

TRIBUTE FROM GHANA BY KOFI ODUM, FOUNDER & PRESIDENT OF FRIENDS OF THE HANDICAPPED INTERNATIONAL (FHI)

No doubt, the Holy Spirit put us together as partners to serve and facilitate the education of underprivileged and needy children with disabilities particularly the deaf in Ghana and other West African countries when a team of 4-Christian Businessmen led by late Mr. Gunnar E Olsson from International Christian Chamber of Commerce (ICCC) in Orebro, Sweden to ICCC, Ghana in 1998. The other 3 members of Gunnar's team were, Messrs Sven Inge Nilson, Anders Fintling and Jan Olov Bjhour. Their purpose was of a fact finding into Christian Businessmen and women in Ghana in order to help link and partner with Christians in businesses from the two countries.



I was only the staff as a Secretary in the ICCC, Secretariat in Ghana. Before the team's arrival into the country, the Ghanaian members were informed to make ready with their Business Proposals to be presented to our Swedish brethren to be considered for partnership and other linkages for businesses. I have by then prepared a simple handout of FHI in which the aims and objectives had been clearly printed.

On the second day of the team's arrival into the country, they paid a visit to the Secretariat. Immediately I shook hands with Gunnar, we were knighted in the spirit as if we knew ourselves before. I then gave a copy of the simple handout of FHI to him. He quickly glanced through it and he asked me, who is the founder? I politely answered, I am. From there on, Gunnar and his team became interested in the FHI activities and programmes and asked me how it was funded. The team developed more love for me and encouraged me to take good care of the disabled children's education and welfare.

Gunnar, on the day of their departure donated all the remaining money in Cedis left on them plus US\$50.00 to me and said, "Kofi, I cannot promise you, but assured me that he would try as much as possible to help fund FHI". I used this donation to register the organization as non for profit (NGO) at the Register General's Department to protect its legal entity for the laws of the country. True to his word, Gunnar and his team sent a report to ICCC, Ghana from their findings. It was so amazing that, among the many well prepared Business Proposals submitted to Gunnar and his team, FHI was assessed the best and was highly recommended to the members of ICCC Orebro. Interestingly, the amount collected from the Orebro meeting was donated and sent to FHI to enable me reach out to the needy children with disabilities FHI had identified in the rural areas.

Brother Gunnar E Olsson donated a room in his residence as FHI office to champion the cause of FHI in Orebro, Sweden. He regularly donated money for the work of FHI in Ghana. Gunnar and his team created the first website for FHI and linked us to www.eurodik.com/fhi Later when his team and ICCC Orebro folded up, Gunnar

singlehandedly continued to work and donated to FHI. Gunnar recommended me to his son, Erik to help me with all the issues of FHI website. Erik obeyed and took over the mantle of what his father did for FHI, when his health began to fail him. Even though Erik is doing what the father did, we would still miss him and need another Gunnar to fill his vacuum.

Gunnar was more than a founding-member, a partner, donor, counselor for the FHI ministry. Not only that, he became my intimate friend, brother-in Christ and had the privilege of sharing our deepest thoughts with prayer topics and prayed together. I could remember when he had a problem in his heart about 10 years ago, he sent a scanned picture of his heart to me for prayer support. We prayed and fasted for him and the Lord hearkened unto our cry and gave back his life to us. On the second time of hearing of brother Gunnar's complicated illness about few months ago, I did the same thing as we did with his heart problem. But at this time, Gunnar's Creator is saying to us that, He loved Gunnar more than we do and that he has ACCOMPLISHED that which He sent him to do on earth here, so what is our problem when He had called him to rest eternally in Paradise from his toils and labors.

Dearest Brother Gunnar E. Olsson, we at Friends of the Handicapped International, Ghana adore you for your invaluable services you wholeheartedly rendered to us. We now do understand that it was not a mistake when you and your team could not meet your hearts desires for the business trip you took to Ghana in 1998. To you, you were seeking to partner with Big Mining Gurus and other lucrative businesses. But your Maker who knows the best gave you the most rewarded business to do (Isaiah 55:8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor ways are my ways," says the Lord.) and that was FHI. Yes, yours was a divine calling purposely to invest in the precious souls of the helpless and needy children with disabilities education. Well done, Gunnar, you fulfilled this task with all your soul and heart and strength to the glory of God during your mission here on earth.

So, dearest Gunnar, take our prayers, supplications and lack of funding to the Saints in the Church Triumphant, to the Angels and Arch Angels and to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and to our Heavenly Father whom you are meeting today.

GOOD BYE FOR NOW AND REST IN THE PEACE OF YOUR MAKER.

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