

# FOUNDATION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE & DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

## *PRESS RELEASE*

### *2007 ELECTION: SUPPORT FOR BUHARI*

We at the Foundation for Good Governance and Development in Nigeria (FGGN), a UK based international organization of Nigerian professionals whose main aim is the pursuit and promotion of good governance in a democratic, virile and peaceful Nigeria, feel it is time to share our views with Nigerians and make our position clear on the 2007 presidential election. We have watched, with keen interest, the political developments in Nigeria since the 2003 elections and had cause to share our views with Nigerians at various occasions. We have of recent watched the jostling of parties and politicians for the presidency in 2007. These events have informed our views and stand.

We have monitored the activities of all the parties, both new and old, and have come to the conclusion that they have no ideology or programme that they are offering the electorate to judge them on for the 2007 election. The poor performances of the governing parties, at federal, state and local government levels, where the party officials and machineries have become just the tools of the executive in power make us believe that the party does not matter. Governance in Nigeria, from Local Government up to the Federal Government, has therefore continued to depend on the individual that occupies the executive post rather than the party programme, manifesto or machinery. In light of the foregoing, we have come to the conclusion that to achieve good governance and development in Nigeria we need a leader with exceptional personal qualities, proven records of service and is politically tested and found to be capable and is determined to work for the general wellbeing of Nigeria and Nigerians. It is our considered view and belief that General (rtd) Muhammadu Buhari is the only presidential aspirant who possesses such sterling qualities to lead the country to greater heights.

Buhari, who the Press call the 'No Nonsense General', is a man widely known for his discipline, trustworthiness, seriousness of purpose, dedication to duty, transparency and honesty. He is the only national figure who is undoubtedly regarded by both his supporters and opponents to be incorruptible and a *bona fide* anti-corruption crusader. Those who know him well say that Buhari's dislike for corrupt and dishonest people and his like of honest and hard working people transcend ethnic and religious affiliations. The current state of decay of our polity, public institutions and services coupled with institutionalised corruption, call for a leader with the kind of personal qualities that the General has been endowed with. Nigeria and Nigerians therefore need Buhari at this crucial time.

Nigeria needs not only a leader with exemplary personal qualities, but also who had been tested and found to be true to these attributes in the best and worst of times. General Buhari was the Military Governor of the then North Eastern State when he was very young and when there were abundant resources. He gave the state a purposeful leadership that even today the people in that area still remember him with nostalgia. He then became the Minister of Petroleum under the Obasanjo/Yar'adua's government and came out squeaky clean when Obasanjo and his cronies retired to their multi-million dollar farms and other businesses. Buhari later became Nigeria's head of state and gave Nigerians a scene of discipline, purpose and direction. He brought the country from a situation where Nigeria was being refused letters of credit by almost all international organizations making Nigeria not credit-worthy to a situation where the country was paying her foreign debts with the intention of paying off all her debt burden. One needs only to compare Buhari/Idiagbon's tenure with the successive governments to realise what Nigeria and Nigerians have lost.

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Buhari distinguished himself even under the difficult regime of Sani Abacha, when he headed the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF). Whether you like Buhari or not and wherever you are in Nigeria you would have seen PTF in action in your area. Roads, hospitals, schools and even the armed forces all felt the positive impact of PTF. The bed sheets and equipments in our hospitals and schools as well as the only descent roads that we had throughout the first four years of Obasanjo/Atiku presidency were those provided by the PTF. Buhari's leadership of the PTF showed Nigerians how good leadership can utilise little resources to achieve so much as the PTF had only the increase in the local petrol pump price to fund its projects. The interest accrued from the PTF bank's deposits were the moneys used to pay PTF staff salaries and the running cost of the organization, including the erection of the staff quarters where Obasanjo accommodated his Senior Special Assistants in 1999. Buhari did not only bring purposeful leadership and the culture of performance, he also made accountability the watchword for those holding offices of public trust. The PTF was the only institution that produced audited accounts of all its years of operation and the records are there for all who want to see. Buhari has therefore been tested at various capacities and stages of his life and he has lived above board and came out true to his personality and character - dedicated, hard working, honest, purposeful, accountable, incorruptible and a person who takes public trust seriously. The General has been tested and trusted by Nigerian masses who are his main supporters and by all those who are decent and those who are not afraid to be honest to themselves.

Buhari was equally tested as a democrat. His transformation from a military man to someone with the best democratic credentials is another testimony of the exemplary qualities of Buhari. He conducted himself with dignity at the party primaries, the 2003 elections and thereafter. When the Obasanjo Government used the security agencies and the INEC to rig the election, Buhari pursued the judicial option to seek redress. In doing so, he succeeded in

exposing the failures of the democratic institutions such as INEC, the Judiciary and even the political parties. Buhari went through the ordeals of the courts from the Appeal Court to the Supreme Court despite knowing that the government in power has a strangle hold on the judiciary and all the other institutions to a point that the judge ordered the then INEC to produce exhibits and the electoral body disobeyed the court of the land. The judge still issued judgement against Buhari. He fought all these battles with his modest resources. As a democrat who believes in the rule of law and democratic institutions, Buhari accepted the Supreme Court's rulings, which every one apparently knows were purely politically motivated. In addition, he built bridges with other parties and well-meaning individuals to form the main opposition to a reckless and ruthless Government and party in power. Buhari has once again thrown his hat into the election battleground asking the electorate for their vote. This has completed the transformation of the man Buhari.

We at FGGN have therefore come to the conclusion that General (rtd) Muhammadu Buhari is the right person that Nigeria and Nigerians need and deserve to lead them if the current decay in our country is to be arrested and the pace of economic growth and development be accelerated. We are, therefore, declaring our support for Buhari for the presidency of Nigeria at the 2007 elections on whatever party platform he contests. We feel it is necessary to take this stand after due consideration of all the issues. We urge all well-meaning Nigerians and friends of Nigeria to support Buhari for the 2007 presidential elections for the common good of all Nigerians and friends of Nigeria.

*Long Live the Federal Republic of Nigeria!*  
*Long Live the Foundation for Good Governance and Development in Nigeria!!*

For and on behalf of *the Foundation*:

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