

**SERVANT LEADERSHIP THROUGH DEMOCRATIC STAKEHOLDERISM:
Arise, O Stakeholders of Nigeria! Please, Begin to Assemble for Naija Republic**

Bolaji Oladejo

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DEDICATION

To the Almighty God: Lord of power and rule

EPIGRAPH

“As partisans practise democracy with partisanship, stakeholders must practise democracy with stakeholderism.” – Bolaji Oladejo

PREFACE

It is heartwarming for me to see that the ideas expressed in this book, which I have been putting down little by little, have now been finalized to the glory of God. This work would have been completed before now but my simultaneous writing on a couple of other subjects and the demands of my erstwhile full-time job gave me only little time to concentrate, update, and put the bits and pieces together for final publication.

I must state that it is a matter of coincidence that the book is being published at this auspicious period of transition from one government to another in Nigeria. For avoidance of doubts, the book is not specifically directed against the current or any other government in the country. It is meant to raise a motion and a movement against the unwholesome practices of the party system and not particularly against politically-exposed persons and public personalities. An important part of its main proposition is the introduction of stakeholder groups and assemblies as replacements for political parties as well as the restructuring and strengthening of public leadership and governance systems.

However, conscious of the fact that membership of a political party is a constitutional requirement to contest for public offices in the country, and in order to achieve the desired reform in a law-abiding, peaceful, and non-violent manner, the book recognizes political party as the platform for participating in elections. This is with the understanding that stakeholders can only take this as a stopgap measure to win political power from the partisans with a view to institutionalizing social, political, economic, and legal reforms that will henceforth break the barriers of Nigeria's limiting Constitution and extend the frontiers of democracy and development. Using a bit of poetic language in some of its sections, the book reawakens the consciousness of stakeholders of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the stark realities of the country's socio-economic and political situations and motivates them towards taking legitimate remedial actions within the framework of the law as law-abiding agents of change.

The target audience of this book is not just adult members of the population. Youths are particularly a crucial segment of the target audience. It is my candid expectation that publishers, high school teachers, lecturers, education stakeholders, and education authorities will consider recommending or approving the book as a supplementary reading material in relevant subjects or courses to sensitize the young ones and to galvanize them towards thinking about potential solutions. This is based on the fact that the youths of today have more than one reason to work towards creating and having a better Nigeria of their dream. It will also be exciting to see individuals, associations, professional bodies, corporate and civil society organizations not only buying the book but reading it and making copies available to their stakeholders and interested readers.

Even though Democratic Stakeholderism zeroes in on Nigeria, I believe that some of the central ideas advanced are useful and adaptable to other countries, especially developing countries that are struggling to resolve the rat race for power among party politicians, reorganize public leadership and governance systems, improve democratic participation, inject professionalism, competence, and values in leadership and governance, build unity out of diversity, reduce the

challenges of corruption, impunity, and bad governance, and make progress towards sustainable peace, security, and welfare.

I hereby commend this book to the stimulating reading experience of my target audience and other interested readers, and to vibrant follow-up discussions and actions of all well-meaning stakeholders of 'Project Nigeria'.

Many thanks and God bless.

Bolaji Oladejo

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I want to use this medium to appreciate the hospitality and special words of encouragement, support, and inspiration given to me by Mr. Halid Amin and Bro. Shadeed with whom I sojourned as a visiting research student at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. I also recognize the inspirational words of Dr. Ali Wassil with whom I had brief but memorable moments of interaction while living in London House, Mecklenburgh Square.

Apart from quotations and views of authors, stakeholders, and opinion leaders which are thankfully referenced and acknowledged, I hereby take responsibility for the ideas articulated in this book. I would like to thank my wife, Mrs. Chioma Oladejo, my former boss, Mr. Igwe Eleke, as well as friends / colleagues like Mrs. Rhoda John Kuje, Mr. Danjuma Muhammed, Mr. M. J. Bello, Anthony Udoh, Ali Ahmed Gubio, Christiana Shamaki, Hadiza Dako, Moses Audu Ogala, James Oche, and Lawrence Kwaghga who assisted in validating or correcting some of the few phrases or words that were rendered in indigenous languages in the book.

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Finally, and most importantly, all well-deserved gratitude, praise, and glory are due to the Almighty God for the inspired commencement, faithful sustenance, and successful completion of this work. May the good Lord grant all of us as stakeholders the necessary knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and strength to implement the proposed stakeholder democratic system!

Bolaji Oladejo

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CHAPTER 1

WAKE UP! TAKE BACK YOUR SOVEREIGNTY!

If it dawns on you that you must reform your society in your own interest:

“You must set forth at dawn.” – Wole Soyinka

Good morning, great people and friends of Nigeria! At whatever time you are reading this piece, be it morning, afternoon, evening, or night, I say to you: “Good morning, dear compatriots and well-wishers.” You and I have been sleeping, snoring, and dreaming: dreaming that the undesirable realities that were with us before we slept have disappeared overnight like a miracle. Lo and behold, the realities are still with us as we awake into the world of reality. If you are awake like many other people, you will hear, you will see, and you will feel the unwanted realities that were with us, and are still with us, and will continue to be with us until we do something. As for me:

I hear, I see, and I feel the undesirable realities

I hear, I see, and I feel the agony of the multitude
The multitude of expectant mothers in pregnancy and in labour
As they groan and die trying to become mothers of their babies
 The multitude of infants in their babyhood
 As they cry out in vain for care and survival
 And the multitude of children in their early years
As they struggle with avoidable morbidity and mortality

I hear, I see, and I feel the anger of the multitude
 The multitude of consumers
 As they suffer for electricity and potable water
And as they get billed for services they never consumed
 The multitude of commuters
As they face dangers of poor road and transport infrastructures
And as they face burdens of fuel scarcity and money scarcity

I hear, I see, and I feel the frustration of the multitude
 The multitude of local manufacturers
As they battle high production costs, multiple taxation, and dumping
 The multitude of trained professionals
As poor incentives and working conditions push them to brain drain
 And the multitude of pensioners
As they wait endlessly for their retirement benefits

I hear, I see, and I feel the disappointment of the multitude
 The multitude of students and youths
As they grapple with unmet needs for higher education

And as they spend extra years in school due to strike actions
The multitude of jobless graduates and under-employed workers
As they desperately move to check out of the country
And as they look for greener pastures abroad

I hear, I see, and I feel the helplessness of the multitude
The multitude of farmers and fishermen in their homelands
As their land, water, and air get trespassed, degraded, and polluted
The multitude of poor masses in their daily toils
As they labour with beads of sweat and drops of tears
And the multitude of people in their houses and sanctuaries
As they live and worship under insecurity and fear

And as I hear, and see, and feel the unwanted realities
I wonder and ponder: Oh My God!
Are your blessings exclusive to people in other lands?
And there came His swift response in the wise book:
“The bounties of thy Lord are not closed to anyone”
So, when then will the multitude wake up to unblock their access?
When will they bring down the walls of Jericho blocking their success?

As you wake up, please wake up the slumbering ones. For those who have woken up, please ask yourself if the thought of a change for better times and abundant life has ever crossed your beautiful mind. If so, have you thought of how early you want the change to happen? Yes, a new era can happen very soon in our lifetime, if we work for it, and if we support and take part in positive change actions from now. But if we do nothing other than complaining, the transformation we want will elude us and we will become a wasted generation and a liability to our offspring. As the darkness of the night gets consumed in its twilight and the dawn heralds the beginning of a new day, we seek help from the Almighty creator and witness of every dawn of a new day.

So, once again, I say to you: “Good morning, brothers, sisters, and friends.” Wake up from your slumber! Wake up! Take back your sovereignty! It’s time to begin the journey of survival. The palmerworms, locusts, cankerworms, and caterpillars in our land have always wanted us to remain disunited and docile in action while they do their thing, but when the need arises, we can be united and action-oriented beyond imagination. The need has indeed arisen for us to unite and begin to take action. But, before we begin the journey of survival, let us further justify and situate our action by asking ourselves: What are some of the unfortunate twists of events that have been characterizing our public governance space in contemporary times and in times past?

The irony of a rich country with poor people

Governments are borrowing,
People are sorrowing.
Politics is booming,
Business is dooming.
Politicians are gaining,

People are waning.

Appointed and elected officials are thriving in luxury and opulence,
Disappointed electorate are striving in penury and hopelessness.
Servants entrusted with power are lavishing money on 3-course meals,
Masters who own the power are languishing to get 3-square meals.
Public officials and their families and cronies are wining and dining,
Members of the public are whining and dying.

Wriggling out of waging with willpower,
Worried weaklings are waiting, watching, and wishing for wonders.
Without weighing in with their wherewithal:
Wary and wakeful ways of work,
Witty and wonderful words of wisdom,
Weighty and worthwhile wallets of wealth.

Arise, therefore, O people of Nigeria!
Arise, O friends of Nigeria!
Arise, O stakeholders of Nigeria!
Please, begin to assemble to take back your sovereignty
And to build Naija Republic
For the benediction of the people and to the glory of God

Nigeria needs people of good faith and goodwill, and you are one of them. Each and every one of us who are yearning for real change must bring something to the table. We must embark on our ways of work, voice out our words of wisdom, and support with our wallets of wealth. The best gift that we, as a people, can give to ourselves is to join hands through constitutional means to withdraw our mandate which has for long been misused by the selfish rulers. The best charity that we, as stakeholders, can do to ourselves is to proclaim, reclaim, and hold on to our stakes which they have been holding in trust for us. We must mobilize, organize, and strategize against the political machines of politicians.

We recognize that the Nigerian political arena consists not only of bad politicians but also good ones, and so politicians cannot all be tarred with the same brush. The political sacs of chaffs are not all about chaffs but there are some grains in them. However, the truth is that the grains are not many and they are typically constrained within the boundaries of extreme partisanship and electoral survival to the extent that we have only few leaders in the true sense of good leadership. We have always had rulers who have been given sufficiently long rope to pull but, having misruled and mistaken the people's patience for stupidity, the people are declaring loud and clear to the political class and their collaborators: No, not anymore! Never again!! Enough is enough!!! Besides, the point has to be made that, all over the world, and with particular reference to highly under-performing countries such as Nigeria, the idea of a partisan political class of people who call themselves party politicians, pursue politics as a profession or career, and selfishly rule over the affairs of the society, is getting moribund. As it was with the royal, colonial, and military class, the ruling class of party politicians will soon become inconsequential and relegated to the backwaters of public governance.

Over the years, corrupt military and civilian leaders, politicians, public office holders, and foreign collaborators at all levels have developed primitive culture of misappropriating to themselves the common patrimony of the people. They've been feeding fat on the people's common wealth. They've always had so much to eat and drink and have indeed eaten and drank so much that they are no longer awake to the realities of the common man and the society as a whole. They are fully-fed to the brim, while the poor majority are yawning in hunger, starvation, and hopelessness. The plunderers are extremely excited about their selfish achievements but they feel unconcerned about the plight of the suffering masses. While they help themselves to the public treasury, they use ethnicity, religion, and other dividing factors to pull the wool over our eyes. Never again should we allow any person or group to use ethnicity, religion, or other sentiments to deceive and mislead us!

Over the years, corrupt military and civilian leaders, politicians, public office holders, and foreign collaborators at all levels have amassed tremendous strength so much that they have become too strong for the poor, the weak, the vulnerable, and the fairly strong. Almighty Father and Hearer! You are the marvellous hearer of all audible and inaudible voices, and you are so gracious that you would listen and hear the 'voices' of voiceless bones, answer the calls of helpless callers, and deliver the oppressed from their oppressors when they lament:

"All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?" (Psalm 35:10)

Over the years, corrupt military and civilian leaders, politicians, public office holders, and foreign collaborators at all levels have captured power and have openly and secretly transgressed citizens' rights, usurped people's privileges, and upturned resource blessing into resource curse. But the Lord of power and rule who elevates and abases, by His will and mercy, has been listening and hearing, and has been watching and seeing everything in the minutest details. He will use His divine power and wisdom to stop the plunderers among the ruling class from continuing to clone, recycle, and prolong themselves in power. He will graciously elevate to power and honour authentic leaders from among the people who will protect the poor, the weak, and the vulnerable, and serve the interest of all segments of the society including the rich.

Over the years, corrupt military and civilian leaders, politicians, public office holders, and foreign collaborators at all levels have traversed the public space like lions in a grassland. It has been such an endangered grassland where the lush green grass is losing its greenness. A grassland where good governance is snatched with the claws and jaws of the lions, a grassland where opportunities rot on the ground like rotten fruits, a grassland where many nightingales cannot sing sweet melodies, a grassland where many elephants live like ants. Meanwhile, the lions have assumed the role of the kings of their various territories, roaring in their dens, preying on weaker animals, and having no milk of human kindness. But when their time is up, who really are the lions of wild territories in the presence of the Lion of the tribe of Judah? Who are the kings and queens of men, and the lords of the Manor House, in the presence of the King of kings, and Lord of lords? Who are the controllers of some territories and some era in the presence of Al-Waasi: the all-encompassing, the boundless? Who are the powerful rulers in the presence of Maalik-al-mulk: the Lord of power and rule?

If the different ethnic nationalities of the country unite with faith in God against unscrupulous politicians, who indeed are the little mortal gods of politics in the presence of Hausa and Jama'a Arewa's Ubangiji, Allah, Yoruba's Olodumare, Igbo's Chineke, Fulani's Jomirao, Kanuri's Kamande, Efik, Ibibio, and Annang's Abasi, Tiv's Aondo, Ijaw's Tamara, Idoma's Owoicho, Nupe's Sokwo, Bini's Osanobua, Itsekiri's Oritse, Igala's Ojo Ochamachala, Ebira's Ohomorihi, Esan's Osenobula, Etsako's Oghena, Berom's Dagwi, Ikwerre's Ali, Urhobo and Isoko's Oghene, Gbagyi's Shekwo, Shuwa Arab's Rabbi, Owan's Oselebua, Mumuye's Kpanti Laa, Kalabari's Tamuno, Ogoni's Bari, Jukun's Shidon, Eggon's Ahogben, and other people's supreme beings and deities?

On our own part as faithful workers in the vineyard of the Lord and not ordinary laid-back prayer warriors, we the people must realize that we need to wake up and cooperate with God who, by His compassion and grace, will not withhold His help from above. We must wake up as suffering sovereigns to constitutionally use the instrumentality of the party system to take our sovereignty back, not to hand it over to another set of rulers, but to carry our cross with great sense of collective responsibility and seriousness of purpose. As it was with Ezra and Nehemiah who got many people of different persuasions and callings involved in rebuilding the temple and the walls of Jerusalem respectively, we must all join hands together to rebuild our society.

Our hopes of a better tomorrow for Nigeria are very realistic. However, we must make no mistake of placing our hopes of a better and a new Nigeria on unpatriotic skeptics among Nigerians who will work against the progressive actions of change agents. In order to birth the Naija of our dream, what we need is our familiar 'can do' spirit, the Naija spirit which has always worked for us. You can call it 'Naijmania' if you like:

Naijmania: The Naija Spirit of Naijas

They bitterly argue, needlessly quarrel, and selfishly break their ranks
They ethnically collude, religiously connive, and politically conspire
United in personal gains, divided in common good
They are Nigerians
Citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

They mutually understand, reciprocally tolerate, and equitably unite
They jointly consult, selflessly cooperate, and fruitfully collaborate
United in common good, united in good governance
They are Naijas
Citizens of the Federal Republic of Naija

Filled with Naijmania: the Naija spirit
They believe in their positive 'can do' spirit
And are awake to their responsibilities
They are Naijas
Citizens of the Federal Republic of Naija

They allow their minds to be renewed with faith, hope, and love
They are positive change agents for the society
Willing, able, and ready to work for the society
They are Naijas
Citizens of the Federal Republic of Naija

The typical Naija is a great asset to Naija Republic. She is the one who can answer the call, and he is the one who can show up to be counted, when people say: '*Naija get sense well-well*'. Naija men and women! Naija youths and elders! Please wake up with your great sense and take back your sovereignty from party politicians!

CHAPTER 2

DEMOCRATIC STAKEHOLDERISM AS A WIN-WIN RESTRUCTURING OPTION

"The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails." – William Arthur Ward

2.1 Context for Democratic Reform

There exists in a beautiful corner of the world an enigmatic woman of great destiny in a land of great destiny. This woman also has a number of destiny sisters in neighbouring and nearby territories. She is presently over 60 years old but past and prevailing circumstances would not allow her and her sisters to grow healthy, strong, and rich enough to live abundant life. Some greedy guardians, supported by their friends and collaborators on the home front and in some distant lands, have been hijacking her legitimate legacies and assets since childhood. As a result, she has been going through years of dispossession, rights denial, scarcity in the midst of plenty, hard labour, starvation, sickness, stunted growth, and imminence of avoidable death. This woman is an enigma of a creature like the night visitant whose brilliant light may be obscured for a while but its piercing brightness shows up through the darkness of the darkest night. This helpless but hopeful woman is known by all as Nigeria but her pet name, which she loves so much, is Naija.

The treatments meted out to Mother Naija by our leaders as guardians have polluted her land, water, and atmosphere, and have killed her public schools, hospitals, housing, public infrastructures, industries, jobs, and security of lives and properties. Considering her poor performance over the years in the various global goals and development indices such as the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Human Development Index (HDI), Nigeria has been measuring far below expectation by global, continental, sub-regional, and national standards.

Fellow Nigerians and well-meaning people of the world, would you rather join forces to save Nigeria from the greedy hands of her guardians and conspirators or allow them to continue milking her to death? Are you willing, able, and ready to change the status quo or you want her people and residents to continue suffering in silence? As for me, I am willing, able, and ready to join hands with others to salvage her, to help her to help ourselves, our children, our future generations, and our world. What about you?

Here is a clarion call to selfless stakeholders who will checkmate greedy guardians!

We have strengths and opportunities to re-discover our country as a country of many nations and to exponentially recover years of initial poor growth like a Chinese bamboo tree, but we have to take necessary actions. We have greater potential more than we can imagine to bring about rapid transformative change. And just a few of us at the beginning are sufficient to get many others to contribute towards achieving that feat. It all takes vision, unity, seriousness and sincerity of purpose, and determination to succeed in this regard. If men are dragging their feet, women will

catch the action bug because women have been getting the short end of the stick. If oldies are playing ostrich, youths will play ball because the future of youths is more at stake.

Here is a clarion call to vibrant youths and caring women who will checkmate patriarchal partisans!

Time has come for us to be more conscious, more active, and more united. Time has come for us to reject the status quo and stop the political machinery of the politicians. We owe ourselves actions rather than lamentations. We owe ourselves nothing less than concerted actions bearing in mind an instructive lesson from Isaac Newton's law of motion that, unless and until we take necessary actions, the oppressors' functional political machines will always continue in their exploitative state of motion against us and the status quo will forever continue to remain the way it is.

Here is a clarion call to stakeholder democrats who will checkmate partisan autocrats!

Politicians are the same everywhere, although Africa seems to have an unfair share of the worst brand of this unwholesome product that the politician is generally considered to be. Like most countries of the world, public leadership and governance systems in Nigeria are based on party democracy. Advanced democracies in America, Europe, and other regions have achieved relatively perfect results from the imperfect party system. Even though these developed countries have managed to make lemonade out of the lemon of party politics, concerns, dissatisfactions, and oppositions have been – and are still being – expressed by citizens and experts who believe that the party is over for the party system because of the failings and the moribund state of the system. Some change agents in countries like Iceland have actually been working for a complete shift from party-based representative democracy to direct democracy devoid of political parties or any other intermediary between the people and governance entities.

In many countries, including Britain, USA, and other parts of the developed world, there are cries and concerns of the majority being shut out of the arena of public governance to the advantage of a few. The majority out of power do not trust the few that are in power. Public trust in political leaders is generally low. This will continue to be so as long as the party system continues to be the overarching political order. A survey published on 26th November 2019 by Ipsos MORI (now simply Ipsos), a UK global market research and public opinion specialist, revealed that, of the 1,020 British adults who took part in face-to-face interviews, only 14% would trust politicians to tell the truth and that politicians were the least trusted of the 25 listed professions. The report added that trust in politicians had never been especially high. Similarly, the UK Trust in Government Survey conducted in March 2022 by the Office for National Statistics as a part of an international study commissioned and coordinated by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) showed that only 20% of the UK population reported trust in the political parties. Furthermore, according to the report of a survey covering 8,000 people published in June 2023 by Focaldata for the Institute for Public Policy Research, just 6% of UK public had full trust in the political system while 89% supported democratic and constitutional reforms.

The above developments bring to mind George Washington's warning against "the baneful effects of the spirit of party" and the fact that the early democratic years of the USA, which is the bastion of democracy, were not based on the party system. George Washington, the 1st president of the

USA, actually governed without political parties. The USA does not have political parties specifically mentioned in its Constitution, although their activities enjoy significant protection under the 1st Amendment and they play an important role in government. George Washington had also warned that the party system, like fire, can warm or can consume. I believe that it may have warmed the USA and other developed countries to a relatively large extent but, in the case of Nigeria and most parts of Africa, it has been consuming the socio-political and economic fabrics like bonfire and we need to quench the fire with alacrity.

John Adams, the 2nd president of the USA, expressed the belief that democracies do "commit suicide". Indeed, because of the way our party politicians have been practising it, the Nigerian democracy has long committed suicide. It has actually killed itself like a suicide bomber that also got many others killed and maimed in the process. This has left a big vacuum and there is an urgent need for a credible replacement. Moreover, the party system has been viewed by analysts and citizens as not being the best for a developing country such as Nigeria with its plurality of ethnicity, sensitivity of religion, high level of poverty and corruption, and low level of literacy. If citizens of countries that are doing relatively well are refusing to be complacent and are demanding for reforms, why would those who are suffering continue to smile and keep silent? Why would we wait until when other people, who often recognize their place in national and global affairs, lock the door and throw the key of our party politics into the Atlantic Ocean before we begin to do our usual 'follow-follow'?

