



LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT

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# ADDRESS

BY

*Captain Okhai Mike Akbigbe (NN), fss; psc.*  
*Military Governor of Lagos State*

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

## Launching of Mass Mobilisation Campaign

HELD AT THE NATIONAL STADIUM  
SURULERE, LAGOS

ON

Tuesday, 29th September 1987

AT 10.00 a.m.



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**CAPTAIN OKHAI MIKE AKHIGBE (NN) fca, psc**  
*Military Governor of Lagos State*



**TEXT OF THE ADDRESS BY THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF LAGOS STATE,  
CAPTAIN OKHAI MIKE AKHIGBE (NN), ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
LAUNCHING OF LAGOS STATE CHAPTER OF THE MASS MOBILISATION FOR  
SELF-RELIANCE, ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (MAMSER)  
CAMPAIGN AT THE NATIONAL STADIUM, SURULERE, ON TUESDAY,  
29TH SEPTEMBER 1987**

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,  
Members of the National Council of Ministers,  
Members of the Lagos State Executive Council,  
Your Excellencies,  
Your Royal Highness, the Oba of Lagos,  
Obas and Chiefs,  
Eminent Citizens of Lagos State,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

1. We are gathered here this morning to launch the Lagos State Chapter of the Mass Mobilisation for Self-Reliance, Economic Recovery and Social Justice (MAMSER). I have immense pleasure, therefore, to join in welcoming our people from various works of life who have made it a duty to be at the momentous occasion of this launching. The large turn-out today and the representative nature of its composition is indicative of the preparedness of the entire citizenry of Lagos State to ensure the enduring success of this campaign.

2. As many of us present here today will recall, the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Major General Ibrahim Babangida, on Saturday, 25th July 1987, launched MAMSER at the National level. On that occasion, Mr President, having eloquently articulated the aims and purposes of MAMSER, summarised the overriding goal as Quote "inculcation in our citizens the values, the habits and the orientation which will lead, without coercion to the emergence, out of our disarray, of a great self-reliant, civic society in which justice, duty responsibility, tolerance and commitment to nation shall hold sway". Unquote. Thus MAMSER seeks to counter those negative aspects of our national life which in the words of Mr President Quote "have in the past made our society a by-word for disharmony, dishonesty, distrust and dis-service and to re-inforce those positive attributes of our people which would galvanise the natural goodness, creativity, and the reasonableness in the Nigerian to help himself and the nation to attain the greatness, the past so often promised but always failed to fulfil". Unquote.

3. These reflections and thoughts by Mr President indicate clearly that MAMSER is a crusade whose time is Now. It is a voluntary but mass movement that seeks to tap the vast resources, human and material, of our great nation and prime our people's psyche, as never before, for the purposeful, self-sustaining, political, social and economic development of this great nation.

4. In order for us to succeed in this exciting national endeavour, we must firstly create awareness, appreciation and understanding, in the entire populace, of the means and ends of public policy in all facets, whether political, social or economic. Secondly, and having secured their understanding, we must enlist the support, commitment and active participation or collaboration of the entire populace in the execution of those programmes and public policies which have been designed to achieve specific objectives. In other words, what MAMSER seeks to achieve is active and dynamic involvement of the people in public policies designed for their own good. MAMSER also seeks to counter the malaise, inertia or complacency of our people and substitute positive and responsible action. It must be obvious to us by now that great national events or undertakings cannot be achieved by just a handful of activists whether at governmental or private levels. No matter how beneficial, far-sighted an Administration might be, if it fails to mobilise its people and channel their collective energies and efforts in the pursuit of great national objectives, it would discover, as others have done in the past, that nothing of lasting worth has been realised. Accordingly, we would through MAMSER, undertake the following:

- (a) Inculcate in the entire citizenry, the value and spirit of self-reliance, commitment to social justice and civic responsibility;
- (b) Develop and focus political consciousness of the entire populace so that they are fully aware of their responsibilities and obligations as well as their rights within the Nigerian polity;
- (c) Educate our citizens in the substance and contents of the new social and political order, as our only hope for stable, orderly and durable social and political arrangements;
- (d) Instil in our people pride in everything Nigerian including patronage and consumption of home produced services and commodities; and
- (e) Inculcate in the entire citizenry the virtues of patriotism and putting service to the Fatherland above self.

5. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, when the present Administration assumed the reins of power just a little over two years ago, that event took place at a time of great national self-doubt, acute social malaise, deep melancholy and distress as to the uncertainties engulfing our nation. Today, it should be a matter of great national satisfaction that, this Administration, under the dynamic and inspiring leadership of Major-General Ibrahim Babangida, President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, has in two years, arrested the drift, restored our national self-confidence, charted a new direction on both the economic and political fronts and above all, confronted with remarkable decisiveness, fundamental problems of our nation. Specifically, the present Administration has embarked on a bold and imaginative restructuring of the Nigerian economy, a far-sighted and comprehensive political programme, a redirection of resources towards upliftment of the lives of our rural dwellers etc.

