



## ADDRESS

AT TAIPEI INSTITUTE FOR SPOUSES OF GOVERNORS-ELECT

**Ayo Majiyagbe**

Spouse, TRF Trustees Chair

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Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, spouses of District Governors elect and members all, of the Family of Rotary. I welcome you to the Spouses Program. We have interesting activities lined up and I am sure the Taiwan Institute will be one we will always remember.

It is an honor to stand before you here today. I never dreamt that one day I would be asked to give a speech. I thought I would just tag along and enjoy this Rotary year. I did not think anyone would be interested in anything I had to say because I am a very new Rotarian and, especially, as I know that most of you have many more years of experience. But I will do my best.

No doubt, you all realize that you have a busy year ahead of you. I was never a DG'S spouse, but as spouse of the Chairman of the Foundation, I believe our roles are quite similar. Primarily, we are pillars of support.

This year your whole life will revolve around Rotary. You will be expected to go where your spouses go. You will go where Rotary wants you to go. It will be a year for hard work and commitment and you may be asked to make sacrifices but, I assure you, it will be well worth it.

Rotary will give you the opportunity to meet new people and make life-long friends from different countries. Already, you have met spouses from other districts and at the International Assembly in January you will meet with your colleagues from all over the world. It is an experience of a life time and one that you will never forget.

As spouses of District Governors, you are suddenly thrown into the limelight, many of you are not prepared for this but Rotary will bring out the best in you. Skills you never knew you had will come to the forefront. You will be called to put your talents to use and participate in



projects that will better the lives of millions of people. A brand new world will open up to you and you will begin to see life differently. You will realize how lucky you are to have food, a roof over your head, good health, healthy children, money in the bank and extra to give away. So many people worldwide have nothing, absolutely nothing.

Spouses, please be well prepared for this enormous task ahead of you. It is essential that you are well informed about the many Rotary programs. Take time to know what Rotary is all about. Read their several publications, the Rotarian Magazine is very informative about Rotary activities around the world.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. I have found that Rotarians are only too happy to help out. I became a

Rotarian only a year ago but I have learned so much within this period. At my first outing in San Diego, I was a bundle of nerves but with much encouragement from other spouses, I can stand before you today a much more confident person.

What can we do to help your Spouse this year? There is so much, including having to make speeches. So get ready, you might be standing here one day.

Fortunately, I have secretarial skills so I was able to put these skills to work and thereby assist my husband in Administrative tasks. From having to do the filing, and replying his mail, I get to know what is going on in the Rotary Foundation. By listening to his speeches, over and over again, I get to understand how the Foundation operates and how much good Rotarians are doing in the world.

Apart from Rotary tasks, I am responsible for packing, unpacking, then there is the laundry, making phone calls, running errands and receiving Rotarians in our home. I am most fascinated as I watch Rotarians who have crossed continents to come to participate in National Immunization days. They are not anxious for their own comfort in our homes but for the opportunity to be able to put those two precious little drops of vaccine into the mouths of children. These are professional men and women who do not have to come to third world countries. They do it because they are Rotarians – a very special group of volunteers. Their dedication has spurred me on to be more determined to ensure that polio is eradicated in my country, Nigeria. Actually, I live in Kano where cases of polio are on the increase and I see polio victims, on a daily basis, begging on the streets, crawling on their hands and knees.

From visiting clubs in your district, you will get to know what projects they are sponsoring in your communities and you will learn about the needs of others and how, together, we can make a difference.

But remember, you cannot do everything on your own and one of the qualities of a good leader is to delegate duties. You will have to work as part of a team and will require good interpersonal skills.

Now, you may ask, how do I benefit from being a District Governor's spouse? What is my reward? Well, you get the opportunity to travel and you make new friends. You will have the satisfaction of seeing how Rotary is doing good in the world. You will also have the satisfaction of seeing how your time and donations affect lives in the farthest parts of the world. You will hear reports of how people you might never meet are given new hope for better life.

Finally, in whatever you do always ask yourself – is it the truth, is it fair to all concerned, will it build goodwill and better friendships and will it be beneficial to all concerned. This four way test should be your guide in all your decisions.

And so I encourage you to take your new role very seriously. Put all you have into it and I assure you it will be a very rewarding experience. Like the saying goes, 'All work and no play will make us dull' There is no dull moment in Rotary. You will have a lot of fun this year.

And so as we work together to bring hope to millions around the world, as we share, because we care, we will certainly, MAKE DREAMS REAL this year.

I look forward to seeing you in San Diego.

THANK YOU