Here is a clarion call to democratic assemblies and groups of stakeholders who will checkmate partisan cliques of political parties!

Taking a trip down memory lane, we recall that we have practised both parliamentary and presidential systems of party democracy with relative successes and failures. Apart from the challenges of the variant of democracy and partisan politics that we practise, there are also challenges with our system and structure of public governance which, unlike developed democracies, do not fully align with the demographic, social, political, and economic realities of the country. Many personalities, ethnic nationalities, organizations, and groups have been calling for restructuring of Nigeria which they argue is being run since the collapse of the first republic on 15th January 1966 as a unitary rather than a federal republic. Moreover, beyond the failure of our democratic system and structure of governance, the sets of leaders that Nigeria and many African countries have had have largely contributed in no small measure to the bitter democratic experiences of the people. In general terms, the much-expected dividends of democracy have been eluding the people due to leadership failure and bad governance, leading to declining trust in politicians, waning interest in the democratic process, and voter apathy.

Our experiences over the years have shown that political leaders have been acting like masters and taking advantage of systemic, structural, demographic, and socio-economic weaknesses to misuse power for their own benefit and at the detriment of the people. The result of this is poor governance outcomes across all sectors of the national economy. Nigeria has generally not been doing well on almost all sectoral, socioeconomic, and development indices. This is not attributable solely to any particular leader, era, level, or branch of government. It has been a general consistent failure of leadership and governance from previous generations. We salute the visionary, dynamic, and selfless leadership of pre-independence and early post-independence leaders and some

contemporary leaders who have left indelible marks of progress in their own times for future generations.

Here is a clarion call to servant leaders who will checkmate master rulers!

There is an urgent need for paradigm shift from party politics to another system that will take into consideration the factors militating against the partisan system and create enabling environments for developmental change. We need to have strong systems and structures that will always produce capable, competent, and credible leaders and that will easily flush out bad ones whenever they are inadvertently or purposely thrust up into positions of leadership and power. We need sincere stakeholders with communal interests who will take over from phony politicians with personal interests. Since party politicians have been practising democracy with partisanship without much to show as democratic dividends to the society, it is time for stakeholders, who are the rightful owners of power, to practise democracy with stakeholderism.

Here is a clarion call to sincere stakeholders who will checkmate phony politicians!

In our journey of democracy, the party system has created a corps of professional politicians who recycle or clone themselves and have become more of liabilities than assets to the system. They are indeed a thorn in the flesh of the populace. Must we continue to let power remain in the hands of those who have mismanaged power and caused problems for all of us? Must we continue to trust partisan politicians who have demonstrated lack of trust in their promises and actions? Must we continue to operate under the same system and structure that are dilapidated and collapsing? We certainly need credible professionals, if you like, call them political professionals who will replace those professional politicians.

Here is a clarion call to political professionals who will checkmate professional politicians!

As we shall see in subsequent sections and chapters, stakeholderism is a win-win governance restructuring option for all stakeholders. It is a win-win option for men and women, old and young, north and south, as well as all geo-political zones, ethnic groups, religious groups, professional / vocational groups, vulnerable groups, and interest groups of the country. Using the prism of a revolution, some may even see it as a silent revolution against the oppressive political class and the corrupt establishment. Considering the avoidable loss of lives and properties, anarchy, instability, power vacuum, power grabbing, lack of consensus and clear sense of direction that come with bloody revolutions, I am of the view that our first set of strategies in seeking solutions to our national situation should not be a violent revolution. We have a duty as a people of peace to first explore the peaceful option. Granted that some may call the stakeholder system a silent or peaceful revolution, I would actually like to borrow a word from Abimbola Adedokun to refer to it as a 'resolution' rather than a revolution. The stakeholder system presents a veritable platform for this resolution process which I believe would be embraced and explored to the fullest extent by all progressive and peace-loving stakeholders. The end result is to put in place systems and structures that will take over responsibilities for good governance from the current partisan system. In doing this, non-violence will be our watchword.

Against this background, it is time to arise and shine for stakeholder democracy. As the wise Chinese proverbial saying goes: “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

Arise, shine! The sun is shining

Arise, shine!
The sun is shining
Arise one! Arise all!

Arise, O vigilant people of freedom at home and abroad!
You who cherish human liberty and dignity
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O principled people of conscience at home and abroad!
You who know the truth and live by the truth
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O great people and friends of Nigeria!
You who are blessed to help the country and its people
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O caring women and girls!
You whose feminine touches are missing in public action
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O vibrant youths and students!
You who are dynamic leaders of today and tomorrow
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O powerful people of knowledge and talents!
You who have the skills to mobilize and influence others
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O capable professionals in public and private sectors!
You who have the competences to manage systems
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O impoverished masses of the people!
You who struggle day and night, living from hand to mouth
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O marginalized poorest of the poor, lowest of the low!
You who get bribed on election days for your mortgaged future
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O charitable aristocrats, philanthropists, and elites!

You who have what it takes to sponsor and sustain change
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O benevolent kings, queens, and chiefs!
You who have traditional authorities over your people
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O God-fearing elders, community and religious leaders!
You who want righteousness to exalt your nation
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O faithful prayer warriors and men and women of God!
You who have the grace to pray and get divine intervention
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O disciplined forces of the military and paramilitary!
You who were trained to secure the country and enforce the law
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

Arise, O formidable groups of visible and invisible forces!
You who range yourselves “in ranks and so are strong in repelling evil”
Please, begin to assemble for Stakeholder Democracy

And on top of all these, without which we will all arise and fall
“Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered”
“Let them also that hate Him flee before Him”

2.2 Overview of Democratic Stakeholderism

The overview given below summarizes stakeholderism:

- i. With the vision of “a truly independent, united, peaceful, and developed global country where human rights are universally guaranteed and life is equitably abundant for all” and a mission “to mobilize, organize, and synergize all categories of stakeholders to build a new Nigeria that is a pride of Africa, the black race, and the world”, the goal of stakeholderism is “to build, by 2035, a stakeholder progressive society of servant leaders leading public affairs with broad participation, transparency, accountability, integrity, equity, merit, effectiveness, and efficiency towards good governance”. Its objectives, whose activity implementation timeframes will range from 2025-2035, are to:
 - (a) Replace political parties with stakeholder groups and assemblies;
 - (b) Restructure and strengthen public leadership and governance systems;
 - (c) Broaden and improve participation in democracy;
 - (d) Inject professionalism, competence, and values in leadership and governance;
 - (e) Build unity out of the country’s diversity;

- (f) Reduce corruption, impunity, and bad governance; and
 - (g) Promote good governance, sustainable peace, security, and welfare.
-
- ii. Democratic Stakeholderism is founded on the underlying philosophies and ideologies of servant leadership, broad progressive participation, non-partisan representative democracy, collaborative centre-right politics of equity and meritocracy, modified presidential system, fiscal federalism, economic liberalism, welfare capitalism, free and fair enterprise, as well as the spectrum of social liberalism and social conservatism.
 - iii. Abolition and replacement of political parties with stakeholder groups and assemblies as platforms for elite consensus building, election, appointment, and participation in leadership and governance.
 - iv. Restructuring of government into two wings (Equity Wing and Sectoral Wing) whereby Equity Wing focuses on assurance of equity across gender, generation, disability, religion, and geo-ethnicity, and Sectoral Wing focuses on assurance of merit regarding substantive sectoral issues of development.
 - v. Reorganization of executive and legislative branches of government and repositioning of the judiciary.
 - vi. Establishment of six-member Presidential Council at the federal level consisting of potential presidents who will be essentially elected as vice presidents, with one of them occupying the post of president who will be the head of state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces.
 - vii. Establishment of three-member Governorship Council at the state level consisting of potential governors who will be essentially elected as deputy governors, with one of them occupying the post of governor who will be the leader of the state.
 - viii. Establishment of two or three-member Committee of Chairmen at the local government area (LGA) level consisting of potential chairmen who will be essentially elected as vice chairmen, with one of them occupying the post of chairman.
 - ix. Rotation of presidential powers among the six vice presidents as members of the Council of Presidents, governorship powers among the three deputy governors as members of the Council of Governors, and chairmanship powers among the two or three vice chairmen as members of the Committee of Chairmen.
 - x. Creation of the posts of prime minister and deputy prime minister at the federal level as well as premier and deputy premier at the state level.
 - xi. Appointment of council minister and cabinet minister for each federal ministry with their associated responsibilities, as well as council commissioner and cabinet commissioner for each state ministry with their respective responsibilities.

- xii. Strengthening of the LGA level with financial, political, and administrative autonomy and allowance for big, municipal, and buoyant LGAs to appoint experts as technical advisers.
- xiii. Operation of bicameral legislatures at the federal and state levels while the legislature at the LGA level will continue to be unicameral but cease to operate as a merged entity of the legislature and the executive based on the principle of separation of powers.
- xiv. Establishment of Federal House of Representatives based on the existing 360 federal constituencies.
- xv. Establishment, based on the existing 109 senatorial constituencies, of Federal House of Technocrats which will replace the Senate and operate, not as the upper chamber of the bicameral legislature, but side by side with the Federal House of Representatives.
- xvi. Establishment of State House of Representatives based on existing state constituencies.
- xvii. Optional establishment of State House of Technocrats based on constituencies to be adopted or newly delineated.
- xviii. Adoption of part-time representation in legislatures.
- xix. Practice of open governance, open debating, open voting, open planning, open budgeting, open spending, and open accounting.
- xx. Reversal of top-down approach in the process of governance to bottom-up approach.
- xxi. Devolution of powers and resources to the sub-national levels.

2.3 Definition of Important Terms Used

The following definitions are hereby presented for the purpose of this book and the stakeholder system:

Stakeholder

A stakeholder of Nigeria is either a Nigerian by origin / birth (at home or in the diaspora), a Nigerian by registration (irrespective of gender), a Nigerian by naturalization, an African in the diaspora, a foreigner with business or other legitimate interests in Nigeria, a foreigner who is legally resident in Nigeria, or a non-resident citizen of any country of the world who wishes to contribute towards developing Nigeria. The concept of stakeholder applies not only to the national level of the country but also to sub-national levels, which means that there also exist state stakeholders and LGA stakeholders.

Primary Stakeholder

Primary stakeholders are citizens by origin / birth, by registration, or by naturalization who, under normal circumstances, are considered to have higher stakes than other categories of stakeholders.

Secondary Stakeholder

Secondary stakeholders consist of foreigners who are legally resident in Nigeria, foreigners with substantial business or other legitimate interests in Nigeria (whether or not they are residents), and Africans in the diaspora.

Tertiary Stakeholder

Tertiary stakeholders are foreigners and non-residents not captured under any of the two higher categories but are willing to help the country.

Stakeholder Democrat

A stakeholder democrat is a stakeholder who is involved in the stakeholder democratic process of leadership, governance, and development as against the partisan politician who plays politics of power in the name of democracy. A stakeholder democrat can also be referred to as a stakeholder political actor.

Stakeholder Assembly

A stakeholder assembly or simply an assembly is an independent body organized for the purpose of meritocratic and equitable participation in democracy, leadership, and governance with membership based on knowledge, experiences, interests, or identity classifications that are relevant and useful to the assembly.

Stakeholder Group

A stakeholder group or simply a group is a collection of assemblies or a collection of component groups consisting of allied or conveniently grouped assemblies organized for the purpose of meritocratic and equitable participation in democracy, leadership, and governance. For example, we have Equity Group and Special Group which are collections of assemblies just as we have Sectoral Group which is a collection of component groups made up of allied or conveniently grouped assemblies.

Main Assembly

A main assembly is directly positioned as the first level of assemblies under a group or a component group of assemblies. A main assembly may or may not be broken down into sub-assemblies depending on the peculiarities of the assembly. The entry level of assembly membership can be at the main assembly or sub-assembly level. In other words, membership of an assembly can be grown at the main assembly level or at the lower level of its sub-assemblies. Finance Assembly, for instance, can grow its membership from membership of sub-assemblies such as:

- Public Finance Sub-Assembly
- Private Finance Sub-Assembly
- Banking Sub-Assembly
- Accounting Sub-Assembly
- Auditing Sub-Assembly
- Taxation Sub-Assembly
- Insurance Sub-Assembly
- Capital Market Sub-Assembly

- Public-Private Partnership Sub-Assembly

Sub-assembly

As we can see from above, a sub-assembly is one of the assemblies under a main assembly. The following are hereby presented as further examples of assemblies and their possible sub-assemblies, with the proviso that they only serve as useful guides and are not necessarily carved in stone:

Transport and Marine Resources Assembly:

- Road Transport Sub-Assembly
- Rail Transport Sub-Assembly
- Waterways Sub-Assembly
- Marine Resources Sub-Assembly

Education Assembly:

- Primary Education Sub-Assembly
- Secondary Education Sub-Assembly
- Tertiary Education Sub-Assembly
- Technical and Vocational Education Sub-Assembly
- Education System Sub-Assembly [Covering, but not limited to, Educational Administration, Policy, Planning, and Management; Educational Curriculum; Educational Research; Educational Technology]

Health Assembly:

- Primary Health Care Sub-Assembly
- Secondary Health Care Sub-Assembly
- Tertiary Health Care Sub-Assembly
- Public Health Sub-Assembly
- Medical Sub-Assembly
- Paramedical Sub-Assembly
- Pharmaceutical Sub-Assembly
- Health System Management Sub-Assembly [Covering, but not limited to, Health Policy, Planning and Management; Healthcare Financing; Human Resources for Health; Health Information System; Health Research; Health Infrastructure, Technology, and Supplies]

Joint Assembly

Joint Assembly is a forum of two or more assemblies which may or may not be within the same group. Joint assemblies can always hold as the need arises either at the intra-group, inter-group, intra-assembly, or inter-assembly levels. For instance, joint assembly meetings could be convened between the following assemblies to discuss issues around the possible effects of electro-magnetic field (EMF) exposure on health as a prelude to formulation of necessary policy and / or legislation:

- Health Assembly
- Science, Technology, and Innovation Assembly
- Communication and Digital Economy Assembly

- General Public Interest Assembly

Primary Assembly

Primary assembly is an assembly that is considered to have first-level of stake and responsibility on a particular issue. For instance, Agriculture Assembly is a primary assembly on issues of crop storage, preservation, and processing while FCT, Special, and Rural Development Assembly is a primary assembly on FCT matters, rural development, Niger Delta, North East, and other special development matters. An assembly that is designated as a primary assembly on a particular issue can be a secondary or a tertiary assembly on another issue, depending on its competence, relevance, and importance on the issues. It is possible to have more than one assembly designated as primary assemblies on a particular issue. For example, the following assemblies could be primary assemblies in a joint assembly to engage in preliminary discussions on review of coastal and inland shipping law:

- Justice Assembly
- Transport and Marine Resources Assembly
- Business, Trade, and Investment Assembly
- Defence Assembly (Navy)

Secondary Assembly

Secondary assembly is an assembly that is considered to have second-level of stake and responsibility on a particular issue.

Tertiary Assembly

Tertiary assembly is an assembly that is considered to have third-level of stake and responsibility on a particular issue, which are lower than those of primary and secondary assemblies.

Lead Assembly

Lead assembly is the primary assembly officially designated to be in the driving seat of joint assembly conversations on a particular issue in view of the relevance, importance, and size of its stake as well as its technical, professional, or specialized knowledge concerning that issue. Using the same parameters, other participating assemblies will be designated as primary, secondary, or tertiary assembly. Health Assembly is the lead assembly on health system coordination and management. Designation of assemblies is an arrangement for some specific purposes and not for general application. An assembly that is designated as a tertiary assembly on a particular issue may be the lead assembly on another issue, and vice versa. Different specific issues will have different sets of lead, primary, secondary, and tertiary assemblies collaborating with one another as stakeholders with shared objectives. With respect to complex issues that are multi-dimensional in nature, it is not impossible for two or more assemblies to be designated as lead assemblies whereby each of them will work independently and concurrently in conjunction with their respective participating assemblies while meeting thereafter in a larger Joint Assembly Forum to harmonize their positions.

Supporting Assembly

A supporting assembly is any primary, secondary, or tertiary assembly identified to participate in joint assembly forums and work in cooperation and collaboration with a lead assembly on a particular issue.

Sectoral Assembly

A sectoral assembly is an assembly that is classified under any of the component groups of the Sectoral Group with membership based on knowledge, experiences, or interests acquired through educations, professions, vocations, or occupations that are relevant and useful to the assembly. Below are examples of sectoral assembly:

- Power Assembly
- Agriculture Assembly
- Students and Youth Development Assembly
- Diaspora Nigeria Assembly

Equity Assembly

An equity assembly is an assembly that is classified under the Equity Group with membership based on identity classifications that are relevant and useful to the assembly. Examples of equity assembly include:

- Women Assembly
- Young Persons Assembly

Special Assembly

A special assembly is an assembly that is classified under the Special Group, e.g., Friends-of-Naija Assembly.

Stakeholder Assemblist

A *stakeholder assemblist* or simply an *assemblist* is a stakeholder democrat who belongs to one or more of the recognized assemblies. Assemblists who belong to sectoral assemblies can be regarded as sectoral assemblists, those who belong to equity assemblies can be regarded as equity assemblists, while those who belong to special assemblies can be regarded as special assemblists. However, stakeholders can hold assembly memberships across different groups as long as they are eligible for membership and they fulfil other necessary criteria. An assemblist is a stakeholder but a stakeholder is not necessarily an assemblist. In other words, you can be a stakeholder without being an assemblist but you cannot be an assemblist without first being a stakeholder. An assemblist is conceptualized to be a potential servant leader. He or she is not expected to be like the ordinary partisan politician that we have always known, and should not be confused as one. With a few exceptions that we shall see in Chapter 8, assemblists will have rights to vote, to be voted for, and to contribute to governance through the assemblies they belong to.

Speciable

Speciable and *Speciability* are my coined words relating to the so-called physically-challenged persons. Instead of the term ‘physically-challenged persons’ or the other alternative terms ‘disabled persons’ and ‘persons with disability’, I have taken the liberty to better refer to them henceforth in this book as ‘*speciable persons*’ or simply ‘*speciables*’. This is because, in my own

opinion, physically-challenged, disabled, and disability paint the picture from a negative point of view. Viewed from a positive angle, I believe that they are specially-able since they can live productive lives with modern technologies as persons with specially-enabled abilities.

Speciability

Following from the previous definition, *speciability* is used in this book to replace disability.

Democratic Stakeholderism

Democratic Stakeholderism is used to conceptualize my idea of a non-party or zero-party representative democracy based on stakeholder groups and assemblies as platforms for elite consensus building, election, appointment, and broad progressive participation in leadership and governance. Democratic stakeholderism can also be referred to as stakeholder democracy or stakeholder democratic system.

De-partisanization

‘De-partisanization’ is simply the removal of partisanship or abolition of political parties from politics, public leadership, and governance.

Corporatization

Corporatization is the restructuring of the polity away from excessive political considerations towards social, economic, and technical considerations in a way that strengthens corporate governance in the public system.

Party

The word ‘party’ is used in this book in the regular sense of ‘political party’ and not in any other occasional sense the word may possibly be applied to.

Politician

Politician is used in the familiar sense of party politician except as otherwise used.

Governance Entity

A governance entity is an individual, group, or body involved in governance.

Equity Wing of Government

Equity Wing of Government focuses on assurance of equity across gender, generation, disability, religion, and geo-ethnicity. At the federal level, it consists of Equity Group of Assemblies, Presidential Council, Federal Executive Council, Federal House of Representatives, president, vice presidents, council ministers, members of the Federal House of Representatives, and other entities empowered through the Equity Wing. At the state level, it consists of Equity Group of Assemblies, Governorship Council, State Executive Council, State House of Representatives, governor, deputy governors, council commissioners, members of the State House of Representatives, and other entities empowered through the Equity Wing.

Sectoral Wing of Government

Sectoral Wing of Government focuses on assurance of merit regarding substantive sectoral issues of development. At the federal level, it consists of Sectoral Group of Assemblies, Federal Cabinet,

Federal House of Technocrats, prime minister, deputy prime minister, cabinet ministers, members of the Federal House of Technocrats, and other entities empowered through the Sectoral Wing. At the state level, it consists of Sectoral Group of Assemblies, State Cabinet, State House of Technocrats, premier, deputy premier, cabinet commissioners, members of the State House of Technocrats, and other entities empowered through the Sectoral Wing.

CHAPTER 3

VISION AND MISSION

“There are three periods in the life of a people or in the life of a country. The three periods are yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Yesterday belongs to the dead and to chroniclers; today belongs to current functionaries and operatives and you will find them all over the place. Tomorrow belongs to visionaries and idealists, without whom you cannot build a new society.” – Anthony Enahoro

3.1 Vision

According to a Chinese proverb:

“Vision without action is daydreaming and action without vision is a nightmare.”

Looking beyond the horizon, the stakeholder system has a vision of:

A truly independent, united, peaceful, and developed global country where human rights are universally guaranteed and life is equitably abundant for all

Our Global Naija vision is realistic and it will be pursued to great advantage. We look forward to having in the near future a global country where Naija and global citizens can enjoy greater freedom to live, work, and contribute to the society without any encumbrance. As we look forward to the future, we must change the status quo. If, thus far, the status quo could not take us to our breakthrough as a people, the status quo must be challenged before it takes us to a miserable point of no return.

It is expected that we would all key in to the common vision of an independent, united, peaceful, developed, and global Nigeria. We need visionary leaders at all levels of government who will take us out of the woods and fast-track the speed of development in all sectors. These leaders may or may not be those who have been at the helm of affairs before or who are currently there; they could just be some relatively unknown men and women who have the competence, the capacity, the character, the will, and the readiness to serve as humble and true servants of the people.

