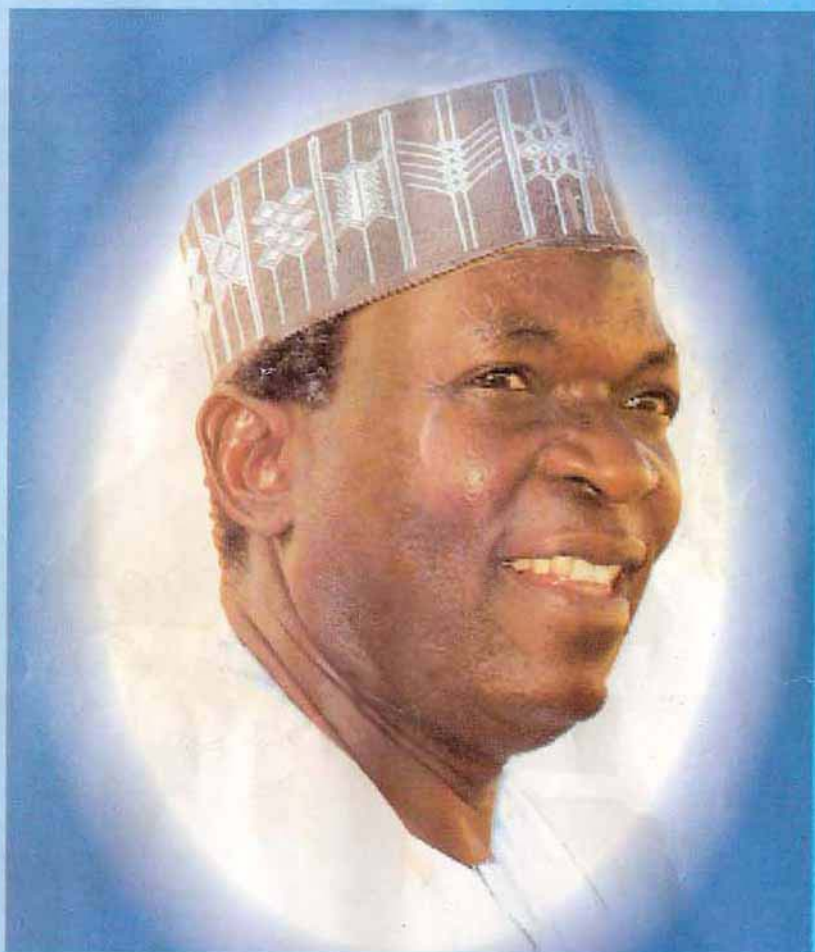


"Precious in the sight of the Lord
Is the death of His Saints"

Psalms 116:16 NKJV



Oumarou Garba YOUSSOUFOU

March 15, 1940 - October 24, 2007

*Ambassador Oumarou Garba Youssoufou, passed on to glory in Abidjan on Wednesday October 24, 2007, following a courageous battle with kidney cancer. He was 67 years old.

Oumarou Garba Youssoufou was born in 1940 in Oungouar Roumdji, near Maradi in Niger, the first living child of his late mother Fouvera and his late father, Alhadji Oumarou Maradi. When he was 8 years old, his uncle the late Reverend Garba Youssoufou, took him to school in Nigeria where he spent many years. His uncle had a great influence on his life, and their relationship was one of his strongest bonds. He attended Roni's Boys School and graduated from Kano SIM Elementary School. After that he attended Titcomb College where he graduated in 1959 with a certificate from Cambridge University.

Upon his return to Niger in 1960, he joined the Presidential Cabinet of then President Hamani Diori as an English interpreter. Oumarou Youssoufou's life as a Christian civil servant was an example to all. He was always bold in his assertion of his faith.

In 1962 he attended the Alliance Française in Paris to learn French.

In 1964, while fighting tuberculosis, the young Oumarou was sent to a sanatorium in the French Alps for six months to recuperate. After his release from the sanatorium, he attended the Institute of Diplomacy in Bern, Switzerland in 1965.

On December 31, 1965, he married Rahila Ganya, his secondary school sweetheart who hails from Bauchi State in Nigeria and whom he has known since elementary school. Together they had seven children, two of whom have gone on to be in glory.

