

OUR PARTNERSHIP FOR THE YEAR 2005/6

My dear friends,

We are embarking on a journey of a thousand miles based on a partnership of you and me; a Partnership is described as an association of 2 or more persons to carry on, as co-owners, a business for profit.” Any number of persons may join a partnership and unless otherwise provided for, share the profits and losses in equal portions.

I restate. This is a journey for you and me which we shall undertake together. It is a journey of equal opportunity, a journey of equal responsibility and will culminate, Inshallah, in a journey of equal pride and privilege. In 450 B.C. Confucius said, “*A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step*”. We must take that first step today and now.

Each Rotarian is a partner in this journey an essential corner stone; every club is the pillar of Rotary’s edifice. Fellowship the mortar; values and principles provide the uprightness..... It is a beautiful building but remains a lifeless monument until the spirit of service activities in equal partnership makes a home there.

Born in club fellowship, nurtured in vocational service, raised in community service, growing in international service, Rotary not only shares hope for a better tomorrow with all humankind but also encourages it through the ideals and actions of its 1.2 million members.

You, my fellow Rotarian, are the key. In the wheel of the Rotary emblem, the key makes the wheel a functioning unit when it is driven into the key way, the little niche in the hub of our symbolic wheel. It gives power and makes momentum possible. The key turns the lock that opens the doors to Rotary. You are the link between that force which we call the “*ideal of service*” which is helpfulness to others and its eventual impact in your own community and vocation. Without you, Rotary can do nothing. You are Rotary’s power. Each of you has a role to play in your own small way as rightly said by Mother Theresa and I quote, “*my whole work is only a drop in the ocean – if I didn’t put the drop in, the ocean would be one drop less*”. And as the Swahili proverb goes, “*haba na haba hujaza kibaba*”. (drop by drop fills the pail)

Therefore, success will only be possible if there is participation by each and every one of you without exception. Rotary is not the private domain or responsibility of any one individual. We can only succeed if each one of us were to do his little bit. In the words of Goethe, “*let everybody sweep in front of his door and the whole world will be clean*”.

My dear friends, this is an exciting time to be a Rotary leader. Rotary is in the business of service, “*Service Above Self*”. We are in a position most businesses would like to be in. Never before in our history has there been such a demand for our product. And as in the case of any successful business, there is a need for special Rotarians, uncommon Rotarians. In every district, in every club, there is a need for a special leadership, a leadership of Rotarians who behold in their hearts the motto “*Service Above Self*”.

Club and district leaders, we have work to do, we must first and foremost make all the clubs in our district effective clubs, clubs which sustain and increase their membership base, clubs that implement successful projects that address the needs of their communities, clubs that support the Rotary Foundation and clubs that develop leadership beyond the club level.

As a leader, you must always lead from the front by example. You must stimulate and not dampen the spirit, motivate and not deflate the members, inspire and not intimidate the work horses, love and not hate the task and be enthusiastically optimistic and not perpetually pessimistic in all your undertakings, for in the words of Winston Churchill, “*a pessimist always sees difficulty in every opportunity whilst an optimist always sees an opportunity in every difficulty*”.

SLIDE 7 – TIGER WOODS

You must be a team leader and team builder, you must listen to the silent voices, you must have vision, you must formulate achievable goals, you must want to touch the sky and most importantly you must delegate. Dwight Eisenhower defined leadership “*as the act of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.*”

On my part, as a lawyer, my word is my bond. I promise to stand by you at all times, come rain come shine, provided you have tried. I shall be true to the Rotary pin I wear. I shall be available, you can rely on me and you can depend on me.

I have a dream which we can fulfil together.

I have a dream that all the 103 clubs will be effective clubs,

I have a dream that all the 103 clubs will attain a weekly attendance of 70% and obtain an increase of 10% net membership gain,

I have a dream that all the 103 clubs will each sponsor 1 Rotaract Club, 1 Interact Club and 1 RCC in the minimum,

I have a dream of “Every Rotarian Every Year” for all and that all the 103 clubs will each participate in 1 Matching Grant in the minimum,

I have a dream that with the decentralization of training seminars, all the Rotarians will attend 1 seminar in the minimum, being my response for the growth of future leaders.

The question that arises is, am I day dreaming?

I believe in you and have trust in you. I am privileged to lead a district in the Rotary World special in ways more than one. Together we can make the dreams come true. There is room for all of us and there is a need of all of us. This is a partnership for a period of one year and there is no reason why we should not flourish if we have the resolve to make it succeed. At the end of the journey we shall reap from a profitable enterprise and together, we shall have all the right reasons to celebrate.

ABDULHAMID ABOO – DGE 2004-05