3.2 Mission

The mission of stakeholderism is given below:

To mobilize, organize, and synergize all categories of stakeholders to build a new Nigeria that is a pride of Africa, the black race, and the world

There is so much and so many that we can do together to salvage our existence and our society. We are all in it together and it should no longer be the exclusive birthright of politicians to perpetually rule and misrule under the pretext of leadership and governance. As we resolve to solve our challenges together, we draw wise counsel and inspiration from the African proverbial saying of our elders that:

“If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.”

Together we can go far... farther than we can imagine.

In togetherness, we have a mission

For us as individuals
We just want to do God’s will
For us as Naija stakeholders
We want to build a new Nigeria
A new Nigeria that is a pride of Africa, the black race, and the world

In togetherness, we must work
To mobilize, organize, and synergize all categories of stakeholders
And to deliver the goods
To the greatest proportion of stakeholders
Deliver, by the special grace of God, we will!

CHAPTER 4

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

“My politics is ‘politics without bitterness’.” – Ibrahim Waziri

4.1 Goal

Considering the need to demystify governance as governance has become something of a mystique especially in Nigeria, the principal goal of the stakeholder system is:

To build, by 2035, a stakeholder progressive society of servant leaders leading public affairs with broad participation, transparency, accountability, integrity, equity, merit, effectiveness, and efficiency towards good governance

4.2 Objectives

The objectives of stakeholderism, whose activity implementation timeframes will range from 2025-2035, are to:

- i. Replace political parties with stakeholder groups and assemblies;
- ii. Restructure and strengthen public leadership and governance systems;
- iii. Broaden and improve participation in democracy;
- iv. Inject professionalism, competence, and values in leadership and governance;
- v. Build unity out of the country’s diversity;
- vi. Reduce corruption, impunity, and bad governance; and
- vii. Promote good governance, sustainable peace, security, and welfare.

CHAPTER 5

UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHIES AND IDEOLOGIES

“Anyone who wants to be a leader must be a servant not the boss of those who he wants to serve.” – Aminu Kano

5.1 Citizenship, Leadership, and Democratic Philosophy

In general terms, we believe that man was created for a purpose and not just an accident of creation. We are who we are, what we are, and where we are for a divine purpose. We therefore owe it a duty to contribute individually and collectively to the upliftment of the society we find ourselves in and to the advancement of humanity in general. We hold the believe that any society has the potential to excel like any other one in science, technology, invention, commerce, good governance, and all areas of human endeavour.

Nothing is inherently wrong with being ‘black’, and nothing is particularly wrong with Africa, the black world, and Nigeria. The different peoples of the world may be differently endowed as individuals, groups, nations, and races, but the bounties of God are not exclusive to anyone. It is all about us discovering, developing, and deploying our endowments rather than looking at those of others. Beyond our God-given abundance of natural resources, we have the strength of our human capital, the youthfulness of our population, and the diversity of our ethnicity standing as great endowments to our advantage.

Plurality of ethnicity is a fundamental part of our existence as a country and wishing it away or sweeping it under the carpet does not solve the problem but postpones the evil day. We have a challenge and a duty to manage our ethnic plurality, turn it around positively, and make it count as a comparative advantage which should give us a global competitive edge. I share the view of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe who believed that ethnicity can actually be used as *“a pragmatic instrument for national unity”*. The same treatment applies to the multi-religious character of our society. All the variations in the social, cultural, demographic, and other characteristics of our society that have pitifully been turned into liabilities and are being manipulated and used by unscrupulous leaders are invaluable assets. These assets must be redeemed and treated as a precious baby whose dirty body must be bathed but must not be thrown out with the bathwater.

If leadership and representation are taken as public service and not self-service, and the different demographic groups tolerate, respect, and trust one another, it should not and would not matter so much whether the leader or representative belongs to one of the majority or one of the minority ethnic nationalities, whether he is a Muslim, Christian, or traditional worshipper, or whether she is an indigene or settler, a native or non-native, a citizen by birth or citizen by other means. A leader or representative that is not a ‘son of the soil’ or ‘daughter of the soil’ but demonstrates attributes of patriotism, leadership, competence, benevolence, integrity, equity, love, respect, and other cherished values towards the host community is better than a ‘home boy’ or a ‘home girl’ who possesses only little or none of these qualities.

Democracy in Nigeria is here to stay. Nothing can be taken away from the fact that a number of undemocratic benevolent kings, queens, emperors, military dictators, autocratic partisan leaders, and powerful oligarchs have had their places in past and contemporary times in lifting their societies to greater heights. However, beyond strong leaders, strong systems and structures preferably within the framework of democracy are essential for the sustenance of societal advancements. A society requires, as a matter of importance, strong functional systems and structures to facilitate and sustain good leadership and good governance. A society also requires, as a matter of importance, the right set of servant leaders – not masters – who are competent and selfless to promote and sustain growth and development. Put together and taken back home, Nigeria definitely needs, as a matter of importance and urgency, strong functional systems and structures as well as servant leaders: servant leaders in the mold of ‘*osinlu*’ and not ‘*oselu*’.

For those who can understand Yoruba language, have you ever wondered why politics and politicians are referred to as ‘*oselu*’ and not ‘*osinlu*’? There is a significant difference between the two terms. ‘*Oselu*’ merely refers to the act of running public affairs or individual(s) who run public affairs. Those individuals may or may not be selfish. But believe you me, the parties of ‘*oselu*’ we have in many countries are not only selfish but they are skillful, crafty, and experienced in running public affairs and the people aground. People sometimes refer to them using the portmanteau word "politricians" because of the tricks that go with their politics.

On the other hand, ‘*osinlu*’ refers to selfless person(s) who serve the society. They are community and nation builders and not ordinary politicians. There is indeed a very big difference between those who serve the society – who we desperately desire for change – and those who run public affairs and the people like their personal or family estates. It is quite unfortunate that our society has not really given enough space and opportunity for those selfless group of people to be at the helm of affairs. The political and economic domains have virtually been dominated by the selfish politicians and their business collaborators. This is precisely why we need to transform from our conventional partisan society of ‘*oselu*’ – the politician to stakeholder society of ‘*osinlu*’ – the servant leader.

In the same line of thought as Mallam Aminu Kano, I posit that the servant leaders we desire will not see themselves as masters of those who elected or appointed them. They will not demand for fat salaries, allowances, fringe benefits, and spoils of office. They may not be perfect saints but they will be humanly above board and will not engage in wanton corruption, nepotism, and other unwholesome malevolent practices because they are the honest and good-enough persons that we need. They are Jama’a Arewa’s ‘*masu siyasan gaskiya*’. They are indeed men and women of sufficient virtue who are willing, able, and ready to play ‘*omoluabi*’ politics, or any of the many other variants of politics that I have chosen to call *valuable-variants-of-virtue* (*vvv*) politics. They have been itching to provide selfless leadership and service to the society but have been avoiding the ‘dirty’ game of partisan politics. They will soon begin to come out when given the opportunity to serve the society to the best of their abilities under a new dispensation. We are talking about selfless leaders who are thinking of prosperity and posterity as common goods and not selfish rulers who are just thinking of prosperity only for themselves and their chosen ones. As for those who may have misbehaved in the past but have covenanted with their Lord to become willing and useful vessels in His hands, who are we to judge or stop anybody from being used for the good work of our good God?

Political parties, party politicians, and public leaders especially in Africa have breached the public trust and have lost the confidence of the people on ethos of democracy, good leadership, good governance, and virtually on all aspects of social contract with the citizenry. With very few exceptions, these political actors are a clog in the wheel of progress. Winning elections even at great costs is of more paramount concern to them than good governance. Silent but meaningful, useful, futuristic, and development-oriented projects such as education and health, that often require strategic planning, sacrifices, and long-term investments are usually not attractive to political leaders who are more disposed to short-term, quick-fix, and white-elephant projects that the electorate can see and that can be showcased in the media to support their packaged credentials for re-election. Time has come for declaration of freedom from the political class and their collaborators!

Democracy cannot operate at its fullest potential in a partisan atmosphere. Partisanship has a Bermuda Triangle of political self-preservation, economic irrationality, and social inequity that hijacks, limits, and frustrates even the best of leadership and governance intentions. Even developed nations that are far ahead of developing nations are operating far below capacity due to democratic and systemic constraints. For as long as Nigeria continues to practise party politics, ethnic, regional, and religious sentiments will continue to be used by party politicians as horsewhips in power battles, and the masses of the people, in their educated, uneducated, and miseducated ignorance, financial poverty, moral poverty, and psychological poverty, will continue to be used as cannon fodders in leadership wars. We need to create enabling environments for laudable leadership, good governance, and peak performance for achievement of our great goals.

Bearing in mind the importance and urgency of strong systems, structures, and servant leaders, democratic stakeholderism centres on the practice of democracy through groups made up of assemblies consisting of purposely organized women, young persons, and *speciable persons* as well as people from the various geo-ethnic, religious, interest, professional, vocational, and occupational backgrounds rather than through political parties. Against the background of the popular belief that politicians and political parties are in politics to win elections and so are constantly interested in the current and the next elections, stakeholderism is built on the philosophy that groups and assemblies have the capacity to replace political parties and to thrust up assemblymen and assemblywomen who would constantly be interested in the current and the next generations.

Stakeholderism believes that a better set of democratic outcomes can be achieved through the groups and assemblies that will be established to contribute to leadership and governance in an inclusive, cooperative, collaborative, and productive manner rather than through political parties which party politicians selfishly use to assume, retain, or regain power in a tensely exclusive, extremely competitive, and wastefully sub-optimal manner. Indeed, the desired change that will usher in a new era will be more easily realized if the platform for democratic participation shifts from competition-driven and winner-take-all system of political parties to cooperation-driven, competency-based, all-are-winners system of stakeholder groups and assemblies. This is because each of the assemblies will, by design, have relevant mandates for which it is primarily responsible and will not have to worry about extreme competition or re-election fever.

5.2 Political Ideology

Stakeholderism presents a midway option between the current party-based representative democracy and direct democracy being advocated by change agents in some other countries. Political ideology of stakeholderism consists of representative democracy based on non-partisan stakeholder groups and assemblies as platforms for broad progressive participation and inclusive governance, collaborative centre-right politics of equity and meritocracy, modified presidential system, and fiscal federalism.

Many Nigerian politicians have so much damaged the image of the politician that a typical gentleman or lady would not like to call himself or herself a politician, or be associated with politics. And this is not peculiar to Nigeria alone. Yes, you are right if you're one of such ladies or gentlemen, but under the new stakeholder dispensation, you're not a politician of the partisan order. You're a stakeholder political actor: a stakeholder democrat.

We've been running a partisan political order that makes egocentric abuse of power and excessive personal gains rather than selfless service the magnetic allures of politics. Stakeholder politics comes with a new political order that will consign partisan politics to the backwater of our democratic experience. Stakeholder groups and assemblies will replace political parties while stakeholder democrats and members of stakeholder assemblies, who will be called '*assemblists*', will replace party politicians.

The borrowed but wrongly-applied system of executive president, executive governor, and executive chairman with super powers of the political gods to unilaterally do and undo will give way to a modified presidential system consisting of six-member Council of Presidents, a prime minister, and a deputy prime minister at the federal level; three-member Council of Governors, a premier, and a deputy premier at the state level; and two or three-member Committee of Chairmen at the local government level.

Bicameral legislature will be operated at the federal and state levels while the legislature at the LGA level will continue to be unicameral but cease to operate as a merged entity of the legislature and the executive. The LGA Legislature will thus consist of only the councillors, with one of them elected as the speaker, while the LGA Executive Council will consist of the chairman, one or two vice chairmen, and possibly experts to be appointed as technical advisers.

5.3 Economic Ideology

Economic ideology of stakeholderism rests on 'small' government with optimal government spending that is buoyed by private sector-driven economy, business-friendly environments, economic liberalism, welfare capitalism, free and fair enterprise, and cushioned with supports for social enterprises and public-private partnerships. From the point of view of the economy, stakeholder government will essentially be a centre-right pro-business government. Big government will yield space for small government with small and efficient public spending supported by huge private sector spending from different conventional and innovative sources. Big

government implies big public spending, and big public spending attracts big political and economic opportunists who benefit in a big way from continuous accumulation of big debts that burden and mortgage present and future generations of citizens.

Stakeholderism does not align with extreme versions of capitalism, socialism, or communism. As a stakeholder economy, everyone will be entitled to free and fair enterprise in a way that will not constitute an encumbrance on the security, welfare, human rights, and socio-economic interests of others or jeopardize societal peace and development. There is a need to strike a balance between the rights and entitlements of different groups of stakeholders. Life must be made increasingly abundant for the common man but not at the full expense of entrepreneurs and productive individuals. Entrepreneurs and business-savvy people will continue to have access to opportunities to produce goods and services and generate revenue. Businessmen and businesswomen will deserve their profits, employees will deserve their wages, while easy-going, vulnerable, and poor people will have access to welfare opportunities as much as possible. Society stands to progress vertically if human creativity is provided the necessary enabling environments to be unleashed by talented entrepreneurs, wealth creators, and innovators on equitable terms without being checkmated with unnecessary demands for equality from those who cannot productively and efficiently turn things around.

A serious economy that aspires to be wealthy should not unduly muzzle the creative geniuses, enthusiastic initiatives, and productive ventures of capitalists and other well-endowed enterprising individuals in an effort to dispense equality to the people. Giving relatively too little advantage to enterprising diligent fellows will make them under-perform and under-achieve whereas giving relatively too much to ignorant and lazy laid-back persons will lead to wastages and frittering away of scarce resources. In any case, neither of the two extremes is beneficial to the common good and progress of the society. It is like giving the elephant and the ant equal portions of food.

Giving optimal advantage to all individuals and groups with focus on efficiency, freedom, fairness, and equity, rather than equality, will be the watchword of our free and fair enterprise system. The greedy strong ones will not be allowed to unduly over-maximize their advantages in a way that minimizes almost to naught those of the helpless weak. The lowly-motivated weak ones will equally not be allowed to unduly acquire resources that will not be utilized and end up as colossal wastes.

5.4 Social Ideology

Social ideology of stakeholderism is not a static one-size-fits-all framework. It is dynamically predicated on the spectrum of social liberalism and social conservatism depending on the issue involved.

Social liberalism will be applied to freedom of movement, freedom of association, freedom of expression and the press, freedom of belief, freedom of religion and worship, as well as other positive freedoms, rights, and values geared towards human and societal development without encroaching on those of other individuals and groups.

Social protection and empowerment will be provided for the poor, unemployed, *speciabies*, and other members of vulnerable groups within the framework of social welfarism. Social welfare policies and practices by government and businesses will be encouraged, deployed, and supported towards delivering free and compulsory universal basic education, mandatory universal health coverage, and other human development services. Doing these may be costly but not doing them will be costlier.

“The children of the poor you failed to train will never let your children have peace.” – Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

Social conservatism will be applied to unethical, socially unacceptable, and destructive behaviours such as terrorism, racism, ethnocentrism, cultism, same-sex relations, corrupt practices, criminal acts, and others. The human rights of all individuals and groups can only be guaranteed to the extent that those rights do not infringe on the rights of others. It is in keeping with the concept of a stakeholder society guided not by extreme liberty but by legal, moral, and socio-cultural values of right conduct.

CHAPTER 6

CORE VALUES

“The future of our nation Nigeria and indeed Africa is hinged upon our affirmation and irrevocable commitment to the Word of God as the only reliable foundation for maximizing our personal and national well-being.” – Yakubu Gowon

6.0 Introduction

Core values are like a body of water that the fish treasures. The fish will always gravitate towards available body of water even when it finds itself on land. As a society of human beings, created in the Image of God and empowered by the Spirit of God, our core values must basically be in alignment with the Word of God. Irrespective of challenges that may manifest in the march towards the realization of our vision, mission, goal, objectives, philosophies, and ideologies, the stakeholder system cherishes the following as its core values:

1. Human rights, fairness, equity, justice, and freedom
2. Meritocracy
3. Unity in diversity
4. Integrity
5. Transparency and accountability
6. Frugality, effectiveness, and efficiency
7. Dignity of labour
8. Patriotism and selfless service
9. Productivity, self-reliance, and minimal dependence
10. Peace, security, and welfare

With the above core values in mind, no matter how far and strenuous the journey towards our breakthrough is, every little step taken and every little milestone achieved remind stakeholders, as people of faith, that the future is pregnant with goodness. That is why you will hear a sizeable proportion of them declaring: *“It is well!” ... “E go better!” ... “O ga di mma!”*

6.1 Human Rights, Fairness, Equity, Justice, and Freedom

The stakeholder system broadly subscribes to Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. It also subscribes to the fundamental human rights enshrined in Chapter IV of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As Amended). It recognizes the rights of the human person, fairness, equity, social justice, personal liberty, and the need to always respect the Constitution and strictly adhere to the rule of law. It believes in free and fair enterprise as well as free and fair world for individuals, corporate bodies, and other groups.

For many years, women, young persons, *speciable persons*, non-members of political parties, and other groups have largely been excluded from public leadership and governance. There is a need for a fairer system to remedy the prevailing democratic and socio-economic inequities. This explains why the stakeholder system proposes the establishment of Equity Group of Assemblies whose responsibilities will cover all major areas of equity while working with and through the existing Federal Character Commission. Under the new dispensation, this commission will be renamed Equity Commission in view of the fact that the system is determined to focus not just on state, geo-political, and ethnic equities but also on gender, generation, religion, *speciability*, and other equity considerations.

The Equity Group and the Federal Character Commission will work together to ensure, among others, the attainment and maintenance of equity in public elections, appointments, and infrastructures. For instance, based on demographic statistics of the population, they can push for allocation of certain minimum percentages of public posts to women, young persons, and *speciables*. Under stakeholder democracy, there will be focus on assurance of both equity and merit with allowance for necessary trade-offs as situations demand. As expected, where equity and merit conflict within the Equity Group, equity will be of first order importance while merit will be of the second order. However, within the Sectoral Group, merit will be of first order importance while equity will be of the second order.

In general, human rights, fairness, equity, justice, and freedom will hold sway in all areas of governance in a way that resources are optimally utilized to create and improve wealth, welfare, peace, and socio-political harmony. Equality in its various ramifications will also be pursued as far as possible. Equality before the law and equality of protection under the law are not negotiable and should be held sacrosanct. There should be no sacred cows among leaders and among followers. Leadership should be seen as a call to service and not an opportunity to become an untouchable god or a separate institution in the face of the law, morality, and ethics. The controversial immunity clause that shields Mr. President, Mr. Governor, and their deputies from prosecution while in office should be expunged from our Constitution to demonstrate the spirit of equality. Immunity clause in the Constitution may have good intentions in terms of making the politically-exposed persons to focus on governance but, unfortunately, it has provided excessive protection to them and has grossly been abused. It should therefore be dispensed with.

While giving equality its utmost respect particularly concerning rights to life, justice, freedom, and dignity of the human person, it should be stated however that, in some unavoidable circumstances where it may be argued that all fingers are not equal, equality may be difficult to justify in the practical scheme of things. You cannot and must not, in the name of equality, repeatedly give an elephant and an ant equal portions of food. Otherwise, the elephant will get starved and die of hunger while the ant will have excessively too much to eat and store, leading to wastages, inefficiency, and loss of resources. In such circumstances, equity rather than equality will be the watchword.

6.2 Meritocracy

Some may observe that the proposed stakeholder democracy has some trappings of technocracy. Yes, it partly does, with reference to its emphasis on relevant knowledge, competence, and experience as major criteria for membership of sectoral assemblies which will be part of government. But in view of its other aspects that are not technocratic, one can describe it as a meritocracy which is broader in scope than a technocracy. Noting that there are also technocrats even among politicians who participate in government under the party system, the difference lies in the fact that such technocrats and other participants have allegiance or linkages with their political parties rather than with their professional groups.

We need to take our governance system away from the corridor of partisanship to another corridor that hinges more on merit while allowing other desirable parameters such as equity. Under the stakeholder system, merit and equity will go hand in hand in terms of election and appointment to public posts and other matters. There will be assurance of merit on one hand and equity on the other hand, with room for necessary compromises. As stated in the previous section, should there exist any conflict between equity and merit within the Sectoral Group, merit will be of first order importance while equity will be of the second order. But within the Equity Group, equity will be of first order importance while merit will be of the second order.

It is clear that, under the current party system, appointments that are supposed to be based on merit are sometimes not made based on merit. The practice of appointing persons into public offices to handle complex, dynamic, and sensitive issues about which they have little or no knowledge, competence, experience, or even interest and leaving them to learn on the job is a colossal misapplication and waste of abundant human resources that abound in the society. How can we be running a system that always encourages politically-savvy but technically unsuitable persons to get a job, begin to learn on the job, and end up wasting time and other resources while struggling to catch up with the rest of the world that are already on the move?

One would readily agree that, for some public positions, candidates do not have to be subject-matter experts. For such positions, it is sufficient and acceptable that the knowledge, experiences, and competences acquired by candidates are general in nature and not specifically relevant to the position to be filled. However, there are other public positions that require knowledge, experiences, and competences that are specific and relevant to the position. For such positions, we cannot continue putting round pegs in square holes, square pegs in round holes, and expect to get the best results that will position us to compete favourably in the comity of nations. We know very well that a stakeholder, say a journalist, not being a lawyer, is a round peg in a square hole as attorney-general but she is naturally a round peg in a round hole as cabinet minister / cabinet commissioner of information. Similarly, an engineer, excepting biomedical engineer, with no pedigree in the health sector, is a square peg in a round hole as cabinet minister / cabinet commissioner of health but he is naturally a square peg in a square hole as cabinet minister / cabinet commissioner of power or works and housing.

