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INTERNATIONAL

GOODNIGHT, MY BROTHER HOSA.

**“ The loss of a friend is like that of a limb; time may heal the anguish of the wound,
but the loss cannot be repaired. ”**

Robert Southey (Poet)

The last few months have been nightmarish for me. It was months spent more on my knees in intercession for a friend and brother, asking God Almighty to heal him and give him another chance to live. From the 8th of August till date, I have been in denial. I have been in one long dream and yet to see the end. I have wondered, what could have triggered off the ailment that took my friend? I have been waiting to hear the voice of my friend, brother, mentor and partner; Hosa Wells Okunbo. I keep hoping it is a bad dream that I'll come out of; and that I'll see his face and hear his voice again. But as the days keep stretching, my imaginations flounder. He remains in my thoughts.

I met Captain Idahosa Wells Okunbo as a great airline captain. He was exceptionally dextrous on the wings. We became friends who grew to become brothers, and fate made us co in-laws.

Captain stood in as a father for me at my wedding and his signature remains on the dotted line of my marriage certificate to this day.

We became best of friends and business associates from the 1980s: a business relationship that left us both happy and appreciative of one another. A mutually benefitting business relationship indeed. We remained inseparable, until the grim reaper, death, took him away from me.

We both walked into the airplane in Abuja and flew together to London for a business meeting in September 2020. He proceeded for what we all assumed to be routine medicals, only for me to get that life-shattering phone call from him and the doctor, breaking the sad news of pancreatic cancer diagnosis.

The rest is this eulogy, this history of a friend and brother I will sorely miss. I have lost a brother, a friend, a confidant, a very close buddy, and my Chairman. My children have lost a father and a doting uncle. I pray for strength to go through this pain. The pain I feel at this irreparable loss is not just like Robert Southey's losing of a limb. It is like a sore on the palm of the hand.

I pray for his wife, children and grandchildren, that God will continue to stand by them and strengthen them.

May Hosa's soul rest in perfect peace. Amen.

Tony Osagie Odigie