

**Foundation for Good Governance and
Development in Nigeria
International Conference on Sustainable
Democracy in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects**

COMMUNIQUE

Aware of the great difficulty that the drive for democracy and good governance is currently undergoing in Nigeria; and noting the growing apathy of its people as a result,

Conscious of its desire to promote unity, progress and friendship between all ethnic, religious and genuine political groups in Nigeria,

Recognising the need to encourage and support honest and competent individuals and groups to participate in the political process,

Accepting the indispensable need for checks and balances in the conduct of government,

Recognising and accepting the need for a viable and robust Opposition to the government's exercise of power on behalf of the people of Nigeria,

And, based on its declared aim and desire to promote good, accountable, open and transparent governance in Nigeria, the Foundation for Good Governance & Development in Nigeria organised the International Conference on Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects at the South Kensington campus of the Imperial College, London on Saturday, June 25, 2005.

The conference has noted as follows:

1. That leadership is, regrettably, still the most serious problem facing governance. Democracy itself is on trial today, with a corrupt and an incompetent leadership bent on perpetuating itself in office at all costs,
2. That the elections conducted by the incumbent government in Nigeria have not been free or fair and that the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, is not independent,
3. That there is palpable lack of respect for the Nigerian Constitution, and for the law and the rule of law by both the rulers and the ruled,
4. That, in the climate of docility and corruption the judiciary has failed to carry out its constitutional role of the ultimate umpire and final arbiter, the few upright judges that resist are being intimidated to toe the line,
5. That, in view of the Nigerian experience, there appear to be deep structural problems facing the implanting and implementing pure Western-style democracy,
6. That, despite all the rhetoric, there is still pervasive poverty among the people; and this fact has, in consequence, only made corruption to prosper,
7. That there is an unrestrained personalisation of power and the corrupt subordination of the other two arms of government by the Executive branch

of government, leading to the emergence of a fascist dictatorship in the name of democracy,

8. That, with the exception of the heroic efforts of the Conference of Nigerian Political Parties, there is no organised opposition to the government of Nigeria today,
9. That there is no leadership by example in Nigeria today.

In view of the foregoing therefore, the conference has resolved as follows:

1. That the objective of democracy must be good governance and development and the eradication of poverty.
2. That Nigerians must be prepared to resist rigging, arbitrariness and attempts at self-perpetuation through mass action, demonstrations, protests and civil and other forms of civil disobedience; and be prepared to lay down their lives in the struggle to establish democracy and good governance.
3. That while Western-style democracy may require continuous adjustment from time to time to suit African conditions, but Nigerian leaders must accept the supremacy of the power of the electorate to decide the leadership.
4. That the judiciary must be sanitised and all corrupt judges flushed out, while the rule of law must be re-established; while the leadership must learn to lead by example.

5. We appeal to the international community to show understanding of our struggle to overcome our current problems which are created by the leadership. The apparent danger of Nigeria falling apart is purely the result of bad leadership which Nigerians and nobody else can correct. This appeal is appropriate in view of the fact that many Nigerians hold British, American and Canadian citizenship, and hence understanding Nigerians' predicament is indeed in the interest of the international community.

The presenters and discussants at the conference include:

1. General (rtd) Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR
2. Chief (Dr) Alex Ekwueme, GCON
3. Chief Bola Ahmed Tinubu
4. Alhaji Ibrahim Shekarau
5. Alhaji Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa
6. Alhaji Mohammed Abubakar Rimi
7. Chief Mike Ahamba
8. Chief Bisi Akande
9. Dr Usman Bugaje
10. Alhaji Adamu Modibbo
11. Professor Munzali Jibril
12. AVM (rtd) Mukhtar Mohammed
13. Dr Sulaiman Kumo