Misplaced responsibilities and misplaced resources often create problems. The right people must be saddled with the right responsibilities and the right resources to achieve the right results. The right power must be placed in the hands of the right people who would do the right thing to the right people in the right place at the right time and in the right way.

Viewed from another perspective, concerned patriots have always expressed dissatisfaction with the way influential persons, people at the helm of affairs, and others presently or previously in government or other connected cycles get lavishly decorated with national honours simply on account of positions they occupy or occupied rather than pure merit. Our current system automatically and un-meritoriously honours persons with the following:

- Grand Commander of the Federal Republic (GCFR)
- Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON)
- Commander of the Federal Republic (CFR)
- Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON)
- Officer of the Federal Republic (OFR)
- Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON)
- Member of the Federal Republic (MFR)
- Member of the Order of the Niger (MON)

Under the stakeholder system, honours will be targeted at people who have demonstrated remarkable integrity, patriotism, sacrifice, and other positive values irrespective of their positions in the society. We are talking, for instance, of individuals who return destiny-changing sums of money forgotten in their cabs, individuals who contribute significantly towards emancipation of the poor and advancement of the society, as well as security personnel who refuse to collect mouth-watering bribes from bandits, armed robbers, kidnappers, smugglers, or other unscrupulous persons.

The national honours listed above will be amended as shown below:

- Grand Champion of the People’s Republic (GCPR)
- Grand Champion of the Order of Naija (GCON)
- Champion of the People’s Republic (CPR)
- Champion of the Order of Naija (CON)
- Officer of the People’s Republic (OPR)
- Officer of the Order of Naija (OON)
- Member of the People’s Republic (MPR)
- Member of the Order of Naija (MON)

6.3 Unity in Diversity

Stakeholderism values diversity of ethnicities, languages, and cultures; diversity of religions and beliefs; diversity of professions, vocations, occupations, and interests; diversity of perspectives and opinions; and all other forms of diversity that align with common sense, moral ethics, and the divine order of things. It does not compromise on societal norms and values in the name of welcoming diversity. With these diversities, it also values unity among and between the various groups and subgroups, as well as unity of purpose at the national, state, and LGA levels.

Unity of purpose will however be difficult to achieve in any sector of the economy where spirits and acts of disunity operate among stakeholders. The health sector, being a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder sector, is one of the sectors that is usually faced with challenges of inter-professional rivalries that need to be resolved for the sake of unity and progress. Non-physicians in the health sector must beware of what I call ‘medicophobia’ – an extreme fear, dislike, or disapproval of medical doctors and their professional, leadership, or other interests in the health sector. Medical doctors, on their own part, must beware of ‘medicoism’ – an excessive support for medical doctors and the medical profession against other professionals and professions in the health sector. The rule of the game of team work in the health sector should be anchored on mutual respect, mutual trust, and mutual tolerance. We must all learn to allow some breathing space for one another for the purpose of sectoral unity, effective leadership, successful team management, good working relationships, and mutual benefits. Similarly, stakeholders like civil / structural engineers, architects, estate surveyors and valuers, and other professionals in the built environment sector, whose interests are inclined to being in conflict, must also allow progressive spirits and deeds of unity to prevail in their sector.

In terms of geo-ethnic politics, stakeholders hold the unity of the country sacrosanct. We do not celebrate demagogues and rabble-rousers who are problem generators rather than solution providers. We believe that we are stronger and better together than going our separate ways. We also believe that there should be a mutual agreement not on the question of whether or not we want to remain together as a federation, but how to restructure and govern the federation in a truly federal, democratic, united, equitable, peaceful, progressive, and sustainable way.

In the search for restructuring, stakeholders will not pretend about, wish away, or take undue advantage of the plurality of our society's ethnicity and religion. We fully recognize that, by divine arrangement, differences are part of our co-existence, and that we are not and cannot all be the same or behave in the same way. This was the thinking of our great independence leaders as one of them sometime stated that:

“Here in Northern Nigeria, we have people of many different races, tribes, and religions who are knit together to common history, common interest, and common ideas; the things that unite us are stronger than the things that divide us.” – Sir Ahmadu Bello

Even though the true picture of unity painted by the Sardauna of Sokoto in the past has been disfigured by latter-day politicians, the stakeholder system believes that it can undergo successful renaissance not just in the north but in the country as a whole. The system intends to manage our plurality by prescribing formation of Geo-ethnicity Assembly and Religion Assembly which are to be operated as united collaborative fronts for geographic / ethnic and religious equities respectively.

In order to achieve the desired unity against the background of diversity, mutual tolerance is important. Tolerating each other with all sense of reciprocity requires mutual recognition of our diversities, mutual understanding, mutual love, mutual respect, and mutual trust. We must avoid exchange of negative vibes and energies between us as members of different religions and different ethnic nationalities, and between us as indigenes and non-indigenes. If we are in the palace of a king, it is appropriate and wise for us to honour and not insult the king and his people. If we are in

the Vatican, it is appropriate and wise for us to reverence and not despise the pope and the Catholic Church. Once our differences are mutually and tolerably taken for what they simply are, peaceful co-existence and unity in diversity will reign supreme.

6.4 Integrity

Integrity is associated with probity, honesty, morality, ethics, rectitude, truthfulness, uprightness, and other forms of virtue, correctness, and goodness in human behaviour. All these are attributes that we can all relate with irrespective of differences in our religious beliefs. We can, from the perspectives of both the religious and the unreligious, simply look at this important core value as righteousness. It can come from religion, culture, individual choice, or other sources. Indeed, we have socio-cultural, religious, and moral standards but many of our leaders do not follow them. Unfortunately, unlike in the olden days, society no longer sufficiently queries unethical behaviours such as corruption that has become a ‘cankermouth’ in our norm. It is the practical lull in these values among leaders, public office holders, and some members of our society that paves the way for the impunity that goes with corruption and other vices. There is a need for greater self-discipline, behaviour-change communications, and re-awakening of our norms and values that place high premium on honesty, discipline, purity, diligence, meritorious success, and other forms of right conduct rather than pursuit of ill-gotten wealth and other iniquities. Mechanisms for reward and sanction put in place to encourage people towards ethical practices and to discourage them from unethical practices respectively will be strengthened and enforced.

Advocating for integrity in public affairs has nothing to do with any insinuation of moralism. We believe that no human person should be considered as crooked and completely condemned, especially because our omniscient and omnipotent God can straighten any crooked place, smoothen any rough way, and use any vessel to achieve His benevolent purpose. We also believe that there is none that is absolutely righteous in the sight of God, but there are many who are righteous by human standards and can be seen as paragons of virtue. Majority of the people who are considered to be humanly righteous often shy away from contesting for elective positions or participating in leadership and governance. Some people hold the belief that men of God and ‘decent’ people should not move near politics because politics is considered to be a dirty game. They find it exciting to read or listen to divine words of wisdom which say that:

“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.” (Prov. 29:2)

And that:

“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.” (Prov. 14:34)

But they do not find it exciting to make themselves available for positions of authority. How then can the righteous be in authority when the righteous are refusing to demand for positions of authority? How can the people rejoice when the righteous are not in authority? And how can righteousness exalt their nation when they are not bringing righteousness to bear on public affairs? The good thing is that, unlike the dominant world order, the stakeholder system believes in and

values morality in politics, business, and all human affairs. Therefore, let the honest and truthful ones come out to turn things around. Let them honour divine words of wisdom, heed the great call, and come forward to help us with their moral rectitude:

"Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong; they are the ones to attain felicity." (Q.3:104)

Advanced countries of the world do not joke with corrupt and immoral behaviours especially on the part of their leaders and public office holders. Economic and financial corruptions are not handled with levity in most Asian countries. Western societies and systems seriously object to public acts that offend ethical standards so much that the offender or the accused normally resigns from his or her post before being pronounced guilty. People of the west and other regions of the world may not be as religious as we are – and they do not claim to be – but they wittingly or unwittingly follow the dictates of the Scriptures, in more ways of public life than one. They live Christianity without necessarily being Christians, they live Islam without necessarily being Muslims, and they live other religious codes of ethics without necessarily being worshippers of those religions. Salutations to great peoples of national virtue, even though they are also not getting things right on issues such as human rights, extreme liberty, ethnic equity, racial justice, self-interest, and global peace because of double standards. Those are issues for another context and another day.

Although Section 15 (5) of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution (As Amended) states that: "The state shall abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power", not enough is being done to accomplish this lofty dream. This is one of the beautiful constitutional provisions that the stakeholder system will love to implement and will never throw away in the name of constitutional reforms. Stakeholderism believes in zero tolerance against indiscipline, corruption, and other vices. However, instead of wasting time, resources, and energy to catch old treasury thieves based on scanty evidences only to release them on very cheap plea-bargaining terms, the system will ensure that those who had stolen public funds in times past and before the new dispensation are forgiven and are encouraged to repatriate the funds from the various safe havens back to Nigeria where it will be useful to the economy. Arrangements will be made to ensure that, henceforth, corruption routes are effectively blocked and when new treasury thieves emerge, funds involved are refunded and appropriate punishments are dispensed in accordance with the law.

6.5 Transparency and Accountability

Transparency and accountability are very important in public governance. Transparency serves as a useful way of ensuring that fairness, equity, and justice, which we all value, are seen to be done and that, in all things and at all times, the right things are not only being done but are seen to be done. Transparency and accountability constitute a fruitful friendly alliance with integrity. Except for security, strategic, or other excusable purposes, it stands to reason that if you as a government, public institution, or public officer are doing what is right, you will not hesitate to bring it to the open and give necessary and timely account of your actions. Conversely, if you are doing the wrong thing openly or secretly, you will struggle to cover up the details of your actions and be evasive in giving stewardship account to the public.

Isn't it a problem of poor integrity, poor transparency, and poor accountability that, despite availability of oil meters and other useful technologies, Nigeria cannot give accurate account of daily oil production and sales figures, not to mention the many barrels that are constantly being stolen by those who are supposed to safeguard the crude? Isn't it also a problem of poor integrity, poor transparency, and poor accountability that, as a major crude oil producing country, Nigeria has been turned to a shameless importer of refined oil products by some greedy guardians who deliberately ran down our refineries under the cloak of darkness while siphoning huge public funds annually for bogus turn-around maintenance and creating corrupt oil subsidy economy for themselves and their cronies?

Let us take a further look at this public revenue issue using the backdrop of Section 162 (1) of the Constitution which provides that "The Federation shall maintain a special account to be called 'the Federation Account' into which shall be paid all revenues collected by the Government of the Federation, except the proceeds from the personal income tax of the personnel of the armed forces of the Federation, the Nigeria Police Force, the Ministry or department of government charged with responsibility for Foreign Affairs and the residents of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja." The usual practice of public agencies such as Federal Inland Revenue Service, Nigeria Customs Service, and Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (which after completion of its privatization will no longer be 100% government-owned and will therefore present a different accountability scenario) deducting costs of revenue collection at source before payment into the Federation Account is fraught with poor transparency and poor accountability, even though those agencies often claim that they have the legal backing of their enabling Acts to do so. Some of the agencies operate in unaccountable manners that make one to wonder whether or not they are a creation of the government.

It is hereby suggested that the establishment acts of all public revenue generating agencies of the federal government should be amended so that total revenues generated by any agency shall first be paid into the federation account following which the associated costs of collection will be deducted and remitted to the agency. In tandem with Medium Term Revenue Framework (MTRF) and Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) processes, all ministries, departments, agencies, and recipients of public and private funds (including loans, grants, and supports from philanthropies, foundations, and public-private partnerships) must also exhibit openness in their revenues, expenditures, and operations.

Transparency and accountability demand that all revenue generating bodies in the public sector must statutorily open their books to the legislative houses, Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation, Office of the Auditor-General for the Federation, Ministry of Budget and National Planning, Ministry of Finance, National Bureau of Statistics, Central Bank of Nigeria, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU), other relevant agencies, civil society, and interested members of the public.

In the Nordic countries (Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Iceland), where freedom of information, openness, and transparency have long been entrenched in the democratic culture, government information are accessible to the public with some exceptions. But in Nigeria, ordinary annual budget documents of many states never used to be readily available online until recently

when they had to fall in line with some mandatory requirements of Debt Management Office and credit institutions. How much get released by state governments to their local governments and how the local governments spend the funds released are always a mystery. Too many things, including contract details, are shrouded in secrecy at all levels and in all branches of government in the Nigerian public system. The Official Secrets Act (1962), which is still in force in the public service up till the time of publication of this book, is a high secretive wall of corruption shielding corruption in high and low places. With the exception of data, information, and documents that are considered classified due to their sensitive and strategic nature such as those on procurement bids, intelligence, defence, and security, there is a need to bring down the antiquated wall of the 1962 Official Secrets Act in favour of the 2011 Freedom of Information Act, as may be amended. **Transparency must be the rule while secrecy can only be an exception.**

Based on the core values of transparency and accountability, openness in conducting public affairs will be pursued with **few** justifiable exceptions. Efforts will, for instance, be made to institutionalize open governance, open debating, open voting, open planning, open budgeting, open spending, and open accounting. The business of the various assemblies and organs of government will be conducted with high degree of openness. The vibrant Nigerian media will be an essential and resourceful partner in the practice and institutionalization of the culture of openness. Modern information and communication technology resources will be officially deployed to support openness in public governance.

6.6 Frugality, Effectiveness, and Efficiency

It is a known fact that the cost of running government in Nigeria is outrageous in absolute and relative terms. Since stakeholderism involves broadening of the democratic space which in turn involves creation of more democratic platforms, institutions, or offices, some people may want to argue that by operating many stakeholder assemblies as part of governance process, establishing bicameral legislature at the state level, introducing six zonal vice presidents, one prime minister with a deputy prime minister, three zonal deputy governors, one premier with a deputy premier, and two / three LGA vice chairmen, the costs of running government under stakeholder democracy will escalate the already high costs. However, stakeholder government will be guided, not by the familiar prodigal financing system, but by culture of frugality with a view to totally avoiding or drastically reducing existing and potential cost escalations.

Knowing that there is so much work to be done, it should be pointed out that a broadened stakeholder democracy involving many benevolent participants and leaders will actually create the needed leeway at low cost compared with the prevailing mess of ‘cash and carry politics’ involving few cliques of money-guzzling moneybags and profit-oriented professional politicians. What we need for democracy and good governance is multitudes of selfless democrats who are not looking for personal benefits and may even sacrifice part of their resources – including time, expertise, and money – for common good. We the people do not want cabals of rulers who have been terrifying the political terrain making terrific gains out of our terrible pains.

I believe that selfless stakeholders and servant leaders even among the party politicians and their sponsors will have no problem with the culture of frugality. Why will anyone have problem with

prudence, simplicity, waste avoidance, cost reduction, and other cautious approaches to public expenditure apart from those who are looking for spoils of office after political victory? Frugality is a desirable practice under any system and it should not be a difficult thing to follow under stakeholderism. The new corps of stakeholder servant leaders are not expected to engage in 'cash and carry' game of party politics like party politicians and their sponsors who invest so much in the business of power with the hope of heavy profiteering when they get into power.

With the culture of frugality, the practice of jumbo salaries, allowances, welfare, and retirement packages for public office holders will perish with party politics and get buried with party politics. This will encourage servant leaders who genuinely want to contribute while discouraging political opportunists looking for easy enrichment from public office. As a matter of fact, legislators will be on part-time service which used to be the practice during the first republic. And that has implication for further significant reductions in remunerations, allowances, living, administrative, and operational costs.

Can you imagine, even with full-time legislative service, what will simply happen if salaries and other benefits of public leaders, especially legislators, are brought down across the board to, say, 25% of the current jumbo values? The public treasury will make 75% cost savings on that alone; the reduced take-home pays of the leaders will still not be low compared with those of their counterparts in many other countries of the world; and the new pays will be acceptable to those who are ready to serve as a sacrifice and not for pecuniary benefits.

Better still, can you imagine that, under part-time legislative arrangement, some of the legislators may decide to work as truly selfless patriots by delivering gratuitous services? All that will be expected from the public system are allowances to cover their operational costs.

Nigeria has enormous resources which have been considered to be a curse rather than a blessing due to the wasteful application of those resources. Resource-constrained but rich countries of the world such as Japan and South Korea have been using meagre resources to achieve mega results but the leaders of our dear country have been using mega resources to achieve meagre results. In addition to being frugal, we need to be effective and efficient in managing and utilizing resources towards achieving desired results by doing the right things, doing things right, and doing more with little.

The above and other necessary strategies will be deployed to bring down the high running costs of public governance. These will include, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Blocking of revenue and expenditure loopholes;
- (b) Enforcement of measures for transparency and accountability;
- (c) Assurance of effectiveness and efficiency in government budgeting and expenditure;
- (d) Sensitivity to high costs of procuring works, goods, and services;
- (e) Adoption and use of inexpensive locally-produced / locally-assembled products such as government vehicles;
- (f) Promotion of consumer preference for locally-produced goods and services;
- (g) Promotion of private initiatives, public-private partnerships, and social entrepreneurships;

- (h) Improved coordination of private sector supports, loans, grants, and development assistance to avoid duplication of funding and improve effectiveness and efficiency of public finance;
- (i) Strengthening of waste management and maintenance cultures; and
- (j) Implementation of monitoring and evaluation system.

6.7 Dignity of Labour

Dignity of labour flows from human dignity that we discussed earlier. We need to take care of our labour force in terms of financial and non-financial incentives and rewards. This should be done in a dignified manner that encourages them towards better performance and discourages them from corruption and from succumbing to the push factors and pull factors of brain drain. Even those categories of workers that are not susceptible to being poached for off-shore services should be adequately taken care of. Salaries, allowances, and working conditions of teachers, policemen, and other workers should be considered as matters for priority improvement. Take-home pays of workers should be able to take them home. Industries should strive to guarantee their workers' welfare, occupational health, and safety while protecting them against occupational hazards. Every individual worker and group of workers deserve not only the dignity of their human person but also the dignity of their labour at all times.

It is worrisome that members of the labour force, particularly the hewers of wood and drawers of water in the private sector, sometimes get laid off with little or no severance package while their employers and business executives operate as fat cats and political leaders award themselves multiple portions of post-service packages. Where is the dignity of labour?

As the labour market is fully saturated, we must quickly reform our education curriculum and system to produce more entrepreneurs, employers of labour, self-employed technical / vocational practitioners, enterprising professionals, and talented achievers to forestall further increase in the large army of job hunters. We must encourage our youths who have the capacity and passion to become job providers and wealth creators rather than job seekers and salary earners. And we must provide necessary enabling environments for all interested persons and groups to conceptualize initiatives, start, grow, excel, and succeed.

6.8 Patriotism and Selfless Service

Patriotism is expected from all citizens of the country, whether they are leaders or followers, or they are Nigerians by birth, by registration, or by naturalization. The manner of patriotism we are talking about is one that is devoid of extreme nationalism, racism, xenophobia, and other narrow-minded attitudes to others. At the level of leadership, the type of leaders that we need at all times, and particularly at this state of our federation, are people who, in addition to other good qualities, have the blood of patriotism running in their veins. We need good patriotic leaders who will make good laws, good policies, and good plans for good governance not just as matters of good intentions but of good actions.

Leadership in itself connotes service but service does not necessarily connote leadership, especially positional leadership. We can render service to the people without necessarily being leaders in terms of occupying positions of authority. We need patriotic followers, who are also leaders in their own rights, as much as we need patriotic leaders. We need leaders who will relate with the people and function as servants of the people. Even though the leaders are expected to position themselves as humble servants of the people, the people in their own humility will see them from the mirror image of their minds as leaders and they will give them utmost respect, honour, and followership. These servant leaders are not like many of the crop of leaders we have always had who behave like masters but the people in their simplicity see them from the mirror image of their minds as slaves: slaves of dishonesty, greed, kleptomania, and other negativities. We need selfless servants who desire to serve others in leadership and not masters who desire to master the art of dominating others in leadership. In the context of selflessly serving the people as a servant and not as a master or a slave, I align with that great ex-president of the United States who stated that:

"As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy." – Abraham Lincoln

Resting on the philosophical pivot of servant leadership, stakeholderism values service-oriented leadership as against leadership for the sake of exercising power, or being in position of power, or the glitz and glamour of office. It values leadership for selfless service as against leadership that uses power for lucrative self-interests. It demystifies public office by shifting emphasis from tyrannical power and primitive acquisition of wealth to servant leadership and selfless service to the people. It totally rejects the selfish practice of political leaders fixing lavish gratuities and other retirement benefits for themselves for short-tenured services while ordinary workers, who had put in far more years, months, weeks, days, and man-hours of service, are left to struggle, wait, and possibly die before collecting paltry lump sums and monthly pensions whose values progressively get weakened under the burden of inflation.

Servant leadership presupposes that there is a master whose interest the servant is expected to serve. It gives relatively no room for choice between good governance and bad governance because the leader is a servant whose masters want positive results at a given time. The people, who are the masters, need at the very least security and welfare and their servant leaders work towards providing just that. The servants may occupy the centre-stage of pre-eminence but the masters must have the power to influence what the servant does, when he does it, where he does it, and how he does it. Stakeholder groups and assemblies will play vital roles on behalf of the masters in discharging these oversight responsibilities. They will act as a new layer of people's representatives and servants in government even though they will only be in government but not in office. Of course, all of us cannot be in office at the same time.

If public office holders, who will be in government and in office, are to be made to truly serve the people as servants of the people, the leashes on their collars must be held by the people. Since all the people cannot be in government at the same time, a realistic option is that the leashes should be held on behalf of the people by the stakeholder groups and assemblies and not by the president, the governor, or some other power mongers who themselves are the main subjects of servanthood that are not supposed to be allowed to be a judge in their own cause.

