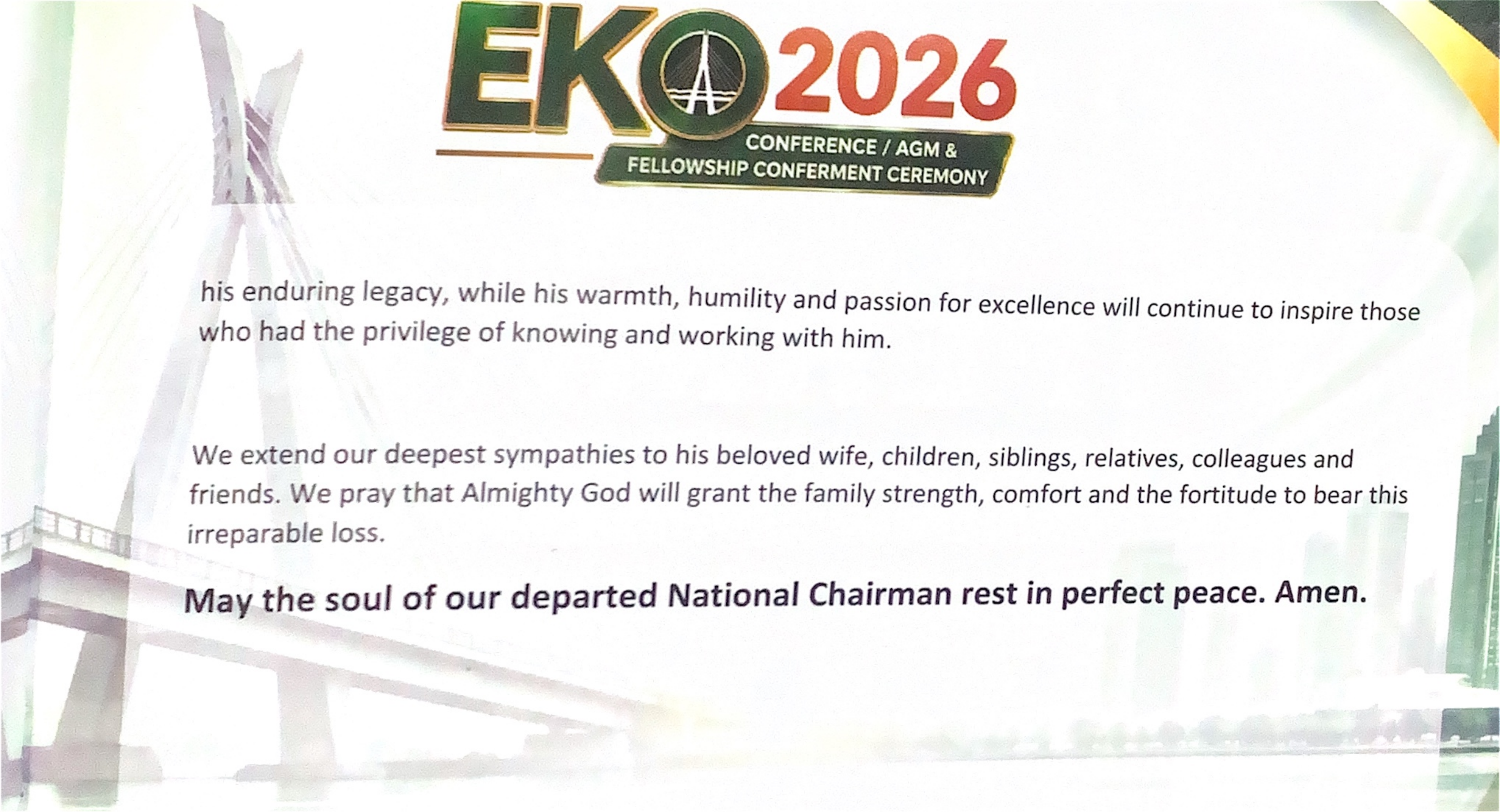
A devoted Christian and Knight of St. Mulumba (KSM) of the Catholic Church, he was married to Mrs. Patricia Oriakhi and was blessed with four children, all of whom are engineers.

A LASTING LEGACY

The passing of Engr. Francis Oriakhi is a profound loss to his beloved wife, children, siblings, relatives and friends. It is equally a great loss to NIHTE, the Nigerian Society of Engineers, the engineering profession and the wider professional community.

Yet, while we mourn his departure, we remain grateful for the life he lived, the knowledge he shared, the institutions he served, the relationships he built, and the many engineers and professionals he encouraged to pursue excellence.

Engr. Francis Oriakhi leaves behind a legacy of professional excellence, leadership, service, kindness and an unwavering commitment to the advancement of engineering and the development of engineers. His contributions to NIHTE, NSE, NICE and other professional engineering organisations will remain part of



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his enduring legacy, while his warmth, humility and passion for excellence will continue to inspire those who had the privilege of knowing and working with him.

We extend our deepest sympathies to his beloved wife, children, siblings, relatives, colleagues and friends. We pray that Almighty God will grant the family strength, comfort and the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

May the soul of our departed National Chairman rest in perfect peace. Amen.