**EPISCOPAL MESSAGE BY HIS LORDSHIP BISHOP (DR) MORRIS USEN, DEAN OF AKWA IBOM RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE FCT AND CO- CHAIR, JOINT COUNCIL OF AKWA IBOM TRADITIONAL RULERS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE FCT.**

I am greatly and immensely honoured to stand before and address this noble gathering of solemn ceremony of Akwa Ibom cultural and religious fiesta in commemoration of the silver jubilee of Akwa Ibom State and the installation/coronation of Akwa Ibom traditional rulers and chiefs in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Before stepping much further, I will not hesitate expressing my gratitude to God Almighty for giving us all the enablement for making this day successful in deed. My joy this day is not only because we are gathering here to celebrate the silver jubilee of our dear state but much more because we have been able to discover and implement the missing factor that has caused a serious set back in our dear state which is Unity in the place of Disunity and Division

To say that the choice of this solemn ceremony nay this occasion at a time when this missing factor has done much untold damage to lives and properties in our dear state is most auspicious, and the ceremony have not come at a more appropriate time is nothing short of the truth, however, it has come at a time all right-thinking observers from both the Ibibiosi, Annangs and Orons, traditional rulers and religions leaders have come to a more painful conclusion that the greatest enemy we are facing in our dear state is disunity.

Having said thus, we are here to celebrate and advance the Akwa Ibom traditional and religious identities in the Federal Capital Territory, in a summary, we are here to showcase our good identity and stand out as a role model in Nigeria and Africa at large.

Permit me at this point to encourage us to imbibe in this spirit of unity for **“united we stand, divided we fall,”** as it is the only key to peace and development of any State/Nation, by so doing the rumour and fear of insecurity which is the present heartbreak of every peace loving and patriotic Akwaibomite and Nigerian at large will give way.

Finally let me remind us that, before time immemorial, Akwa Ibom State had been known for good not evil and nothing will shift us from that God given position. Disunity and Division are enemies of progress but with Unity in addition to the realization of the government of His Excellency, Chief Dr. Goodswill Akpabio’s vision aptly tagged **“the uncommon stride”** we shall make Akwa Ibom more proud that we are today.

Thank you and God bless.