The question then arises: Can we really get true servant leaders under the party system? I mean servant leaders who have no choice between good governance that their masters want and bad governance that the masters abhor. I mean servant leaders whose masters are not some political warlords operating behind the scenes. Yes, it is possible to get some servant leaders among our party politicians but the overbearing status, latitude, and influence of the partisan servants under the existing partisan political order have always put the masters at a disadvantageous position of weakness. In order to achieve better performance and better results from servant leadership, it will be better to have servant leaders who will serve under the new platforms and new rules of stakeholderism rather than those of the party system. Our yearnings are for servant leaders whose masters are the people as owners of the country's sovereignty.

Against this background, we have a duty to choose between leadership and rulership as far as our public affair is concerned. We have a duty to choose between servant leaders and master rulers. We have a duty to choose between ourselves as sensible sincere stakeholders and our powerful phony politicians. We have a duty to choose between stakeholder assemblies and political parties. My people, let us choose wisely and give ourselves life in abundance!

6.9 Productivity, Self-Reliance, and Minimal Dependence

Nigeria's economy is a consumer economy. Unbridled consumption habits nurtured by high tastes and preferences for foreign goods that can and are being produced locally have voraciously been consuming our local capacity for production, exportation, job creation, wealth creation, monetary stability, fiscal stability, and economic development. It leaves a sour taste in one's mouth to note that even our economic resources and revenues are treated as national cakes for scrambling and immediate consumption rather than for sustainable production and planned consumption. The way excess crude revenues resulting from booms in oil export prices and / or outputs used to be shared and spent on spurious projects rather than development projects especially before the advent of the Sovereign Wealth Fund is still fresh and painful in our memories. Such practices have inflicted injuries to the psyche of progressive and development-conscious Nigerians and the injuries have refused to heal.

Consumption is not like a plague that must be avoided. Just as lack of production is dangerous for an economy, moving away from consumption also has its own demand and supply challenges. Consumption needs production as much as production needs consumption. If goods and services are produced, but people do not have the purchasing power or preference for them, there will be no consumption and it will have negative consequences on sustainability of production. The Nigerian economy must truly move from consumption to production, but the complete truth is that our economy must move from non-productive consumption to consumptive production. In the spirit of self-reliance and economic survival, we must produce what we use, use what we produce, and export to other countries as long as it is realistic, effective, and efficient to do so. We must replicate and improve our exploits in music, movie, ministrations, and other top-ranking sectors that are achieving local and global successes. Much as we are disposed to looking inward towards self-reliance, we will continue to minimally depend on importation of products and services that we presently cannot produce in adequate quantity or quality or those that we do not have

comparative advantage to produce until the situation changes through new knowledge, joint ventures, technology transfer, or other factors. No nation is 100% self-sufficient and self-reliant.

Local production of goods and services must be prioritized. With arable land resources and climate benevolence at our advantage, we need to deploy modern technologies to strengthen local production of agricultural commodities, re-strategize, and re-focus our agricultural practices to agricultural value addition, food processing, exportation, and provision of raw materials for local industries. Industrialized countries never threw away agriculture. They do not downplay it the way we do. In fact, agriculture is an important part of the bedrock of industrialization. It is disheartening to observe that Nigeria has generally not been doing well in agriculture and manufacturing, as a substantial proportion of our arable land remains either uncultivated or sub-optimally cultivated. Of course, it goes without saying that the poor state of electricity supply has been contributing in no small measure to the low level of industrial capacity utilization and growth thus worsening the worrisome state of unemployment in the country. Besides, there exist unpleasant situations whereby local manufacturers of products cry under the burden of multiple taxation while importers of the same products smile on the cushion of big import duty waivers. In addition, the political will and financial commitment by all levels of government towards capital project initiation, execution, and sustainability are grossly inadequate.

As a major crude oil producing country, Nigeria has no reason not to make all its oil refineries functional and not to develop petrochemical industries for local production and export of products and raw materials for plastics, fertilizers, pesticides, drugs, soaps, detergents, cosmetics, solar power panels, wind turbines, and many other useful products, while paying attention to local content development. We also need to systematize exploration and exploitation of solid minerals and other natural resources that abound all over the country, revamp our steel industry, and develop other industries for production of goods that we have resources to produce. Moreover, taking advantage of our vast population and market size, the number of jobs that will be created will be unimaginable if we resuscitate our textile industry and provide enabling environments for local production and export of other goods. We salute the private sector for the level of investments in industries which have filled some part of the yawning gaps.

Our traditional heritage also constitutes a treasure for productivity, self-reliance, and minimal dependence. It is an act of wisdom for a people not to under-value, rubbish, or throw away their own valuable traditional heritage even though they can be open to and, where necessary, copy and benefit from other people's superior way of doing some things. For so long, we have gradually been losing our herbal and other traditional medicine practices but the Chinese, the Indians, and other peoples of Asia, Europe, and America have successfully and profitably been rediscovering, developing, and integrating their own practices with orthodox healthcare practices. Whatever is good, safe, and useful for the society in traditional knowledge, traditional science, traditional technology, and traditional practices will be developed, refined, rebranded, and repackaged for use in our enlightened self-interest and self-reliance.

Within the framework of productivity, self-reliance, and minimal dependence, the special consideration for encouragement, support, and protection of local production of goods will also be applied to services. It will be difficult to justify preferential public procurement of the services of foreign firms and professionals when there are equally qualified, capable, and willing experts

locally? If there are qualified programmers, software engineers, and other ICT experts in the country, and there indeed are, there should be no justification for off-the-shelf public procurement of imported software packages or hiring of foreign ICT consultants. Neither should there be any justification to shop for expatriate engineers, architects, accountants, doctors, management consultants, or other foreign consultants in the midst of qualified local counterparts unless it is for the purpose of collaboration or to fill some gaps. Patronizing foreign services brings short-term quick-fix advantages which undermine local services and do not translate to quick-wins in the long-term.

We adopt the above protectionism positions with full sense of patriotism, responsibility, and enlightened self-interest but with full awareness of the principles of comparative advantage, globalization, digitalization, and international mobility of labour. To this end, and as a realistic win-win option, corporate arrangements for onshore and offshore mutual production of goods and services through international joint ventures, partnerships, collaborations, and consortiums between indigenous and foreign companies will be encouraged and supported. Due process must be followed in all circumstances.

When it comes to public financing, we need to soft-pedal the culture of excessive borrowing except in exceptional circumstances and in areas of productive need. Instead of borrowing and throwing money at anything and everything, government should allow the private sector to play bigger roles which typically come with lower levels of corruption and higher levels of efficiency, creativity, innovation, and corporate governance. Enabling laws, policies, opportunities, and environments for private sector participation and funding involving Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and large-scale industries should be strengthened or created where they are non-existent. Indigenous investments, foreign direct investments (FDIs), public-private partnerships (PPPs), equity financing, leasing, capital market, crowd funding, and other innovative means of injecting funds into the economy without recourse to public loans and credits should be encouraged. Nigeria and Africa must do away with over-dependence on needless foreign loans and lines of credit, especially those with high interest rates and / or stringent conditionalities that dig holes on our economic independence and political sovereignty.

6.10 Peace, Security, and Welfare

Good governance thrives in an atmosphere of peace and security. Peaceful co-existence among the different ethnic nationalities as well as security of lives, properties, and investments are crucial to the achievement and sustenance of development. Nigerians are not happy with the general unsatisfactory level of peace and security in the country. They want to live in harmony, in security, and in prosperity with their fellow human beings. They are dissatisfied with self-centred socio-political and economic intrigues that have been bedeviling the peace and security of the country. If all of us as stakeholders, with the support of government, make effort to be at peace with one another, there will be peace in the land. This peace must take root and grow in leaps and bounds between and among ethnic groups, religious groups, other groups, regions, nations, and races.

Much as the people know that they also have a big role to play in cooperatively providing intelligence and working towards peace and security, they expect that government – which should

have monopoly of violence – should be able to quench all fires of violence and insecurity. As a preventive measure, inter-agency collaborations and information sharing between entities such as Nigeria Immigration Service, Nigeria Customs Service, National Commission for Coordination and Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, and National Drug Law Enforcement Agency should be strengthened towards effective control of influx of dangerous foreigners, weapons, substances, and narcotics into the country. This will facilitate the defence and security efforts of other security agencies such as Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Nigeria Police Force, and the Military. Beyond making revenue for the country, and for the more important purposes of human security and international trade facilitation and control, there is no reason why the Nigeria Customs Service should not be repositioned and reorientated under Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investment or Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs, as against Finance, Budget, and National Planning.

As far as maintenance of security is concerned, it is noteworthy that the practice of allocating and disbursing huge sums of money to leaders of the executive and other public officials as monthly security vote funds which are normally at their personal disposal and discretion, unaccounted for, and hardly ever fully spent on security is not transparent, not effective, not efficient, and should be stopped.

Like security, socio-economic welfare is a crucial element of public policy. Security and welfare are so important that even the 1999 Constitution, as undemocratic as it is, prescribes that “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government.” However, it is disappointing to observe, in general terms, that while Chapter II of the 1999 Constitution (As Amended) grants the people some fundamental rights including security and welfare, Chapter I Section 6 (6) (c) of the same Constitution takes away those people-oriented rights by rendering them to be non-justiciable.

It is a well-known fact that the poor, the elderly, pensioners, unemployed, and vulnerable members of the population are usually protected by welfare-sensitive countries under necessary social welfare / social security systems that provide safety nets for food, health, shelter, and other essential needs. The stakeholder system supports the need for pro-poor welfare programmes by both public and private sectors. It also encourages and supports social entrepreneurs who have the competence, capacity, and interest to run social enterprises that can deliver moderately-priced goods and services to low-income members of the population particularly in the areas of health, education, housing, and transport.

A government that values and cares for its own people, especially the poor and the vulnerable, will consider welfare as a matter of serious action and not of mere intention. Welfare may appear in the short run not to be an efficient thing to do for this group, but its outcome and impact on human development will manifest in the medium and long run respectively. Welfare is the main course the poor and the vulnerable really desire at the dining table. Give them their little share of the main course, and they would not be bothered about the starters and the desserts that the rich elites indulge themselves in. For all we care to understand and appreciate, the people at the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder deserve their main courses in form of basic necessities of life.

CHAPTER 7

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

“Eneke the bird says that since men have learned to shoot without missing, he has learned to fly without perching.”
– Chinua Achebe

7.0 Introduction

Many people have identified leadership failure as the bane of Nigeria’s development. Others put it down to followership problem while some others expressed the opinion that corruption is the major problem. I believe and I want to submit that bad leadership, bad followership, corruption, nepotism, and other ills are truly part of the diseases plaguing our society, but organizational problem deserves special mention and attention because it is generally overlooked or downplayed. Organizational problem is a fundamental problem. The way we organize our governance systems, structures, institutions, and power relations needs to be queried.

Our system of government is not organized to accommodate the ethnic diversity and regional aspirations of the country, our electoral system is not organized to be sensitive to the people’s high poverty and low literacy levels, our structures and institutions of governance are not organized for broad participation and efficient coordination, and our Constitution gives too much power to the leaders leaving only little room for checks and balances. We need to get more properly organized through establishment, strengthening, and empowerment of functional systems, structures, and institutions of governance. With strong and sustainable systems, structures, and institutions in place, as it obtains in developed countries of the world, challenges of leadership, followership, corruption, and other factors that may succeed in sticking out their ugly heads in the democratic field will not take sufficient root before they are uprooted.

We as a developing country have a lot of good things to copy from the developed countries. We all as humans also have a lot to copy from lower creatures like ants, termites, honeybees, social wasps, and naked mole-rats. These sets of creatures live in organized socially-cohesive communities and do not operate their colonies in a haphazard manner. If organization, collectivism, specialization, division of labour, and leadership thrive among these lower colleagues of ours, it brings a huge challenge for us as Homo sapiens who are supposed to be higher and wiser and are expected to do better.

This is why the stakeholder system is recommending reorganization of our public governance systems and structures through introduction of stakeholder groups and assemblies as new governance entities and restructuring of existing governance entities. The mutually-reinforcing guiding principles of stakeholderism presented below will serve as pillars for the establishment and operation of the groups, assemblies, and other governance entities described in Chapter 8 and Chapter 9.

The principles are as follows:

1. Democratic flexibility
2. 'De-partisanization' of politics, leadership, and governance
3. Corporatization of politics, leadership, and governance
4. Collectivity and connectivity of actions
5. Inclusivity of participation
6. Exclusivity of participation
7. Equality of stakes
8. Proportionality of stakes
9. Plurality of assemblies and assembly membership
10. Singularity of voting and electoral rights
11. Independence and non-interference of governance entities
12. Interdependence and intervention of governance entities
13. Separation of powers
14. Diffusion of powers
15. Rotation of powers
16. Devolution of powers and resources

7.1 Democratic Flexibility

As far as public governance is concerned, democracy is the way to go. However, democracy is not a one-size-fits-all matter. There is a model of democracy that suits each society. The question then is: What model of democracy is appropriate for Nigeria? Before we respond to this poser, let us first agree that it is certainly not compulsory that we must practise party democracy for our system of government to pass the test of democracy. People have expressed the view that the party democracy we have been practising is a government of the politicians by the politicians for the politicians. Is that not what it generally is?

Democracy, especially at the early stage of its development like ours, is like a journey on a road that is full of bends, bumps, potholes, and jams necessitating occasional slowing down and possibly taking a detour. As good and desirable as it is, democracy is a means to an end and not the end in itself. The desired end of democracy is good governance, even though democracy on its own does not automatically guarantee good governance. Good governance must not be sacrificed for any type of democracy that would not function well for the people. What is the benefit of a democracy without good governance? What is the long-term benefit of good governance that comes and goes because it is not sustainable?

It is better to recalibrate our democracy in a way that aligns with local realities and people's aspirations, and is geared towards building progressive society and sustaining good governance. It is high time we got flexible and adjust our democracy to achieve a robust system capable of strengthening institutions for moving the society forward. It does not matter if the system we come up with is a non-partisan system that is not in tune with conventional practices elsewhere. Even if all the countries of the world continue to practise party democracy and it is working well for them, to the extent that majority of our politicians have made it to grossly under-perform in Nigeria, we can do something different. We can choose to be different because we are different and we undergo different challenges. We can choose to be flexible and operationalize democracy in a different way

because we are democratic freethinkers and not *'zombies'*. We cannot afford to be democratically rigid. Neither can we afford to listen to arguments and excuses of naysayers that what we are proposing has never been done in Europe, America, or elsewhere.

When Nollywood had to leave celluloid in the cinemas for home video which aligned well with the **technical resources, preferences**, family setting, lifestyle, culture, and socio-economic status of majority of our people, Nollywood was proved right and has become a big global success story, even though people in some other parts of the world were, and are still, enjoying going to movie theatres. When Nigeria abandoned its ill-functioning and inaccessible landline telephone system and adopted the Global System for Mobile (GSM) communications, telephone lines became far more functional and commonplace even in the rural areas that they practically drove away landlines from our telecoms market, although landlines were, and are still, being used in a number of countries including China, USA, and Germany. The new type of democracy that we need to practise will make party democracy go underground in Nigeria even if party democracy is still the norm elsewhere.

Nigeria needs to re-design the internal workings of its political, economic, and democratic systems, change its leadership recruitment process, restructure its governance systems, and reform its Constitution and legal frameworks to accommodate its national and sub-national realities. Nigeria needs to change its ways, reposition itself to be on top of its game, and move as fast as possible to catch up with the rest of the world that are already on the move. Indeed, the rest of the world have since been on the move while Nigeria and many parts of Africa are still crawling and taking baby steps in weak governance and under-development. We definitely cannot continue to play the same old game with little or no outcomes and expect to win. It takes a mind of democratic flexibility to abandon age-long and familiar democratic practices for new ones.

Guided among others by the principle of democratic flexibility, stakeholderism proposes a number of changes to the way we practise democracy in the country even though it also accommodates some conventional practices that are considered to be good.

7.2 'De-partisanization' of Politics, Leadership, and Governance

'De-partisanization' of politics, leadership, and governance is simply the removal of partisanship or abolition of political parties from politics, public leadership, and public governance. A possible alternative to political party platform is independent candidacy which is an option in some countries. However, as a non-partisan or zero-party system, stakeholderism is not built on independent candidacy which is free of the shenanigans of the party system but is too individualistic and bereft of the positive dynamics and benefits of a progressive group. The individualism of independent candidacy, which gives little or no room for tapping the benefits of group dynamics, consultation, and control, does not align with the stakeholder system.

Under stakeholderism, the current constitutional requirement of membership of political party for election into public posts will no longer be necessary and will therefore be expunged. We cannot remove politics from issues, leadership, and governance but we can remove political parties from issues, leadership, and governance. What is the essence of political parties that are essentially the

same in terms of political, economic, and social ideologies, that have consistently failed to discharge obligations of social contracts, and that bring no serious and sincere value proposition to move the society forward?

As a way out of the party system, the alternatives to be created under the stakeholder democratic system to replace political parties will give opportunities for election, representation, appointment, and participation of stakeholders through platforms for sectors of interest, young persons, women, *speciabies*, geo-ethnicity, and religion. These platforms will be referred to as stakeholder groups and assemblies as mentioned earlier and as defined in Section 2.3. As we shall see in Chapter 8, the assemblies that are being proposed will fall under the categories of Equity Group of Assemblies, Sectoral Group of Assemblies, or Special Group of Assemblies.

7.3 Corporatization of Politics, Leadership, and Governance

Corporatization seeks to reduce extreme politicking by repositioning Nigeria not just as a political entity but also as a corporate entity whose corporate existence, ownership, technical control, socio-economic management, welfare, and security deserve to be protected. On this premise, there will be a Council of Presidents which will be like the Board of Directors of the entity called Nigeria, with the president as the board chairperson, while there will also be a prime minister who will be like the Chief Executive Officer of the corporate entity. A similar arrangement will hold at the state level concerning the Council of Governors vis-à-vis the premier.

The stakeholder system proposes, through the principle of corporatization, a restructuring of the polity away from excessive political considerations towards social, economic, and technical considerations in a way that strengthens corporate governance in public governance. The system believes that the proposed stakeholder groups and assemblies are more amenable to corporate governance than political parties. The groups and assemblies will be actively involved in public governance affairs including, but not limited to, framing and shaping of public discourses, facilitating and making inputs into executive and legislative businesses, nominating eligible persons for public elections and appointments, and recommending the removal of such persons from office due to sub-optimal performance or other legitimate reasons.

Unlike political parties that are typically mutually exclusive with one another and work at cross-purposes, the respective groups, assemblies, and other entities will work towards common causes as co-stakeholders, enjoy their respective rights and responsibilities, apply relevant rules and regulations, and follow prescribed processes and procedures in the development and execution of public policies, plans, programmes, and projects aimed at delivering sustainable solutions for good governance. Within this framework, government institutions will be supervised and governed by their respective boards in line with the goals and guidelines of the organization and not in line with the whims and caprices of political leaders and their associates. Membership of governing boards of agencies, commissions, councils, and other bodies will comprise more of representatives of relevant institutions and stakeholder assemblies, and less of government officials who do the bidding of powerful political and bureaucratic leaders.

What the society needs is not powerful leaders and cabals that are usually few and self-centred but all interested and capable stakeholders working together harmoniously and selflessly under the direction and coordination of servant leaders who are guided by the rule of law to legislate and execute initiatives for people's security, welfare, and human development. Society needs strong systems and structures with strong legal frameworks that have the capacity to restrain arbitrary and destructive use of power by public officers. Society does not need kingly and queenly presidents, governors, chairmen, and such other autocratic leaders in its democratic arena. Neither does the society need power-hungry princes and princesses in its civil space.

7.4 Collectivity and Connectivity of Actions

Collectivity connotes the need for team spirit and team approach to leading and managing our public affairs, and team connotes the need for consultations. The exercise of public power, leadership, and governance should be discharged as a collective responsibility sustained by collective wisdom and not as a personalized enterprise that is self-conceited. It should be a matter of multi-stakeholder joint responsibility: a matter of multi-stakeholder shared responsibility.

Public power can be held in trust and exercised on behalf of the people who are the real owners of the power. An occupant of a public office does not have an inalienable right to personalize the power of the office. To that extent, public power is de-personalized under stakeholderism and is conceptualized as more of a collective engagement than a personal heritage. For instance, the practice of an executive president or executive governor, working with or without the legislature or some inner caucus to take major far-reaching decisions such as acquiring cheap or costly loans with stringent conditionalities and subscribing to lopsided agreements, treaties, and conventions without sufficient consultations and buy-in of the people is antithetical to democratic practice and also to stakeholderism. As a proactive measure, the stakeholder system proposes mandatory mechanisms that will make it extremely difficult or impossible for leaders and their associates to negotiate, finalize, and sign major bilateral or multilateral instruments without adequate need-based consultations, involvement, and approval of relevant stakeholders, assemblies, groups, and organs of government.

The problem with our democracy is that we think that we are running democracy whereas all we have had are just civilian administrations. Without consultation with experts or the public, many important affairs of state are often decided by a few powerful cliques within the ruling party, the legislature, the cabinet, and the so-called 'kitchen cabinet' which may include whoever occupies the unconstitutional position of the 'First Lady'. Such decisions get beclouded by political considerations and selfish economic gains. The powerful cliques sometimes get so powerful that they mislead the leader or render him powerless. Members of these cliques are not necessarily men and women of knowledge, wisdom, or high moral standing but men and women chosen on the basis of party politics, ethnicity, religion, nepotism, or self-interest.

Political parties are vehicles for representative democracy but they are like small passenger buses which can carry relatively few passengers to the point of democratic participation. In order to broaden citizens' participation and civic engagement in public affairs, we need to deploy a much bigger means of transportation which can accommodate more people and which the people can

trust and rely on. Stakeholder groups and assemblies provide such a means not only for collective participation but also connective participation because they, in their numbers, are like the many coaches of the democratic train moving together in the same direction.

