

Route to Peace & Progress

THE UNITED REGIONS OF NIGERIA (URN)

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BACKGROUND

The Northern and Southern Provinces and the Lagos Colony were amalgamated in 1914 with different administrative structures. The amalgamation brought together peoples of different backgrounds, languages, identities, cultures and aspirations. Then, it was North for Northerners, East for Easterners and West for Westerners. Nigeria obtained independence in 1960 with the three autonomous Regions as Federating Regions. Each Region had its own Constitution apart from the Federal Constitution and were able to develop at their own pace. Nigeria is today a dangerously disunited nation with 36 (thirty-six) States and a Federal Capital Territory. Most of these states are unviable.

Nigeria is rated the most dangerous country to reside in in Africa, the third most terrorised nation in the world according to Global Terrorism Index and the poverty capital of the world. Many people rate Nigeria as being close to a failed state with Fragile State Index as one of the worst in the world.

Political prudence and morality demands a form of consociational democracy that will accommodate and serve the interest of the various ethnic groups if Nigeria is to survive as a single country.

After a series of discussions and painstaking consultations with various stakeholders, we have come to the conclusion that most Nigerians believe that there is nothing wrong with Nigeria but the present structure and the quasi unitary system which is a recipe for disaster. It is imperative to return to the regional structure with autonomous regions as federating units or it risks disintegration.

We need to rebuild Nigeria. We therefore recommend that Nigeria returns to the original regional structure as United Regions of Nigeria under a consociational democracy.

WHY WE SHOULD REBUILD NIGERIA

- i) A critical re-evaluation of the history of Nigeria reveals the incongruence in the foundation. Nigeria is a complex multinational state with multiple sources of division.
- ii) Without a review of the structural defects, Nigeria may perpetually be incapable of producing the political and social stability required for peace and progress. Nigeria requires a rebirth.
- iii) There is the urgent need to recognise the ethnic nationalities and respect their right of self-determination;
- iv) We should understand that ethnic supremacy, oppression, genocide and expansionism are integral and inseparable components of internal and external colonialism;
- v) We urgently need to answer the following questions:
 - a. Where are the boundaries of "Nigeria"?
 - b. Who is a Nigerian?
- vi) Rebuild Nigeria into United Regions of Nigeria (URN) with Regions that are recognised as equal, autonomous federating units.
- vii) Each Region shall have a separate Constitution and a fresh Constitution for the new United Regions of Nigeria

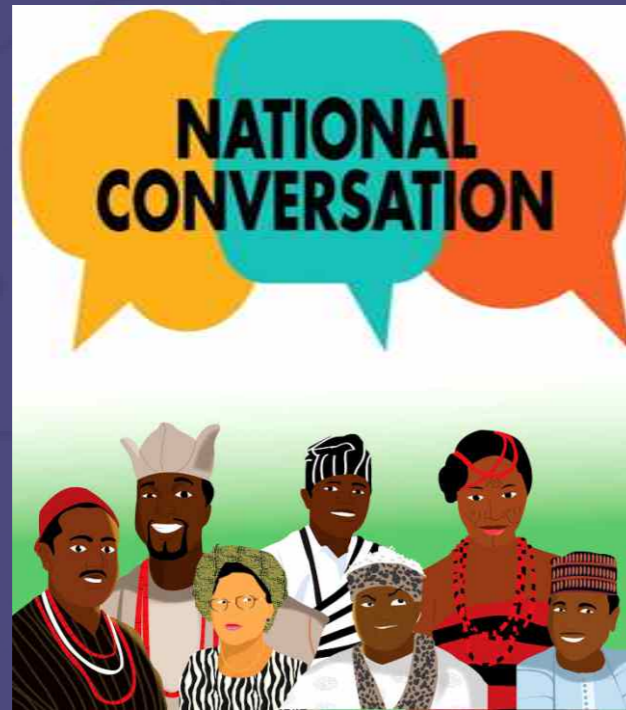
STRATEGY

Advocacy

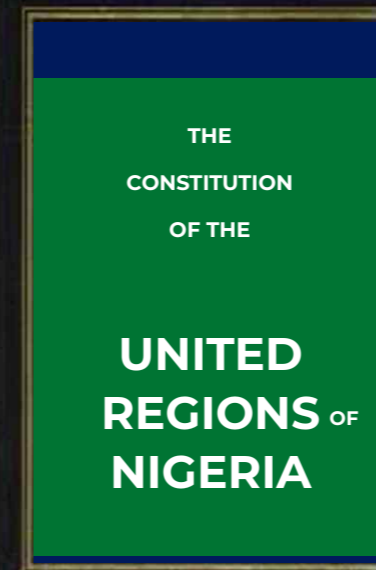
- i) To engage vigorously in effective lobbying and result-oriented advocacy to ensure the liberation of the federating ethnic groups and the release of our latent economic potentials and strengthen the bond of nationhood.
- ii) Internationally supervised referendum to determine which State/Region each ethnic group in the present space called Nigeria prefers to belong.