6. Today, I believe, we can truly say that, more than at any other point in our history, we are ready to undertake the journey into the future with greater confidence and assurance. However, for such self-confidence and self-respect to last, we need a complete and total re-orientation of our values and hence the need for MAMSER as a mass movement. We need to mobilise our people and channel their energies towards a clear understanding of the major initiatives of Government and the realisation of laudable objectives of the various programmes and policies which would, in the short, medium and long term, lead to a complete transformation of our lives as a people. At the State level, these worthy and laudable initiatives and programmes include the following:

- (a) The Political Agenda, incorporating a step-by-step transition programme, the most crucial of which, at this stage, is the imminent Local Government Elections on non-partisan basis scheduled for December 1987. We need the singular commitment of our people in this political process so that a new breed of leaders capable of shouldering effectively, the onerous responsibilities of good government is installed at the Local Government level. In reality, this would be the first test of our collective desire for good, democratically elected Government and how far we are prepared to go to achieve this ideal.
- (b) Focus on rural development as one of the major preoccupations of this Administration. Our aim is to enhance rural productivity and income as a means of upgrading our countryside and thus reverse the imbalance as between the rural and urban areas of the State. In this regard, we are providing infrastructural facilities which would not only open-up the rural areas of the State, but would make life more liveable in those areas. We are for this purpose constructing all season access roads, providing potable water and installing rural electrification. We are also pursuing rural employment-generating measures through the Graduate Farmers Scheme, Agricultural Estate Development Scheme, Agricultural Input Credit Scheme, etc. We also have a programme for the construction of Model Schools which would be located in six rural communities among those which have been designated as model villages. These schools will offer boarding facilities and would serve as Models for our future schools. The Primary Health Scheme, with its orientation towards people's involvement in their own health-care, would further enhance living conditions in the countryside.
- (c) On the economic front, the Structural Adjustment Programmes translate at the State level, to the streamlining and rationalisation of our various programmes in order to maximise the benefits of such social and economic investments. The process of streamlining and rationalising programmes in those areas that touch on the daily lives of the citizens of the State such as Education, Health, Provision of infrastructural facilities, etc. must be understood by the entire populace in order that we might enlist their support. In this regard, the review of our educational and health policies deserve special mention. Our aim is to arrest falling standards and meet the gross inadequacies of our educational and health care delivery systems.

- (d) Employment-creating programmes which are aimed at fostering self-reliance through self-employment and Public Works Programmes designed to reduce the level of unemployment among our school leavers. In this regard, we intend, as far as practicable, to undertake public works programme through direct labour. For this purpose, amongst others, we are embarking on a comprehensive re-organisation of the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Public Works Corporation as the Primary agencies for the execution of public works programmes.

7. If we pursue these and other public policies and programmes diligently and with singular commitment, and if we succeed in mobilizing, totally and completely, our people behind these programmes, we shall be laying a solid foundation for a new social and political order which cannot be subverted. I have no doubt that if we have the active backing of the entire populace for these various programmes in the economic, social and political fronts, which have been designed for and in the national interest, it would be impossible for any unscrupulous or self-seeking person or group of persons to undermine our people's will and subvert their cardinal interests.

8. It is for this reason that we need MAMSER as our last hope in arresting the traditional drift in the Nigerian polity. We need MAMSER to harness and channel dynamic energies of our people and all institutions of society to make the new Order take root and endure. All individuals, institutions and groups within the society, whether in the economic, social or political fronts must come on board. Our Voluntary Organisations, Youth Groups, Students, School Children, Market Men and Women, Trade Associations and Labour Unions, Religious Bodies, the Mass Media, indeed, every single organised group within society, must join hands to make this experiment in social engineering an enduring and successful enterprise. We in Lagos State, occupying as we are privileged to do, a pivotal position at the nation's economic and political nerve-centre, must be at the vanguard of this crusade. We must carry the message of MAMSER to every nook and corner of this State.

9. May I, therefore, appeal to the entire citizenry of Lagos State, as individuals and as groups, to embrace whole-heartedly the message of MAMSER, and to disseminate this message to all and sundry. It is by so doing that we can ensure its lasting impact. Let us all resolve, as one, to work in concert and serve our nation with selfless devotion and full commitment so that future generations of Nigerians can say of us, in the words of Mr President, Quote "that for their tomorrow we gave our today". Unquote.

10. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I now have the singular honour and privilege to launch today the Lagos State chapter of the Mass Mobilisation for self-reliance, Economic Recovery and Social Justice (MAMSER). May the Almighty bless these our noble efforts to realise the full potentials of our great nation and fulfil her destiny.

11. Thank you and God bless.

Surulere  
29th September 1987.

CAPTAIN OKHAI MIKE AKHIGBE (NN)  
Military Governor of Lagos State.