With connectivity in stakeholders' participation, it will be easier to achieve alignment and consistency of government instruments and actions which are part of key success factors in running a government. Alignment and consistency will improve with the various assemblies working together interdependently. Alignment and consistency, on their own part, will also reduce friction and promote collectivity and connectivity of actions between relevant stakeholders. It is important to have alignment and consistency in the goals, objectives, laws, regulations, policies, plans, programmes, projects, and actions of the various entities of government. Moreover, alignment and consistency between past and present policies and interventions of the same or different governments are a matter of utmost importance.

Without alignment and consistency, it should not be a surprise to have some provisions of different laws or policies from the same or different legislatures being at variance with one another. A good example is the policy somersault between Fiscal Responsibility Act (2007) and Finance Act (2021). Like a mood swing that blows hot and then blows cold, government had – through the Fiscal Responsibility Act (2007) – restricted public borrowing to just capital investment and human development on concessional terms only to relax the restriction under the Finance Act (2021) to include borrowing for “important reforms of major national importance” either on concessional terms or at relatively low-interest rates. This has implication for increasing the latitude of government's borrowing powers and reducing the focus on fiscal discipline, debt sustainability, and economic stability.

What about a situation whereby one organ of government, with government's approval, is rightfully banning importation of some commodities to protect local industries and another organ, surprisingly with the same government's approval, is granting unnecessary and counter-productive waivers for importation of the banned commodities? We need to avoid situations like these at least as a demonstration of consistency, unity, seriousness, and sincerity of purpose.

In order to promote alignment and consistency in all ramifications, government should urgently harmonize all existing discordant laws, update or repeal outdated ones, and henceforth ensure that provisions of all existing and new laws are not in conflict with one another. The same thing applies to policies and other governance instruments and frameworks that have contradictory prescriptions.

7.5 Inclusivity of Participation

Inclusivity is about ensuring that every eligible group is carried along without leaving any one behind. It covers social, political, economic, financial, and other forms of inclusiveness especially with respect to vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalized groups without bias against any one on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity, region, religion, socio-economic status, physical or other conditions.

If we truly want to play the game of democracy as a government of the people by the people and for the people according to Abraham Lincoln, we should stop this partisan game of few powerful players with many weak spectators. We should carry out reforms that will reduce the group of weak spectators and ensure that we have as many active power players as possible and not necessarily powerful players. As we know, power players are not the same as powerful players. However, we do not expect to have no spectators at all in the democratic arena simply because all eligible stakeholders are encouraged to be active players. There will always be individuals who, for personal or other reasons, will voluntarily choose to be just passive players or silent spectators. The most important thing is that people are given opportunities to belong, participate, and contribute as long as they have the required competence, capacity, and other eligibility criteria.

As a matter of economic and financial inclusion, the poor and the under-privileged will more seriously be covered under welfare programmes, while the low-income class and the middle class that needs to be resuscitated from its state of extinction will more seriously be empowered with enabling opportunities, environments, and incentives. From the socio-political angle, the principle of inclusivity will guide the formation and operation of assemblies. Governance will also be guided in general terms by the principle of inclusivity of individuals, assemblies, and groups. However, in certain specific situations, as we shall see in the next section, inclusivity will not hold.

In the spirit of inclusivity, broadened participation in governance will be pursued to incorporate young persons, women, *speciabies*, Nigerians in the Diaspora, Religion Assembly, Geo-ethnicity Assembly, as well as registered and naturalized citizens of Nigeria. Africans in the Diaspora, legally resident foreigners, foreigners with business or other legitimate interests in the country, and well-meaning friends of Nigeria from any country will also be organized in a way to contribute to governance process. These groups of persons will be organized into special assemblies to harvest their progressive opinions on selected governance issues not necessarily as statutory inputs but as useful pieces of advice towards making decisions.

The idea of including interested, eligible, and credible Nigerians who are not originally Nigerians in public governance process is not due to inadequate capacity or lack of it among Nigerians by origin. It is an inclusive principle aimed at fostering togetherness, broadening perspectives of opinions, enhancing the quality of major decisions and, where necessary, the neutrality of such decisions. I see Nigeria taking a cue from countries like USA, UK, France, and Canada where qualified persons who are not citizens by origin can be elected or appointed into public offices. I also see Nigerian communities and leaders at the sub-national levels rediscovering and reviving the old practice of supporting credible non-natives for democratic elections and appointments.

7.6 Exclusivity of Participation

Exclusivity sometimes go side by side with inclusivity. As important principles guiding actions from different perspectives, inclusivity will be the rule while exclusivity will be the exception. The fact that memberships of the Sectoral, Equity, and Special Groups of Assemblies are open to all stakeholders but are based on eligibility criteria to be set by the various assemblies carries the dimensions of both inclusivity and exclusivity. Any person is free to join an assembly but the person must be qualified to join.

Much as inclusivity in governance will be pursued, exceptions must be allowed for governance issues, policies, and decisions that require technical knowledge and experience of experts whose informed opinions and judgments must not be mixed, confused, or watered down by pedestrian and merely political views of uninformed and misinformed individuals in the name of inclusive democratic participation. Even if those that may be democratically included to participate in such discourses are in majority, the fact remains that majority may sometimes be wrong due to ignorance, lack of current knowledge, prejudices, sentiments, or some other reasons. In those cases, exclusivity will override inclusivity, albeit with sensitivities to democratic conservatism. But all is not necessarily democratically inclusive that is excellent, and all is not necessarily excellent that is democratically inclusive.

It is actually an act of extreme democracy devoid of excellence that some categories of the population, such as poor illiterates and unaware persons who are technically and financially challenged and are always manipulated by politicians, are indiscriminately given unbridled power of technical and democratic choices that have consequential implications on leadership outcomes. Faced with a high population of such persons in our society, unlike developed democracies, we need to reduce this tendency towards extreme democracy which does more harm than good to our progress. Our democratic system will benefit more if we curtail the voting powers of poor illiterates and unaware persons and enfranchise more of our vibrant literate teenagers by reducing the legal voting age from 18 to 16. It is along this line of thought, as we shall see in Chapter 8, that illiterates and unaware persons will be accommodated as members only within the lower chambers of assemblies under the Equity Group but will not be eligible for membership of both lower and upper chambers of assemblies under the Sectoral Group and the Special Group.

Uncontrolled universal adult suffrage is really counter-productive in a society like ours that has high level of illiteracy, high level of poverty, high level of corruption, high level of ethno-religious sentiments, and high level of predator politics. While universal suffrage will continue to be applicable in general elections relating to the Equity Wing of Government, as far as the Sectoral Wing is concerned, we must take away from the claws and the jaws of predator politicians the preys that the masses of the electorate have been turned to if we want to transform and move forward.

On the path towards curtailing the franchise of the identified category of people, I share the belief of the 35th president of the United States, viz:

“The ignorance of one voter in a democracy impairs the security of all.” – John F. Kennedy

It is also very instructive here to note the thoughts of another great leader of the great democracy, who said that:

“Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education.” – Franklin D. Roosevelt

In order to enrich and make our democracy successful, participation in elections, debates, and decisions especially on technical and complex matters of public interest will be limited according

to the relevance of acquired knowledge, information, competences, or experiences of an individual or group. Illiterates and semi-illiterates definitely have so much to contribute to public discourse from the perspectives of their backgrounds and personal wisdom but they are resourcefully limited on highly specialized technical and complex matters of state and will be excluded accordingly. Individuals who do not have the mental capacity to understand an issue – but are always being taken advantage of for peanuts by politicians – have no business debating or voting on the issue. Their franchise will be subdued in public interest.

Exclusivity is not only with respect to illiteracy and lack of awareness of issues. There are some educated elites who constitute liabilities to common good and are clogs in the wheel of societal progress based on their professional, vocational, occupational, business, or other vested interests. In situations whereby deliberate steps need to be taken to safeguard some important common interests, such individuals, assemblies, or groups may need to be excluded. This is to protect, support, and advance highly favoured interests against unfavourable interests of the society. For example, when committees are being formed, policies or laws are being formulated, and decisions are being taken in relation to local production, and it is estimated that importers may frustrate progress, importers in Trade Sub-Assembly and in other assemblies can be excluded in favour of Industry Assembly. In particular, the principle of exclusivity will be deployed to exclude individuals and assemblies that are associated with importation from participating in decisions relating to waivers since their preferences will naturally be pro-importation and pro-waiver even for goods that can and are being produced locally. This is in view of the importance of local production to sustainable products availability, self-reliance, minimal dependence, and the overall economic, strategic, and security interests of the country.

7.7 Equality of Stakes

While inclusivity and exclusivity deal with the question of whether or not some stakeholders are to be included or excluded for certain strategic reasons, equality and proportionality are respectively concerned with sameness or relativity of representation that the various included stakeholders should have.

Equality believes that all stakeholders and stakeholder groups and assemblies are the same and should be treated equally in terms of representation in governance affairs. It welcomes all shades and perspectives of participation, opinions, and democratic choices – technical or pedestrian, robust or parochial, popular or unpopular, progressive or conservative, etc. Within the framework of equality, all assemblies have general roles to play on matters that require general debate or decision, and so will be treated as equal partners and equal contributors. Similarly, all eligible voters are equal in the realm of elections.

7.8 Proportionality of Stakes

Equality of stakes will generally apply as described above and to other issues and situations to be determined by stakeholders. However, on account of differences in stakes and knowledge of different assemblies concerning different specific issues, all assemblies will not be considered as

equal partners on all issues. To this end, a primary assembly will be designated as the lead assembly on a specific issue in view of the relevance, importance, and size of its stake as well as its technical, professional, or specialized knowledge concerning the issue. Other relevant assemblies will play primary, secondary, or tertiary roles accordingly. The level of involvement of relevant assemblies in joint sessions concerning specific issues will be determined based on the principle of proportionality.

Proportionality also implies that all members of an assembly will not be considered as equal members of the assembly. Membership of each assembly will be categorized into upper chamber and lower chamber based on knowledge, competence, and capacity to grasp and contribute meaningfully to the remit of the assembly and to general discourse on governance.

7.9 Plurality of Assemblies and Assembly Membership

Plurality has to do with the existence of many stakeholder assemblies just as we have many political parties in multi-party democracies. All assemblies will simultaneously participate in governance and be part of the power equation not as rivals but as collaborators. Of course, assemblies are inclined to being healthy collaborators and cooperative co-creators unlike political parties that are inclined to being unhealthy rivals.

Plurality also entails stakeholders' rights to plural membership of assemblies. The rule that will guide assembly membership will be based on the principle of plurality such that a stakeholder can register and belong to more than one assembly simultaneously, provided that he or she fulfils eligibility criteria set by each of the assemblies. This is unlike what obtains under our party system whereby an individual can only be a registered member of one political party at a time.

The advantage of plural membership of assemblies is that it creates opportunities for fruitful cross-fertilization of ideas in the various assemblies. *Assemblists* will be able to contribute their expertise and experience towards enhancing the quality of debates in all the assemblies that they belong to. They will also have opportunities to be appointed into public posts through any of their assemblies.

It is a gross under-utilization of human resources to limit individuals, especially those who have multiplicity of knowledge, experience, and interests, to only one assembly. Indeed, many people have, during the course of their education, career, business, and life's experiences, acquired useful multi-sectoral information that could be brought to bear on governance in more than one sector. You will agree with me that a young research fellow in an agricultural research institute who is also a successful farmer is a potential stakeholder in Research and Development Assembly, Agriculture Assembly, and Young Persons Assembly. He will be an asset to the three assemblies, and more, if he chooses to be a member of any of them. Similarly, a *speciabile* female graduate of Law who is now into any or a combination of fashion, music, movie, comedy, or some other form of entertainment is a potential stakeholder in Justice Assembly, Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy Assembly, *Speciability* Assembly, and Women Assembly. She will be an asset to the four assemblies, and more, if she chooses to be a member of any of them.

Plurality of assembly membership will however be limited to a manageable maximum of five (5) assemblies or any maximum number to be determined from time to time by appropriate authorities. It is not mandatory for an *assemblist* to fully utilize the maximum number of assemblies allowed. An *assemblist* can actually decide, for whatever reason(s), to register with only one assembly of her choice even though she is eligible for membership of up to 5. An *assemblist* can also, of his own volition, change or withdraw his membership of an assembly. Changes and withdrawals will be allowed at designated times when registers / records of assemblies will be reviewed and updated.

7.10 Singularity of Voting and Electoral Rights in Assemblies

Singularity relates to stakeholders' voting and electoral rights in assemblies. Without prejudice to the rights of stakeholders to register and belong to a maximum of five assemblies simultaneously, such rights will not be automatically extended to rights to vote or be voted for in all the assemblies that they belong to. For example, *assemblists* who enjoy their rights to plural membership of assemblies will be allowed to vote in only one of the assemblies that they belong to during each of the elections into legislative and executive positions, and during polls to determine policy / legislative directions or to resolve national questions. In addition, such *assemblists* with plurality of assembly memberships will be allowed to contest for not more than one elective post at the same time. Contestants who do not win in an election for a particular post will be allowed to vie for another elective post in the same or another assembly in which they are eligible.

By and large, the principle of singularity will hold sway especially on related matters of general concern and application as far as voting and electoral rights in assemblies are concerned. Considerations may be given to suppress the principle of singularity concerning voting on unrelated specific issues of the various assemblies and in elections that are being conducted for different posts and / or at different times. In those cases, plural *assemblists* will enjoy plural voting rights in all the different assemblies they belong to, subject to limitation(s) of any exemption granted.

7.11 Independence and Non-Interference of Governance Entities

This principle fully aligns with standard expectations and requirements under the current system concerning independence and non-interference of the branches of government, the police, and bodies such as the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Office of the Auditor-General for the Federation, and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

Assemblies and groups as independent entities are supposed to operate independently of one another. Other governance entities are also independent and are supposed to operate independently of one another. Assemblies and groups are not designed to be subjected to the president, prime minister, governor, premier, chairman, or other functionaries in terms of their operations. In the same way, assemblies and groups are not supposed to interfere with the works of public office holders and proper functioning of government.

Within their sectors, branches, and levels of government, leaders will play their normal leadership roles unhindered and subordinates will discharge their expected roles unhindered. All entities are independent and there should be non-interference of an entity's operations by another entity. Independence and non-interference of all governance entities, all branches of government, and all levels of government are at the heart of the stakeholder system. However, as we can see in the next section, the principle of independence and non-interference is not to be taken in absolute terms. As independent operators, reckless drivers of our public system may drive recklessly and veer off the road, but mechanisms must be in place to prevent them from driving the system and the people into a ditch.

7.12 Interdependence and Intervention of Governance Entities

The principle of interdependence allows, encourages, and sometimes mandates governance entities to work consultatively, cooperatively, and collaboratively with one another to create synergy and produce the best possible results. All entities are independent but they will need to work with each other rather than working in silos. Without taking anything away from their independence, assemblies, groups, and other governance entities will operate interdependently to ensure good governance. This can be done through joint assembly forums, joint group forums, or consultative meetings between entities. All entities stand to benefit from working interdependently as they take advantage of sharing information, experiences, lessons, and best practices.

Governance entities will be expected to establish linkages, interact, and exchange necessary information, notwithstanding the fact that they belong to different assemblies, groups, or wings of government. For example, the president, vice presidents, council ministers, members of the Federal House of Representatives, Presidential Council, Federal Executive Council, Federal House of Representatives, Equity Group of Assemblies, and other entities within the Equity Wing are expected to work interdependently towards achievement of common objectives with the prime minister, deputy prime minister, cabinet ministers, members of the Federal House of Technocrats, Federal Cabinet, Federal House of Technocrats, Sectoral Group of Assemblies, and other entities within the Sectoral Wing, and vice versa. Similarly, at the state level, the premier, deputy premier, cabinet commissioners, members of the State House of Technocrats, State Cabinet, State House of Technocrats, Sectoral Group of Assemblies, and other entities within the Sectoral Wing are expected to work interdependently towards achievement of common objectives with the governor, deputy governors, council commissioners, members of the State House of Representatives, Governorship Council, State Executive Council, State House of Representatives, Equity Group of Assemblies, and other entities within the Equity Wing, and vice versa.

Each entity will be subjected to oversight responsibilities by other entities, and get cautioned on wrong plans before it is too late. Even though assemblies and groups are not supposed to interfere with normal independent discharge of executive, legislative, and judicial functions by public office holders, they will be empowered to make inputs to the workings of government, put a check on public office holders where necessary, and intervene on behalf of the people when decisions and actions are being taken in breach of the Constitution or good governance. If independence and non-interference are taken as the rule, then interdependence and intervention are the exception.

Taken together, the principles of independence and interdependence imply that every governance entity is interdependently independent.

Under the current system, neither opposition parties nor members of the public can successfully intervene in how the ruling party runs the government. They can lament, lambast, and lampoon; they can mount pressure by mobilizing the media and the people with occasional results; and they can give useful advice which may not be taken. At the end of the day, our usually strong leaders with their ruling parties often take advantage of our weak institutions to push through and get away with bad policies, bad leadership, and bad governance until when they are voted out. But a lot of damage would have been done before they are pushed out of power.

Under stakeholderism, a governance entity or public functionary will not be allowed to go too far with bad recommendations, bad leadership, and bad governance before being called to order because entities will be statutorily empowered to use as applicable the carrot of independence and non-interference and the stick of interdependence and intervention in each other's affairs. When an entity is taking wrong steps through any act of omission or commission that could affect the entire system, other entities will not be expected to fold their arms and do nothing all in the name of independence and non-interference. A little hole dug by a little governance entity on its little corner of the public boat will allow water to gush in and make the boat and everybody to sink. An entity can be called to order to do the right thing following majority decisions to that effect in at least two-thirds of the total number of relevant assemblies (with any possible fraction being approximated to the nearest whole number). On the whole, the task of interdependence and intervention will not be done in an arbitrary manner. It will be based on rules of engagement to be developed by stakeholders.

7.13 Separation of Powers

Stakeholderism subscribes to the familiar principle of separation of powers between the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary to ensure checks and balances in the discharge of power by the three branches of government. Having regard to the imperfect realities of the independence of the judiciary, and in the true spirit of separation of powers, the judiciary will be repositioned to be fully autonomous administratively, financially, and in all ramifications. This will include modalities for appointment of judicial officers and disbursement of budgetary funds to the judiciary at the sub-national level. Similarly, the legislature at all levels will enjoy full autonomy within the framework of separation of powers. The extant system whereby the executive and the legislature are fused at the LGA level will be reformed under stakeholderism through separation of the roles of the chairman as the head of the executive and head of the LGA from those of the LGA speaker who will be the head of the legislature elected from among the councillors as members of the legislature.

7.14 Diffusion of Powers

Beyond the familiar separation of powers between the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary especially at the federal and state levels of government, it is also important to horizontally de-

concentrate and distribute some powers away from concentrated centres and focal points of power to accommodate more players. In other words, concentrated powers should be unbundled and dispersed from public institutions and public office holders in a way that broadens the democratic power space and accommodates more stakeholders.

It is unfortunate that the framers of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution made occupants of leadership positions constitutionally too domineering on the people by vesting too much powers in the offices or institutions of government. Corruption thrives in the country partly because of excessive supreme powers constitutionally given to the executive, legislative, and judiciary leaders which they always misuse. This objectionable concentration of powers in leadership positions has become a magnet that always naturally attracts scores of power-hungry politicians rather than service-oriented leaders to scramble in a do-or-die fashion to contest for a single position. We need to reorganize power and structures of governance in a diffused rather than concentrated form so as to further strengthen checks and balances in public governance. We recognize that diffusion of powers will be a disagreeable idea to power-mongers but it will be readily acceptable to patriots who just want to serve the society.

The need to diffuse power becomes more obvious when one examines the normal day-to-day schedule of a typical public office holder – especially president, governors, and ministers. The powers, responsibilities, and privileges of those offices are so enormous and suffocating that delivering on core mandates in an effective and efficient manner often becomes an uphill task. In particular, the offices of the president and the governor are saddled with too much powers and too much responsibilities including the responsibility to serve as the chairman of so many bodies that they really do not have time for, the power to appoint into office, and the usually-unchecked misappropriated power to remove sensitive and strategic public functionaries. Similarly, presiding officers, committee chairmen, and other legislators enjoy compensations and privileges that over-compensate for the services they render, thus making genuine motive to serve the public secondary to opportunity to make money.

Considering the fact that an individual, no matter how strong and competent, faces limitation of strength, knowledge, time, and other factors, reducing the powers, responsibilities, and privileges of public office holders, and sharing them with other qualified stakeholders will reduce the magnetic allure of the offices, alleviate the pressure of work attached to the offices, enhance participation in governance, increase ownership of government policies, and yield better, faster, and more efficient results. Let us therefore do away with the current system of having one all-powerful, all-knowing, all-doing president, governor, chairman, and other systems of one-head-with-many-caps whereby, after getting into office, they get swollen-headed and become autocratic malevolent masters as against the democratic benevolent servants expected by the people.