- i) Each Region should undertake a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis
- ii) Each Region shall draft and agree on the Region's Constitution/Anthem.
- iii) The Federal Capital Territory shall be administered by a Mayor.



1. The territory of the United Regions of Nigeria shall comprise—
 - (a) the territories of the Federating Autonomous Regions, the Federal Capital Territory and
 - (b) such other territories as may be acquired or created.
2. The Federation exercises all rights that are not vested in the Regions.
3. State creation is the exclusive function of the Regions.
4. The association of the United Regions of Nigeria (URN) shall be based on:
 - a. Mutual respect for the territorial integrity of the federating Regions,
 - b. mutual non-aggression, peaceful coexistence, protection of the liberty and rights of the people
 - c. mutual non-interference in each Regions affairs and protection of the internal cohesion and cultural diversity of the country.
 - d. the greatest possible equality of opportunities among the citizens and cooperation for mutual benefit.



- 1) We suggest the creation of United Regions of Nigeria with six Regions, that is; North West Region, North East Region, Middle Belt Region, Eastern Region, Western Region and Niger Delta Region and the Federal Capital Territory.
 - a. North West Region comprising those parts of the present Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, Kebbi, Jigawa, Sokoto, Zamfara States and any other group of people that may desire to be part of the Region.
 - b. North East Region comprising those parts of the present Borno, Adamawa, Bauchi, Yobe, Taraba and Gombe States and any other group of people that may desire to be part of the Region.
 - c. Middle Belt Region comprising those parts of the present Niger, Nasarawa, Plateau and Benue States and any other group of people that may desire to be part of the Region.
 - d. Eastern Region comprising those parts of the present Abia, Anambra, Imo, Enugu and Ebonyi States and any other group of people that may desire to be part of the Region.
 - e. Western Region comprising those parts of the present Ekiti, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, Kogi, Kwara, Edo and Lagos States and any other group of people that may desire to be part of the Region.
 - f. Niger Delta Region comprising those parts of present Edo, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, Cross River and Rivers States and any other group of people that may desire to be part of the Region.
2. The Federal territory shall comprise those parts of the present Federal Capital Territory.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

1. Administration:

There shall be Executive Council, Legislative Assembly and Elders Council for the Central, Regional and State Governments.

2. Derivation Formula-

- i) Local Government – 30%
- ii) State Government – 25%
- iii) Regional Government - 25%
- iv) Central Government - 20%

CENTRAL STRUCTURE

Supreme Council of United Regions of Nigeria (SCURN)

1. SCURN: Shall include Central Executive Council, The Central Legislative Assembly and the Central Council of Elders.
 - a. There shall be elected 5 (Five) Central Council Members (CCM) from each Region and 1 (One) representing the Federal Capital Territory. A CCM has a six-year tenure and a maximum of two terms.
 - b. The Central Council Members shall elect an elected member as the President and Vice President.
 - c. The position of President and Vice President shall be rotated among the regions.
 - d. President is the head of the SCURN. S/he serves a two-year unrenewable term and hand over to the Vice President.
2. There shall be constituted a Central Executive Council (CEC) made up of the President and the Premiers of the Regions. Ministers in charge of Defence, Finance, justice, Inter-Regional Affairs, Internal Security and External Affairs shall be Ex-Officio Members.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

3. Cabinet members: The President shall:

- i. appoint cabinet members including one from the elected CCM members.
- ii. appoint not more than five ex-officio members
- iii. allot portfolios to the cabinet members and ex-officio members appointed to supervise specific departments
- iv. All appointments shall be as approved by the CCM.
- v. Cabinet membership and portfolios are at the pleasure of the President. The President may, where there is an emergency and the Council is unable to take decision, act on behalf of the CEC. Such action must be ratified by the Council within thirty (30) days. CEC decision making is by consensus. A Region shall not be bound by any decision of the council that is not supported by its Premier.

CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:

1. Central Legislative Council shall consist of:

- a) Elected Central Council Members;
- b) Speakers of The Regional Legislative Assemblies
- c) Chairmen of Regional Council of Elders
- d) 3 Representatives of Religious Bodies

2. Central Legislative Assembly (CLA)

- i. CLA shall elect an elected member as the Central Speaker and Deputy Speaker for a tenure of 2 years
- i) The Central Speakerhip position shall be rotated among the Regions every two (2) years
- ii) CLA shall legislate on all Federal matters
Issues relating to traditional and religious matters may not be passed into law unless with the concurrence of the RCE;

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

- a. There shall be constituted a Regional Executive Council (REC) made up of elected Governors of the States in the Region:
 - b. The Regional Executive Council shall elect a Governor as
 - i) Premier
 - ii) Deputy Premier

The Premier shall serve for an unrenovable term of two years and hand over to the Deputy Premier
3. Regional Legislative Council shall consist of:
- a. Regional Legislative Assembly:
 - b. Regional Council of Elders
- a. Regional Legislative Assembly**
- I) Speakers of the State Houses of Assembly shall constitute the Regional Legislative Assembly (RLA)
 - I. RLA shall elect a member as the Regional Speaker and Deputy Speaker for a tenure of 2 years
 - ii. The Regional Speakerhip position shall be rotated among the State Speakers every two (2) years
- b. Regional Council of Elders (RCE)
- I. The Chairman of the State Council of Traditional Rulers shall be members of the Regional Council of Elders (RCE)
 - ii. Three members shall represent the religious leaders in the RCE
 - iii. There shall be nominated two members to represent professional/ trade associations from each State of the Region.
 - I) The RCE shall elect one of the Traditional Rulers as the Chairman of the Central Council of Elders
- The RCE shall have:
- I. responsibility for all traditional and religious matters in the Central. Issues relating to traditional and religious matters may not be passed into law unless with the concurrence of the RCE;
 - ii. advisory role on all other issues.

PLEBISCITES

All issues that require an amendment of the central Constitution, a new law or a change of existing law shall require 80 % (Eighty percent) of the Central Legislative Council and the assent of the Central Executive Council. If up to 55% of the CLC and CEC support the issue but not up to 80%, the issue shall require a 60% support of eligible votes at a plebiscite organised for that purpose to pass.

STATE ADMINISTRATION

EXECUTIVE:

The State shall elect a Governor.

- i) The Governor has a six year non renewable tenure.
- ii) The Governor shall constitute an Executive Council of not more than 10 (Ten) Commissioners and not more than 5 (Five) Assistants.
- iii) The Assistants may attend State Executive Council meetings but they may not vote on any issue.
- iv) The Executive Council members shall be approved by the State Legislative Assembly.
- v) Executive Council members hold office at the pleasure of the Governor.

STATE LEGISLATURE

Legislative Assembly shall consist of State Legislative Council and State Council of Elders:

A. State Legislative Council (SLC):

1. Composition: Members of the SLC shall be:
 - a. An elected State Legislatuor from each Local Government Area and
 - b. The Local Government Council Chairman
2. An elected member shall serve for a renewable term of four years
3. The Legislative Council shall elect its officers including Speaker. Only elected members of State legislative Assembly can be elected as officer. The Speaker shall also serve at Central Legislative Assembly.

B. State Council of Elders (SCE)

1. The Chairman of the Local Government Council of Traditional Rulers shall be a members of State Council of Elders (SCE).
2. The SCE shall elect one of the Traditional Rulers as the Chairman of the State Council of Elders
3. Three members shall represent the religious leaders in the SCE
4. There shall be nominated Five ex-officio members

The SCE shall have:

- a. responsibility for all traditional and religious matters in the State. Issues relating to traditional and religious matters may not be passed into law unless with the concurrence of the SCE;
- b. advisory role on all other issues.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

- c.
 1. Each ward shall elect a Councillor
 2. A Councillor has a renewable term of four years
 3. One of the Councillors shall be elected as the Chairman.
 4. Chairmanship shall be rotated among the Councillor every two years
 5. A Council Chairman shall serve an unrenovable term of two years
 6. A Council Chairman shall serve at the State Legislative Council
- b. Cabinet members:

The Council Chairman shall:

- i. appoint cabinet members from the elected Council members.
 - ii. appoint not more than five ex-officio members
 - iii. allot portfolios to the elected Council members and ex-officio members appointed to supervise specific departments
 - iv. All appointments shall be as approved by the Council.
 - v. Cabinet membership and portfolios are at the pleasure of the Chairman.
- c. Local Government Council of Elders (LGCE):
 - i. A traditional ruler shall represent each ward
 - ii. Three religious leaders shall be members of the LGCE
 - iii. The LGCE shall elect a traditional ruler as their chairman
 - iv. The Chairman LGCE may serve a rotational term of two years
 - v. The Chairman LGCE will represent the LGC at the State Council of Elders

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