**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: MOSES OLUWASEUN SEMUDARA**

As the world population grow by the day and our knowledge of the importance of environmental conservation deepens, most advanced countries of the world are focused on how to make the earth tenable for the teeming world population. New cities are being built to retain the earth's naturalness and care is especially taken conserve natural resources. Mankind has never in its history needed the skills of an Urban Planner and Public Administrator more than it does today. However, as expedient as this critical need is, it is only addressed by countries whose financial and economic situation is buoyant enough to meet them. Sadly, the developing countries of the world today are already plagued by so many issues that seem beyond their control - poverty, illiteracy, bad governance, diseases. It so seems that this need for sustainability is lost on them, and understandably so. A man needs survive first than care about what his environment looks like.

Having grown up in a small village in Nigeria, a developing country, I have experienced first-hand how difficult it can be to see the future of my immediate environment as anything but bleak. I have experienced the negative impacts of unhealthy environments and bad governance. I have witnessed people I care about die from infectious diseases that are entirely preventable if we had taken care of our environment. And, in the not-so-distant past, I have watched as my parent's farm, their only source of livelihood got severely polluted and untenable by oil spillage, one of the many dire effects of rapid urbanism in the region. These and many more reasons have influenced my choice of studying Urbanism and Public Administration to the letter. It is not only because of my love for science and public management, nor because of the extraterrestrial passion to research and know and definitely not because I want to enjoy the respect attributed to the noble profession. But mostly because I am very passionate about developing my community through my research and active participation.

My interest in research heightened after taking a Research Methodology class in my second year at the University. I then volunteered to work as a research assistant under Dr. Olusa at the Federal University of Technology. Though she refused initially because it wasn't customary for undergraduates to work as research assistants in the University, she reluctantly accepted me.

Most of the work she assigned to me were mainly computing tasks for projects that she worked on. I would help collate the data she had gotten from the field mostly using the SPSS Analytic Software. Other times, I would assist in the preparation of the questionnaires, preparation of PowerPoint presentation on the outcomes of her research which she would present in Policy-making conferences. Though I was not paid financially for the tasks I performed, I was really happy and excited doing them anyway because I learned a great deal from her. She taught me how to perform a research holistically- from identification of a topic and development of research questions downright to the review and analysis of data collected from the field. I did research under her until an opportunity for a volunteer research assistant opened up at the State's Ministry of Planning. She advised me to apply and even recommended me to them because she felt I would be better suited there.

As a volunteer research assistant in the Ministry, I worked under Dr. Emmanuel on so many Federal and State allocated projects. One of such projects focused on the problems facing housing in Nigeria using a village (Ekpoma) as a case study. The study was intended to examine the socio-economic structure in Ekpoma with a view to highlighting the principal causes of housing problems, and also to examine the extent to which the rapid urbanization has contributed to the varied nature of housing problem in the country, with particular reference to Ekpoma. I worked with a team of four and our primary assignment was data management. Under the supervision of Dr. Cyprian, we prepared the questionnaires which was the primary source of quantitative data collection. The other methods of data collection involved series of field investigation, direct observation and oral interviews with the residents and stakeholders. After the data was collected, part of our assignment involved the interpretation of statistical findings, analyzing implications, and conveying high level results and recommendations to national decision-makers. In this particular case, I was chosen by the team to present the findings of our study at the national conference. My experience with this project finally gave me the hands-on research experience that I dearly needed. I learned team work, team leadership and the ability to work under pressure amongst other things.

My bachelor’s thesis was on “The Management of Solid Waste Disposal In FUTA Campus, Akure”. This aimed to identify the strategies than has been adopted by the Campus residents in solid waste management, to evaluate the problems of solid waste management in the Campus and to examine the consequences of poor solid waste management. It was a rigorous study because besides the intensive studying associated with the literature review section, it also involved travelling round the Campus, collating data and organizing interviews with students and other residents. The experience I gained from this study prompted me to partner with a waste management company. The whole idea was to develop a system that would make it easy for the residents to properly sort and dispose their waste appropriately. We started the program by launching a campaign and educating the residents on proper waste disposal. Then, we organized fundraising events to financially sponsor the project. We judiciously used the funds raised including our personal funds to procure color-coded waste baskets to help in the proper sorting of wastes: Green for organic wastes, White for paper wastes, Blue for Plastics, Black for bottles, etc. This was distributed all over the campus, and it eventually caught the attention of the Campus Management and other high profile organization. Based on this project, I was invited to "International Conference on Green Africa" to discuss my project, present the findings and recommend how to push it on to a larger scale, but unfortunately I could not attend due to financial constraints.

In addition to my research, I'm really passionate about teaching, and I have been teaching for five years. I started by becoming a volunteer teacher at a community secondary school for computer studies and mathematics classes. This was largely motivated by the rate of computer illiteracy and poverty in my community. Most kids hail from families that live on less than one dollar per day, and having grown up in such an environment, it was my own little way if giving back to the society, and the experience of inculcating knowledge in the minds of young students has been more than rewarding. As a United Nations Volunteer for PEOI (Professional Education Organization International) I've developed American style university-level courses that fit into standard university semesters for Beginning Computer Programming using Java. I follow literature on pedagogy, especially of its challenges in third world countries like mine, and this is one of my primary motivation for my chosen research area. I'm excited to continue my pedagogical journey at the University of Teas, Dallas and beyond.

Though I have found myself in a lot of leadership positions, I have not had a prior exposure with the academic spheres of Public Affairs. As a Nigerian youth, I have witnessed first-hand the bad effects of malfeasance and lack of accountability. Despite the many protests for reformation by citizens, the cry for better governance has fallen on deaf ears, while the dysfunctional democratic governance abounds. I am no longer satisfied with just sitting around and waiting for this much anticipated change to happen in the political environment. I instead want to be at the forefront of bringing that change to reality.

I intend to help the fight against corruption by running for a public office in my local government. The School of Public Administration at University of Texas, Dallas is my first choice because I profoundly appreciate the ongoing research work being conducted by the social policy team. I believe that the program will improve my understanding in the field and equip me with the knowledge, skills and attitude needed to manage the public sector professionally in the future. I hope to learn all that I can about administrative management and policy analysis, in order to make informed public-policy decisions. Furthermore, studying in America will offer me the exposure of how an ideal public administration system is practiced. This will help me gain a new perspective for my country. I intend to do my very best to reach my ambition, and in the process, recall the glory days of Nigeria.

So, herein lies my passion in a nutshell, crack it open and you'll see a big heart yearning to study in your institution until 'Mr. Moses' becomes 'Prof. Moses'. I really want to spend the rest of my life investigating the consequence of this passion. And while I hope for divine sponsorship and the strength to finish strong, I am confident that my investigative qualities, research experiences, leadership qualities, ambition, creativity, critical thinking and my vast professional experience in public administration and urban planning will score high in your consideration.