On this note, the stakeholder system, through the principle of diffusion of powers, presents a restructuring agenda that diffuses some powers away from concentrated centres and focal points of power, whittles down the absolute powers of political leaders, and proposes new power sharing arrangements as follows:

- i. Establishment of stakeholder groups and assemblies as forums for broad participation in leadership and governance

- ii. Operation of bicameral legislature at the state level
- iii. Establishment of the posts of six vice presidents at the federal level, three deputy governors at the state level, and two / three vice chairmen at the local government area (LGA) level.
- iv. Introduction of the post of prime minister (to be assisted by a deputy prime minister) who will share some powers with the president as co-heads of government at the federal level
- v. Introduction of the post of premier (to be assisted by a deputy premier) who will share some powers with the governor as co-heads of government at the state level
- vi. Appointment of council minister and cabinet minister for each federal ministry with their associated responsibilities, as well as council commissioner and cabinet commissioner for each state ministry with their respective responsibilities. While council ministers / council commissioners are members of the Federal / State Executive Council under the leadership of the president / governor, cabinet ministers / cabinet commissioners are members of the Federal / State Cabinet under the leadership of the prime minister / premier.
- vii. Creation of the post of accountant-general of the federal government distinct from the post of accountant-general of the federation
- viii. Creation of the post of auditor-general for the federal government distinct from the post of auditor-general for the federation
- ix. Separation of the post of minister of justice from that of attorney-general at the federal level and the post of commissioner of justice from that of attorney-general at the state level
- x. Unbundling of the post of Central Bank governor (who currently doubles as board chairman and chief executive officer) to create two separate posts of board chairman and managing director (who may or may not necessarily be referred to as governor)
- xi. Unbundling of the post of executive chairman of Federal Inland Revenue Service (who currently doubles as board chairman and chief executive officer) to create two separate posts of board chairman and managing director
- xii. Reconstitution of boards where supervising ministers also serve as board chairman such as the Nigeria Customs Service Board of which the minister of finance is the chairman and the Civil Defence, Correctional, Fire, and Immigration Services Board (CDCFIB) of which the minister of interior is the chairman
- xiii. In the not-impossible event of any reversal of the yet-to-be-finalized NNPC Limited privatization arrangement, the board chairman should thereafter not be the minister or minister of state for petroleum resources as it was before the 'privatization' of the corporation

- xiv. Unbundling of other public posts, powers, and responsibilities as well as reconstitution of other governing boards, councils, commissions, or bodies that concentrate too much power in the hand of one individual or few individuals

Diffusing power to more leaders and participants at each level will go a long way in restraining potential dictatorships, broadening democratic participation, improving equity, reducing tension, and creating sense of belonging and unity among stakeholders.

7.15 Rotation of Powers

Having put the levers of executive powers at each level of government in more than one hand with the executive power holders operating as equals, there is a need for one of the power holders to occupy the position of ‘first among equals’ without having the power of a despot. Considering the heterogeneous distribution of Nigeria’s population and the need to ensure equity and systemic transfer in power dynamics, stakeholderism believes that the office of the president and commander-in-chief should rotate among the vice presidents from the six geo-political zones of the federation, the office of the governor should rotate among the deputy governors from the three ‘senatorial’ districts of a state, and the office of the chairman should rotate among the vice chairmen from the two or three identified geographic areas of a local government area. Nigeria has a great compelling need to formalize and practise its own version of power rotation which Switzerland has institutionalized with respect to its German, French, Italian, and Romansh language regions.

Except for those who are elected to complete their predecessor’s tenure arising from death, infirmity, resignation, or other reasons, each of the six vice presidents who are members of the Council of Presidents will be entitled to a single term of six years out of which he or she will serve as president and commander-in-chief for one year. Similarly, each of the three deputy governors who are members of the Council of Governors will be entitled to a single term of six years out of which she will serve as governor for two consecutive years. And each of the two / three vice chairmen who are members of the Committee of Chairmen will be entitled to a single term of six years out of which he will serve as chairman for two consecutive years [three consecutive years in the case of LGAs with two vice chairmen].

Rotation of powers makes leaders to come to grips with the realities of the transient nature of power even while they are still in office. This and other similar principles will assist in shifting emphasis away from the mighty powers of the president, governor, and chairman at their levels of government. Rather than the leader taking unilateral decisions using supreme executive powers, emphasis will henceforth be on mutual consultation and consensus among the respective peers in the Council of Presidents, Council of Governors, and Committee of Chairmen.

7.16 Devolution of Powers and Resources

Devolution of powers is concerned with vertical dimension of power and is synonymous with inter-level decentralization with respect to the three levels of government (federal, state, and local

government). The system we currently run amounts to unitary rather than federal system. If by any means it can be called federal, it is a convoluted federalism that runs on the ‘federal might’ of the federal level. The stakeholder system supports a deliberate shift to federalism in word and deed such that government is brought closer to the people at the sub-national levels with federal government, state governments, and local governments as federating units and with special attention to constitutional strengthening of the local government level with political, administrative, and financial autonomies. This will promote grassroots and overall national development.

The local government level, as the third and an important tier of government, seems not to be reckoned with compared with the federal and state levels. If we are serious about grassroots development, we must strengthen and empower the local government level which is the closest to the people. We need to remove the LGAs from the hegemonic control of the states by making necessary changes including immediate scrapping of the State and Local Government Joint Account System. Stakeholderism has a big dream of repositioning state and LGA levels as viable tiers of government with viable economies that provide abundant life for the people. There is no reasonable reason why Nigerian LGAs, in particular, cannot be strengthened and empowered to function effectively and undertake critical projects in collaboration with the private sector instead of operating as administrative entities that mainly pay workers’ salaries.

As fiscal federalism and resource control based on mutually agreed and equitable principles of derivation are expected to flow with devolution of powers from the strong federal to the sub-national levels, the centre will be de-emphasized and appropriate authority, autonomy, obligation, and control will be given to appropriate levels of government. Government should undergo load shedding at the federal level in favour of the other federating units in line with the spirit of federalism. We need to make the centre weaker and make the states and LGAs stronger through revision of the exclusive legislative list in the Constitution and necessary adjustment of the revenue allocation formula. The recent constitutional removal of railway and electricity from the exclusive to the concurrent list was a welcome development, even though electricity was already on the concurrent list.

If more powers, resources, and revenues are devolved to the sub-national levels through further necessary revision of the exclusive list in relation to areas such as construction, alteration, and maintenance of roads, state / community policing, mines and minerals, including oil fields, oil mining, geological surveys, and natural gas, the country will witness healthy competition and rapid development at all levels. This is because devolution and resource control will activate and bring back the drive and ingenuity of operators at the sub-national levels to turn things around in a competitively healthy manner that leads to economic growth and development.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCING STAKEHOLDER GROUPS AND ASSEMBLIES AS NEW GOVERNANCE ENTITIES

“Politics is too serious a matter to be left to the politicians.” – Charles de Gaulle

8.0 Introduction

One of the challenges of the party system, as practised in Nigeria in contemporary times, is that politicians are in practical terms not answerable to their constituencies, their political parties, or any group of stakeholders. Majority of the constituency members who could demand for accountability and good governance are in deep state of poverty, ethno-religious solidarity, or ignorance of what is going on and are downgraded to look up to the politicians for crumbs as dividends of democracy. Political party machinery that could be used to check the politicians are usually in the pockets of some big-time political leaders. Legislatures that could use powers of oversight are, more often than not, in cahoots with executive leaders. Systems, structures, and institutions that could check the excesses of people in government are either not in existence or not as sufficiently strong, functional, and reliable as they should be. Politicians therefore normally have the advantage of organized political networks among themselves to take advantage of the system whereas the people are not strategically organized and coordinated to successfully and sustainably build consensus towards good governance.

The new stakeholder system, with its propositions including the network of stakeholder groups and assemblies working interdependently as platforms for elite consensus building, election, appointment, and participation in governance in collaboration with established structures of government, stands a good chance of filling the existing gaps and inadequacies of the current system. The groups and assemblies that will be established under the proposed system will be quasi-government entities that will ensure good governance on behalf of the people. They are to replace political parties but they are in many respects not like political parties. They will continue after elections to be alive and active and not go to sleep like our ruling parties or go into a coma like badly bruised and defeated opposition parties. No matter the outcome of the electoral process, groups and assemblies will continue to be relevant entities in public governance process. Unlike the current situation whereby elected and appointed public office holders are practically left alone to do whatever they like with the people's mandate until another election or appointment which they normally manipulate, the stakeholder groups and assemblies will be constitutionally positioned as important entities providing technical and oversight supports to the executive and the legislature on behalf of the people. They will actively be part of governance process in a way that they are in government but not necessarily in office. With this arrangement, crucial and urgent issues that normally get unattended to, suppressed, delayed, or discarded in the current centralized partisan legislatures and executive councils will be brought to the fore and dealt with more responsibly and expeditiously.

Operationally speaking, groups and assemblies as strong functional governance entities will be like small streams that cooperate and pull their water resources together to become a big river in

the governance system. Issues discussed and articulated in assemblies and groups that have policy and legal implications will, of necessity, feed into debates and policy / law making businesses on the floors of the relevant legislative houses and dovetail into the planning and implementation activities of the executive. Their meetings can hold virtually, physically, or in hybrid form in the relevant legislative houses, ministries, departments, or agencies across the federation or any other officially-designated venue.

In line with the principle of de-partisanization discussed in Section 7.2, assemblies will be established under three umbrella groups as mandatory parts of governance process. The three stakeholder groups to be established are as follows:

- Sectoral Group
- Equity Group
- Special Group

Stakeholders cannot join a group per se, they can only join a main assembly or a sub-assembly. It is the membership of an assembly or a sub-assembly that confers on them membership of the group under which the assembly is classified. Stakeholders can hold assembly memberships across different groups as long as they are eligible for membership and they fulfil other necessary criteria. Individuals with common characteristics such as gender, *speciability*, youngness, or common professional, vocational, occupational, sectoral, or other interests can collaborate along those characteristics to establish assemblies within stipulated guidelines or join existing ones.

In order to ensure that merit is not compromised in favour of extreme equity and equality, each assembly can be divided into upper chamber and lower chamber. The upper chamber of each assembly will consist of members who must be literate and resourceful enough to have requisite knowledge and understanding of general issues of governance and specific issues of concern to the assembly. Members of the upper chamber will preferably, but not necessarily, be at least bachelors / HND graduates, certified professionals, or equivalents. They may also be persons who are not certificated up to graduate or professional level but are recognized and officially accepted by the assembly concerned as having the necessary knowledge, experience, competence, capacity, interest, affiliation, and character that can be deployed for public service. On the other hand, the lower chamber of each assembly will accommodate other members who are literate up to (plus or minus) secondary school certificate level or its equivalent, with each case being determined by assemblies on its own merit. Illiterates and semi-illiterates will not be eligible for membership of both upper and lower chambers of the assemblies under the Sectoral Group and the Special Group. For purpose of equitable participation, they will be accommodated as members only in the lower chambers of the assemblies under the Equity Group. They will however not be denied rights to vote in general elections of the Equity Group which will be conducted within the framework of universal suffrage. Specific rules around the foregoing general guide will be determined by specific assemblies.

There will be no strict limits as to the number of groups and assemblies that can be established but it is important that the groups and assemblies are relevant and their number should be kept at a manageable level. Each group / assembly will set its operational guidelines including criteria for membership, meeting arrangements, electoral / voting rights, voting system, internal democracy,

mechanisms for power sharing, division into upper and lower chambers and, where applicable, structuring of the assembly into sub-assemblies. Each group / assembly will also elect officials it deems necessary to manage its affairs at the various levels for a specified tenure. Groups and assemblies will be recognized, rewarded, and honoured on account of equity, effectiveness, efficiency, integrity, transparency, accountability, and other progressive measures. They will on the other hand be admonished and, where necessary, sanctioned for poor performances on those factors.

8.1 Sectoral Group of Assemblies

Sectoral Group consists of component groups which in turn consist of assemblies whose primary focus will be on substantive issues of the various sectors of the economy. Interested and eligible stakeholders can register at the state or LGA level for membership of any of the assemblies under the Sectoral Group. Membership of each sectoral assembly is open to all eligible adult Nigerians (by birth, by registration, and by naturalization). It will be based, not on party affiliation, but on relevant professional, vocational, or occupational affiliations, or demonstration of relevant and useful knowledge, competences, experiences, and interests. Unlike the Equity Group, general elections under the Sectoral Group will not be based on universal suffrage. They will be limited to registered members of the respective sectoral assemblies.

Twelve (12) component groups that have been identified with their associated assemblies, which will be operationalized at all levels (subject to necessary modifications especially at the sub-national levels), are as follows:

Education, Research, Youth, and Sports Development Group

- Education Assembly
- Research and Development Assembly
- Students and Youth Development Assembly
- Sports Development Assembly

Health and Human Affairs Group

- Health Assembly
- Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development Assembly
- Women Affairs Assembly

Food, Agriculture, Water, and Environment Group

- Food Assembly
- Agriculture Assembly
- Water Resources Assembly
- Environment Assembly

Infrastructure Group

- Power Assembly
- Works and Housing Assembly
- Transport and Marine Resources Assembly
- Aviation Assembly
- FCT, Special, and Rural Development Assembly

Manufacturing, Commerce, and Services Group

- Steel Development Assembly
- Industry Assembly
- Business, Trade, and Investment Assembly
- Professional Services Assembly
- Vocational and Occupational Services Assembly

Natural Resources Group

- Oil and Gas Assembly
- Petrochemicals Assembly
- Solid Minerals Development Assembly
- Other Natural Resources Assembly

Information, Communication, Science and Technology Group

- Information Assembly
- Communication and Digital Economy Assembly
- Science, Technology, and Innovation Assembly

Justice, Foreign Affairs, and Diaspora Group

- Justice Assembly
- Foreign Affairs Assembly
- Diaspora Nigeria Assembly [consisting of Nigerians in the diaspora, including those with dual citizenship and those who are citizens of foreign countries but have full or partial Nigerian parentage]

Socio-Political, Cultural, and Civil Affairs Group

- Social and Political Affairs Assembly
- Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy Assembly
- Tourism Assembly
- Labour and Employment Assembly
- Civil Society Assembly

Economic Management Group

- Public Policy and Strategy Assembly
- Plan and Budget Assembly
- Finance Assembly
- Organized Private Sector Assembly

Defence, Peace, and Security Group

- Defence Assembly
- Police Affairs Assembly
- Security and Internal Affairs Assembly

Implementation Group

- Public Service Assembly
- Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Assembly
- General Public Interest Assembly [comprising sub-assemblies like Ethics and Values that will recommend nominees for the post of Minister / Commissioner of Ethics and Values who will henceforth coordinate important issues and agencies relating to equity / federal character, merit, transparency, accountability, anti-corruption, national orientation, good governance, and other areas that constitute significant public challenge]

As time goes on, more component groups and assemblies may be created with necessary modifications to meet new situations and new requirements of stakeholders. States and LGAs are at liberty to modify the number and grouping of assemblies recommended above. Even though issues such as Foreign Affairs and Defence fall within the purview of federal responsibilities, Foreign Affairs Assembly and Defence Assembly will also exist at the sub-national levels for the purpose of harnessing their useful bottom-up contributions when necessary.

8.2 Equity Group of Assemblies

Equity Group of Assemblies consists of assemblies responsible for protection and balancing of interests of groups and coordination of equity issues in public governance. Like other groups, this group is not meant for prejudiced promotion of any particular religious, regional, ethnic, demographic, or other interests which are considered unethical and antithetical to the spirit of stakeholderism. As a controlled forum like others, this group of assemblies is designed to improve inclusion of marginalized groups in governance, enhance equitable distribution of public infrastructures, reconcile potential tensions, and redirect energies towards tolerance, equity, justice, unity, and peace. Members of the assemblies under this group, who are often marginalized, used, and dumped certainly have significant contributions to make to public governance. They are qualified for participation in governance not only on account of equity but also on account of merit. For instance, the women among them, like men, have what it takes to govern and the youths among them are not too young to govern.

Interested and eligible stakeholders can register at the LGA or ward level for membership of any of the assemblies under the Equity Group except Geo-ethnicity Assembly and Religion Assembly which are limited to the ward level. Similar to the Sectoral Group, membership of an assembly under this group is open to all eligible adult Nigerians (by birth, by registration, and by naturalization). It will be based on association with the identity represented by the assembly and not with political parties. Unlike the Sectoral Group, general elections under the Equity Group will be based on universal suffrage.

Assemblies under the Equity Group, which will exist at all levels, are as follows:

- Women Assembly
- Young Persons Assembly
- Geo-ethnicity Assembly
- Religion Assembly
- *Speciability* Assembly

At the moment, Equity Group is not sub-divided into component groups. As time goes on, the group may be broken down into component groups consisting of assemblies as is the case with Sectoral Group. More assemblies may also be created with necessary modifications to meet new situations and new requirements of stakeholders. For example, in the not-impossible future event that women become inequitably over-represented in public affairs such as in post-war era, the need may arise at the right time to replace Women Assembly with Gender Assembly consisting of not only women but also men, or alternatively, to establish Gender Group under the umbrella Equity Group to accommodate not only Women Assembly but also Men Assembly.

With a view to formally integrating ethnicity and religion into public governance, each as a composite entity and not as separate ethnic groups or separate religions, the Geo-ethnicity Assembly and the Religion Assembly will each operate as a consolidated collaborative platform of equity. The Religion Assembly will be expected to protect the interests of members of the different religions without discrimination. Similarly, the Geo-ethnicity Assembly will be expected to protect the interests of geo-ethnic nationalities as a whole, including protection of ethnic minorities without short-changing the majority. It will also seek to protect the interests of disadvantaged areas and communities.

The idea of setting up assemblies bordering on ethnicity and religion for governance purposes may sound strange to people especially in the face of ethno-religious sentiments, tensions, and divide-and-rule strategies often ignited by party politicians, but it is a homeopathic approach for treating a major existential malaise of party politics in our body polity. Yes, we can use like to treat like. Within the framework of stakeholderism, we can manipulate and use ethnicity and religion as remedies to reconcile our partisan politics of ethnicity and religion the same way that scientists use the snake's venom in a suitable medium to produce snake anti-venom. It is a case of turning around the partisan political game of ethnicity and religion to stakeholder collaborative game of equity and merit. It is a great challenge but turning our challenges to opportunities is a task that we have to deal with, and we need to deal with it responsively, responsibly, and resiliently.

Some may want to argue that ethnicity and religion have no place in politics because of differences in the perspectives of the different nationalities and the different believers in the country, but we have gotten to a point whereby we need to downplay our specific differences and consolidate the general sameness in our ethnic, cultural, and religious values. Achieving positive results from ethnicity, religion, and other assemblies is feasible because the respective assemblies will be founded on the values of mutual tolerance, equity, justice, unity, and peace. Moreso, they will be expected to operate as melting pots of their component identities.

The positive spirits of togetherness, the cherished values of harmony, and the progressive rules of engagement that will guide members of the proposed Geo-ethnicity Assembly, Religion Assembly, and other assemblies should not be compared and confused with the negative sentiments, the divisive jingoisms, and the intolerant herd mentalities that party politicians often whip up to manipulate ethnicity, region, and religion in their egocentric favour. For so long, Nigerian politicians have been auctioning ethnicity, religion, women, youths, and other groups in the marketplace of party politics. Time has come for members of the various groups to liberate themselves and bring their collective strengths, vibrancies, and values to the marketplace of issues and ideas towards unity, growth and development.

As we shall see in relevant sub-sections of Chapter 9, stakeholderism presents guaranteed opportunities for *speciable persons*, young persons, and women to be on the ballot as candidates in all elections for the posts of vice president (who is a potential rotational president), deputy governor (who is a potential rotational governor), LGA vice chairman (who is a potential rotational chairman), member of Federal House of Representatives, member of State House of Representatives, and councillor. In other words, all the identified marginalized groups have automatic opportunities to contest in all elections under the auspices of the Equity Group, not to mention the additional special legislative seats to be exclusively filled by them, as well as their opportunities to be appointed into public posts. Furthermore, they also have opportunities under the Sectoral Group (though not automatic unless specially favoured by some affirmative action) to be appointed into public posts and to contest in all elections for the posts of prime minister, deputy prime minister, premier, deputy premier, member of Federal House of Technocrats, and member of State House of Technocrats in sectoral assemblies in which they are eligible members.

With this arrangement, it is guaranteed that any public officer elected or appointed at any blessed time from the Women Assembly will be a woman, from the Young Persons Assembly will be a youth, from the *Speciability* Assembly will be a *speciable*, and from each of the other groups will be a member of that particular group. It is a strategic and systematic move towards equity without sacrificing merit.

As stated earlier, Equity Group and its assemblies will be saddled with the responsibility of ensuring balance in the rights and entitlements of the various groups, fair representation, and general equity across gender, generation, *speciability*, religion, and geo-ethnicity. Where and when it is desirable by stakeholders, affirmative actions can be established for rotation of some public positions among the various groups / sub-groups or allocation of certain percentage of some public positions to marginalized groups / sub-groups. In the likely event that all or majority of the six zonal vice presidents elected into membership of the Council of Presidents are elderly males, an equitable thing to do is to favour young females, elderly females, young males, and other groups

that are marginalized in the process with appointments such as council ministers. Similar arrangements can be put in place at the state and LGA levels to compensate any group that is marginalized.

Equity is always desirable but it is sometimes difficult or impossible to achieve it in all dimensions under all conceivable scenarios of a given issue at all times. However, with sincerity of purpose, it is possible to ensure equity from different angles at different times. Where and when equity is realistically not achievable in the short run and at the micro level, equity will be happy if we can always ensure that all forms of inequity mistakenly or unavoidably committed in some scenarios are remedied and balanced out in other scenarios of the same or similar issues such that equity is achieved in the overall scheme of things in the long run and at the macro level. I strongly believe this is the way of divine equity.

8.3 Special Group of Assemblies

Special Group of Assemblies is the group of overlooked but important stakeholders. Just as the corporate world used to overlook important stakeholders of a company such as its workers, contractors, consultants, suppliers, consumers, and host communities while focusing all attention on its shareholders, board, and management, the current political system has for long been overlooking the group of registered Nigerians, naturalized Nigerians, legally resident non-Nigerians, Africans in the diaspora, real investors in Nigeria, and charitable friends of Nigeria. These groups of persons will henceforth be considered as important stakeholders in our body polity and will, if they so desire and are considered credible, be registered as members of any of the assemblies under the Special Group or some other assemblies which they are eligible to join. We reckon that these groups of persons will provide a rich pool of technical resources in public discourses.