In 1967, Oumarou Youssoufou was sent to the Niger Embassy in Washington DC as the First Secretary. While there, he attended American University (AU) in Washington DC, where he graduated in 1972 with a Bachelors degree in Business Administration. After graduating from AU he was promoted to the position of Counselor at the Niger Embassy in Washington DC.

Upon his return to Niger in 1973, Oumarou Youssoufou joined the Niger-Nigeria Joint Commission where he worked for a year.

In 1974, Oumarou Youssoufou was named Niger Ambassador at the age of 34 by the late President Seyni Kountché. During the course of his brilliant career, he was

Niger's representative to 9 countries, including Nigeria and Ethiopia.

In 1980, he was named Ambassador of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) - now African Union - to the United Nations, a challenging job representing all African Nations, which he held for ten years. Among his notable accomplishments there, were representing African nations on the US broadcast "Nightline" with Ted Koppel. His personal proudest accomplishment was his contribution towards the liberation of South Africa and Namibia.

After retiring from civil service, Ambassador Youssoufou turned to politics, in the newly democratic Niger where he participated in the National Conference of 1991. He led the team that revived PPN-RDA, the party of his former mentor, the late President Diori Hamani, and was elected its President. He was PPN-RDA's Presidential candidate for the elections of 1993. That year, he led the coalition of parties known as Alliance des Forces du Changement (Alliance for Change) known as AFC to victory.

Ambassador Youssoufou was one of three founding members of Africare in 1970. Today, Africare is one of the largest NGOs working in Africa and has delivered more than \$540 million in assistance to beneficiaries in 35 African countries. In 2005, at Africare's Annual Dinner known as the Bishop John Walker Dinner, Ambassador Youssoufou was recognized for his important lifetime contribution to the organization.

At the inaugural Summit in Abidjan in 1993, he was recognized by the African African-American Summit (now Leon H. Sullivan Summit), as a bridge builder between the African and African American communities. He used his many years in the United States to work on connecting these two communities which he always believed needed to re-discover each other and re-connect.

A devout Christian, Ambassador Youssoufou dedicated his life and resources to spreading the gospel in the remotest regions of Niger and supported numerous churches and pastors in rural areas. At the last church he was a member of, ECWA Wuse in Abuja, Ambassador Youssoufou and his wife Rahila were part of the Evangelization team and spent the past 2 years pastoring a small church in Zaudana outside of Abuja.

Ambassador Youssoufou was a man of honesty and integrity and a hard worker - as evidenced by his "retirement" in Abuja, where he continued to be active in Business. He was not always understood because of the high standards at which he held everyone including himself.

A devoted and loyal husband, Ambassador Youssoufou loved his wife, Rahila. All those who knew them can testify to the love, friendship and complicity between the two of them.

As a father, he was loving, supportive, strict, yet gentle. He was a friend and a mentor. He enjoyed a wonderful relationship with all his children and grand children and was quite proud of all their achievements.

Ambassador Youssoufou will be remembered for always being a shining light everywhere he went. He was charismatic and witty and had an ability to connect with people of all ages and walks of life.

He leaves a void that only God can fill.

Ambassador Youssoufou is survived by his loving wife of almost 42 years, Rahila Ganya, five children, and 8 grandchildren:

- A son, Yoab Oumarou Youssoufou
- A daughter, Hadjara, wife of Narcisse Ipoté and mother of Johann Ipoté;
- A daughter, Zouera, wife of Moïse Keita and mother of Modibo and Kaliyah-Keita;
- A daughter, Halimatou, wife of Daniel Bourdanne, and mother of Tamibé, Salamaton and Oumarou Bourdanne;
- A son, Aboubacar, husband of Misrak Meskel, father of Samuel and Tadesse Youssoufou;

He was preceded in the Lord's kingdom by two sons, Daouda (1970-1977) and Ismaila (1983-1993)

He is also survived by brothers and sisters, numerous cousins and aunts uncles, nieces, nephews, other relatives and many friends from all around the world and a large christian family he has just preceded in God's glory.

You will be missed dearly Baba. Till we meet again.