Interested and eligible stakeholders can register at the state level for membership of any of the assemblies under the Special Group. The two main assemblies under this group are as follows:

- Friends-of-Naija Assembly
- Diaspora Africa Assembly

As time goes on, more assemblies may be created with necessary modifications to meet new situations and new requirements of stakeholders. With the exception of registered and naturalized Nigerians, stakeholders who belong to the Special Group will not be able to vote or vie for elections but they can contribute ideas and advices through their respective special assemblies.

Friends-of-Naija Assembly

The Friends-of-Naija Assembly is meant for Nigerians by registration, Nigerians by naturalization, legally resident non-Nigerians, foreigners with business or other legitimate interests in Nigeria, Africans in the diaspora, and non-resident citizens of any country of the world who feel concerned

and care to help. We definitely want all the genuine spirits and acts of brotherliness, friendliness, and neighbourliness from any source that they can come from, be it local or international.

Under the stakeholder system, Africans in the diaspora can additionally or alternatively belong to the Diaspora Africa Assembly. Registered Nigerians and naturalized Nigerians can also additionally or alternatively join and participate in any of the sectoral or equity assemblies for which they are eligible. Such registered or naturalized Nigerians can vote and be voted for through membership of their chosen sectoral or equity assemblies.

From the standpoint of stakeholderism, registered Nigerians and naturalized Nigerians who have been contributing to the system, and even credible foreigners who have substantial investments in Nigeria or who have legally been residing in Nigeria for more than 15 years or so and have not been found wanting, are no less of Naija stakeholders than Nigerians by birth who, with their entire families, have stayed away from the country for 20, 30, or many more years and have not been contributing to the system in any form.

Diaspora Africa Assembly

As the name goes, this assembly is obviously designed for our African brothers and sisters in the diaspora – be they in North America, South America, Caribbean, Europe, or elsewhere in the world. We definitely want the resourceful support of our brothers and sisters from the other side of the Atlantic and wherever the support can come from, just as Israelis have been enjoying the support of their Jewish brothers and sisters in the diaspora. As a step beyond giving support to Nigeria, being a big part of their ancestral land, any ‘voyage of return’ to Nigeria or other parts of Africa by Africans in the diaspora will be a mutually-beneficial voyage in the right direction capable of reuniting African descendants with their homeland, reconnecting them with their heritage, and ultimately reversing the centuries-old ‘voyage of no return’. Why not? The future beckons at Africa with great promise!

In addition, or as an alternative, to their membership of the Diaspora Africa Assembly, Africans in the diaspora can also choose to belong to the Friends-of-Naija Assembly. Diaspora Africans who are registered or naturalized Nigerians can also be members of any of the assemblies under the Sectoral or Equity Group for which they are eligible. Such diaspora Africans can vote and be voted for through membership of their chosen sectoral or equity assemblies.

8.4 Networking of Assemblies and Other Governance Entities

Networking does not start and end with stakeholder assemblies. It involves consultation, cooperation, collaboration, and coordination which have always been grossly inadequate or sometimes very poor between government stakeholders. Government entities within the same or different sectors working on similar projects towards common objectives often work in silos and hardly share data, information, strategies, and experiences. Linkages are required, where non-existent, between allied government ministries, departments, and agencies, between the different levels of government, and between state and non-state actors. There is a need to strengthen existing

but weak linkages through proper partnerships that will synchronize and synergize the various activities. There is also a need for top officials within the executive to close ranks in running public affairs. A situation whereby federal ministers and state commissioners take important technical and policy decisions at council meetings of their sectors and the president and governors execute something totally different or opposite is a total waste of time. In the same way, the executive and the legislature need to work more harmoniously while maintaining their respective independence within the framework of separation of powers. The need for proper coordination of supports from the private sector, development partners, and other stakeholders is also very important. Without proper coordination, it will be difficult to identify, track, and integrate non-state resources and activities with those of state.

Bearing in mind the expected plurality of assemblies under the stakeholder system, structures and processes will be put in place to ensure proper delineation of responsibilities and effective coordination of the functions of assemblies in a way that guarantees smooth flow of recommendations to the executive and the legislature. Each assembly will be given clear responsibilities to be discharged. Some aspects of an assembly's responsibilities will be subjected to oversight review, joint meetings, and concurrence by other relevant assemblies or all assemblies without prejudice to the independence, non-interference, and exclusivity rights of the assembly concerned. Provisions will be made for intra-assembly and inter-assembly joint forums towards achieving connectivity and synergy in governance inputs, processes, and outputs and enhancing governance outcomes and impacts.

For the purpose of joint assemblies, an assembly designated as a lead assembly on a particular issue will play central coordinating role concerning that issue with the support of other assemblies designated as primary, secondary, or tertiary assemblies. These roles are significant and require the cooperation of all concerned to ensure effective running of the networking system.

It is highly imperative to ensure that all relevant governance entities network with one another in coordinated multidimensional ways that minimize duplication and clash of interests. Even though it is expected that assemblies will not find it difficult to play according to rules and procedures, necessary conflict resolution mechanisms will be proactively put in place to douse tensions arising from misunderstandings. Adequate control measures and ICT resources will also be deployed to facilitate, monitor, and document inputs, processes, and outputs and to tackle potential challenges. As a connected network, the stakeholder system must be driven by technology and innovation. The operation and coordination of assemblies and other processes will be configured for constant improvements through the use of appropriate technologies. Optimal use of state-of-the-art information and communication technology and any useful emerging technology will be relied upon to support the system. Fortunately, the necessary technology infrastructures and human capital that will drive the system are not out of reach for Nigeria.

CHAPTER 9

RESTRUCTURING EXISTING GOVERNANCE ENTITIES

“The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.”
– Albert Einstein

9.0 Introduction

Under the current party system that we operate, the usual competition for political power is like a beauty contest. Due to perceptions and realities of the rules of the contest, many potential beauty queens including the really-most-beautiful and the very-beautiful ones do not come out to contest. And that always leaves the contest to the beautiful, the fairly-beautiful, the just-good-looking, and the how-did-she-get-qualified. If the rules, practices, and perceptions of the contest are changed, it will be attractive and encouraging for the really-most-beautiful, the very-beautiful, and the beautiful ones to come out to contest. Since political competition also has its own rules and practices, and politics is played mostly as a game of perception, I believe that if we change the rules, practices, and perceptions of our political system, the really-authentic-leaders, the very-good-leaders, and the selfless-and-dynamic-leaders that we earnestly desire will come out to participate and contribute towards good governance.

Indeed, many Nigerians are not happy with the politicians and have always openly expressed preference for an alternative administration or system of public leadership and governance. Some of them have had to put substantial pressure against bad civilian governments just as they had done against illegitimate governments led by the military. Changing the current partisan system is a serious and feasible business. We recognize that pessimists will drum beats of impossibility into the ears of change agents. We also recognize that some partisans and their cohorts who are benefiting or expect to benefit from the status quo will argue and work against any proposal for change. Yet, there are other persons who are neither real nor potential beneficiaries of the status quo who will lament but do nothing about the country’s poor governance outcomes possibly believing that the undesirable socio-economic situations will automatically improve with time without taking necessary actions. However, progressive stakeholders will work hard to adjust the country’s governance systems and structures to sail the ship of state to the shore of success.

We will be deceiving ourselves if we think and expect that beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries, and apologists of the status quo will willingly abandon the status quo and give us the change we want on a silver platter. The stakes involved in our partisan political game are high and the stakers have mastered the art of playing the odds against the people as they scramble again and again for big chunks of our common patrimony. As partisans practise democracy with partisanship, stakeholders must practise democracy with stakeholderism. It is incumbent on us as serious and sincere stakeholders to strive to shift the system away from satisfying selfish interests of stakers to satisfying shared interests of stakeholders. The stakeholder system will give opportunities to stakeholders who aspire to serve in public posts but do not have the audacity to dabble into the

murky waters of party politics or do not possess sufficient financial or socio-political capital to achieve their ambition.

The ensuing sections describe the stakeholder system's scheme for restructuring of existing governance entities based, not on political parties, but on stakeholder groups and assemblies which will be at liberty to nominate their members or non-members for a post allocated to them provided such members or non-members are qualified to hold that post in terms of competence, capacity, character, and other positive attributes.

9.1 Federal Government Level

9.1.1 Federal Legislature

The bicameral federal legislature will consist of two chambers, viz:

- Federal House of Representatives
- Federal House of Technocrats

Essentially, the legislature at the federal level will remain bicameral but the Senate, which hitherto is the upper chamber, will be renamed as the Federal House of Technocrats and operate side by side with the Federal House of Representatives. Even though the Senate will be renamed and repositioned, all the senatorial constituencies across the country will not be dismantled but continue to be used as electoral constituencies especially for the election of members of the House of Technocrats and zonal deputy governors (in which case they will be called gubernatorial constituencies).

The Federal House of Representatives and the Federal House of Technocrats will each elect a speaker as its presiding officer. Each member of the federal legislature will be entitled to three-year renewable tenures. Legislators can be recalled by their constituencies, groups, or assemblies as applicable provided necessary procedures are followed.

Following necessary processes, a former member of the House of Representatives can run for membership of the House of Technocrats or any other eligible post. Similarly, a former member of the House of Technocrats can run for membership of the House of Representatives or any other eligible post.

(a) Federal House of Representatives

The Federal House of Representatives will be made up of members primarily elected under the auspices of the Equity Group of Assemblies (Geo-ethnicity, Religion, *Speeciability*, Women, and Young Persons) and ultimately elected by the people. Each member of the Federal House of Representatives will be elected through the following process:

Stage 1: Intra-assembly Election for Membership of the Federal House of Representatives

Each of the five assemblies under the Equity Group of Assemblies will elect its candidate for Federal House of Representatives for each of the existing 360 federal constituencies through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries.

Stage 2: Inter-assembly Election for Membership of the Federal House of Representatives

For each of the existing 360 federal constituencies, member of Federal House of Representatives will be elected through universal suffrage in the constituency from among the five candidates primarily elected by the respective assemblies.

Special Stage: Arrangement for Special Seats in the Federal House of Representatives

In order to alleviate the usual low representation of women, young persons, and *speciable persons* arising from unfavourable electoral processes and outcomes, provisions will be made for 80 special seats in the Federal House of Representatives in addition to the 360 regular seats which all eligible members of all equity assemblies can contest for. This will bring the total number of members in the Federal House of Representatives to 440 [360 + 80]. The 80 special seats will be filled as follows:

- One (1) seat for each of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory to be occupied by women [Sub-total = 37]
- One (1) seat for each of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory to be occupied by youths [Sub-total = 37]
- One (1) seat for each of the 6 geo-political zones to be occupied by *speciables* [Sub-total = 6]

From one legislative election cycle to another, the above special seats in each state or zone will be filled on equitable rotational basis among the relevant constituencies by mutual consultations and agreements.

As we can see below, a similar arrangement can also be worked out concerning the Federal House of Technocrats primarily to reduce imbalances in electoral outcomes with respect to sectoral groups and with due regard to fairer representation of women, youths, and *speciables*.

(b) Federal House of Technocrats

The Federal House of Technocrats will be made up of members primarily and ultimately elected under the auspices of the Sectoral Group of Assemblies, viz:

1. Education, Research, Youth, and Sports Development Group
2. Health and Human Affairs Group
3. Food, Agriculture, Water, and Environment Group
4. Infrastructure Group
5. Manufacturing, Commerce, and Services Group
6. Natural Resources Group

7. Information, Communication, Science and Technology Group
8. Justice, Foreign Affairs, and Diaspora Group
9. Socio-Political, Cultural, and Civil Affairs Group
10. Economic Management Group
11. Defence, Peace, and Security Group
12. Implementation Group

Each member of the Federal House of Technocrats will be elected through the following process:

Stage 1: Intra-group Election for Membership of the Federal House of Technocrats

Each of the twelve groups under the Sectoral Group of Assemblies will elect its candidate for Federal House of Technocrats for each of the existing 109 ‘senatorial’ constituencies through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries.

Stage 2: Inter-group Election for Membership of the Federal House of Technocrats

For each of the existing 109 ‘senatorial’ constituencies, member of Federal House of Technocrats will be elected by all sectoral groups in the constituency from among the twelve candidates primarily elected by the respective groups.

Special Stage: Arrangement for Special Seats in the Federal House of Technocrats

Although groups / assemblies that lost out in elections will still be part of governance, it will be beneficial to the overall system if each of those groups is favoured to have at least one special legislative seat to reduce electoral imbalances among the groups, broaden representation, and enhance quality of debates. To this end, provisions will be made for 37 special seats in the Federal House of Technocrats in addition to the 109 regular seats. Based on sharing modalities to be agreed upon, these special seats will be filled after the regular legislative election by sectoral groups that have no representation at all or are not adequately represented in the House. In presenting candidates to fill the 37 special seats, there will be mutual consultations and agreements to ensure that each of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory occupies one of the seats and that young persons, women, and *speciabies* are equitably represented. This will result in a total number of 146 [109 + 37] members in the Federal House of Technocrats consisting of 4 members per state and 2 from the FCT.

(c) Federal House of Assembly

As and when the need arises to discuss general issues of common interest, reconcile gray areas, or harmonize positions of the two houses of the federal bicameral legislature, arrangement will be made for convocation of the Federal House of Assembly, which is a joint meeting comprising all members of the Federal House of Representatives and the Federal House of Technocrats under the co-chairmanship of speakers of the two houses.

9.1.2 Federal Executive

The Federal Executive will be made up of the Federal Executive Council and the Federal Cabinet.

- Federal Executive Council will consist of the president, vice presidents, and council ministers. The secretary to the government, who will be appointed by the Council of Presidents, will be the secretary of the Federal Executive Council supported by the permanent secretary in charge of council affairs, who will be appointed by the prime minister through recommendations of the head of civil service of the federation
- Federal Cabinet will consist of the prime minister, deputy prime minister, and cabinet ministers. The secretary to the government, appointed by the Council of Presidents, will also be the secretary of the Federal Cabinet supported by the permanent secretary responsible for cabinet affairs, who will be appointed by the prime minister through recommendations of the head of civil service of the federation

Following necessary processes, a former prime minister can run for the office of vice-president (which provides opportunity to become president); and a former president or vice-president can run for the office of prime minister.

(a) President and Vice Presidents

There will be a Council of Presidents (also referred to as Presidential Council) comprising six (6) vice presidents – one from each of the six geo-political zones of the federation. The vice presidents will be primarily elected under the auspices of Equity Group of Assemblies (Geo-ethnicity, Religion, *Speciability*, Women, and Young Persons) and ultimately elected by the people. Each zonal vice president will be elected through the following process:

Stage 1: Intra-assembly Election for the Post of Vice President

Each of the five assemblies under the Equity Group of Assemblies will elect its candidate for the post of vice president for each of the six geo-political zones through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries.

Stage 2: Inter-assembly Election for the Post of Vice President

For each of the six geo-political zones, a vice president will be elected through universal suffrage in the zone from among the five candidates primarily elected by the respective assemblies.

Each of the six elected zonal vice-presidents will be entitled to single term of six years and will assume the post of president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces on one-year rotational basis during the six-year tenure. The tenure of the six vice-presidents will be co-terminus such that, in the event of a vice president's death, resignation, impeachment, removal from office, infirmity, or other reasons, a replacement vice president will be elected from the affected geo-political zone to just complete the predecessor's tenure and not to start a fresh tenure. This will enable the country to, more often than not, have a stable cohort of vice-presidents who plan and execute policies and programmes together based on shared vision during each six-year tenure.

In order to avoid a vacuum in the Presidential Council, a temporary quick-fix arrangement can be made by the Equity Group of the geo-political zone concerned to appoint an eligible member of

the Federal House of Representatives as acting zonal vice president for a minimal period pending the election of a substantive vice president from the zone.

In the possible circumstance that the zonal vice president to be replaced had originally been elected based on an affirmative action in favour of his or her equity assembly or some other sub-group, the replacement vice president must satisfy the call of the affirmative action.

(b) Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister

At the federal level, there will be a prime minister and a deputy prime minister with joint co-terminus single term of six years. The prime minister and the deputy prime minister will be primarily and ultimately elected through the following process under the auspices of the Sectoral Group of Assemblies:

Stage 1: Intra-group Election for the Posts of Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister

Each of the twelve groups under the Sectoral Group will elect its candidate for the post of prime minister through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries.

Stage 2: Inter-group Election for the Posts of Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister

Each candidate from a group will choose his or her deputy from any of the other groups who must be one of the nominees (say three in number) sponsored by each of those other groups, following which the prime minister and the deputy prime minister will be jointly elected by all the sectoral groups in the country from among the twelve pairs of candidates primarily elected by the respective groups.

In the event of the prime minister's death, resignation, impeachment, removal from office, infirmity, or other reasons, the deputy prime minister will take over to complete the remaining tenure in the joint ticket. However, in the possible circumstance that the prime minister had originally been elected based on an affirmative action in favour of his or her sectoral assembly or some other sub-group, the deputy prime minister or whoever is going to take over to complete the remaining tenure must satisfy the call of the affirmative action. This means that, in this situation, it is not automatic that the deputy prime minister will take over unless he or she qualifies to benefit from the affirmative action. In any case, the deputy prime minister can take over as prime minister in acting capacity for a minimal period pending the election of a substantive prime minister.

In the event of the deputy prime minister's death, resignation, impeachment, removal from office, infirmity, or other reasons, each of the sectoral groups other than that of the prime minister will nominate three eligible persons and the prime minister will choose one from each group. From among the candidates chosen and presented for election, all the sectoral groups in the country will elect the new deputy prime minister who will join the prime minister to complete the joint tenure.

(c) Council Ministers

Council ministers, who unlike their cabinet counterparts do not necessarily have to be core stakeholders or subject-matter experts in the sector allocated to them, will be appointed for the various federal ministries by the Council of Presidents based on nominations from relevant assemblies of the Equity Group subject to the approval of the Federal House of Representatives. Council ministers are members of the Federal Executive Council under the leadership of the president.

(d) Cabinet Ministers

Cabinet ministers, who are supposed to be competent stakeholders in the sector they are to oversee, will be appointed for the various federal ministries by the prime minister based on nominations from relevant assemblies of the Sectoral Group subject to the approval of the Federal House of Technocrats. With the separation of the post of attorney-general of the federation and minister of justice, the attorney-general of the federation will be equivalent to the cabinet minister of justice. Cabinet ministers are members of the Federal Cabinet under the leadership of the prime minister.

9.1.3 Federal Judiciary

In most countries, the judiciary as a branch of government presents a different picture in the sense that judicial officers are, generally speaking, not elected like members of the executive and the legislature. However, just as the legislative and the executive branches of government under the Nigerian governance system are inundated with challenges, the judiciary also has its own challenges. There are certain areas of the Nigerian judiciary that need to be reformed and we look forward to contributions from stakeholders. Meanwhile, some of the reforms being proposed under stakeholderism relating to the judiciary are discussed below.

The chief justice and other federal judicial officers will be appointed by the Presidential Council from the nominees submitted by the National Judicial Council subject to confirmation by the Federal House of Representatives. The Federal Judicial Service Commission and the Justice Assembly, being one of the assemblies to be established under the Sectoral Group, will play important roles regarding recommendations for appointment and removal of judicial officers, composition of judicial bodies such as National Judicial Council, resolution of judicial matters, and other justice-related functions.

Whereas the president is not the chairman of the Federal Civil Service Commission and the senate president is not the chairman of the National Assembly Service Commission, the chief justice, according to the current Constitution, is the chairman of the Federal Judicial Service Commission. It amounts to inefficient and unnecessary duplication of power and responsibility to have a constitutional arrangement whereby the chief justice as the chairman of the Federal Judicial Service Commission is expected to advise and make recommendations to the National Judicial Council of which he or she is also the chairman. The chief justice will continue to be the chairman of the National Judicial Council but should be relieved of the chairmanship of the Federal Judicial Service Commission. There is also a need to take a second look at the membership of the president of the Court of Appeal and the chief judge of the Federal High Court in both the National Judicial

Council and the Federal Judicial Service Commission. While they can retain their membership of the National Judicial Council, suitable retired chief justices / justices should be nominated to replace these serving judicial officers as chairman / members of the Federal Judicial Service Commission.

As a step towards reducing the workload of judicial officers and to ensure faster and better dispensation of justice, there should be improvements in number of judges, funding for the judiciary, recruitment of judicial clerks to assist judges in research and documentation, as well as ICT support for automation of court proceedings and records. We can also explore the possibility of establishing special courts for special cases such as corruption and other issues bothering our society.

With particular reference to conspicuous economic and financial corruption offences, the stakeholder system aligns with the opinions of broad-minded legal practitioners and public analysts that we need to change the adversarial system of common law bequeathed to us by Britain to inquisitorial system that does not require presumption of innocence. Indeed, a person accused of possessing unexplained wealth beyond his means of income has a corruption case to answer. The burden of proof of his innocence weighs more heavily on him compared with the public prosecutor's proof of corruption charge against him which, from experience, can be very difficult to achieve because of the 'smartness' of corrupt public officers and individuals. Observers believe that inquisitorial system has been found to be the norm or part of the system in many countries where it has facilitated their war against corruption. Stakeholderism therefore fully subscribes to a change from adversarial system to inquisitorial system.

One other feature of our judicial practice that we need to change is the unscrupulous practice often referred to as 'forum shopping' whereby a legal action is instituted in a favourable court where a litigant most likely expects to receive a favourable judgment. It always sounds funny to hear that a contentious issue happened in State 'A' but the issue is dragged all the way to another far-away State 'Z' for adjudication in a court whose jurisdiction on the matter is questionable. Necessary rules, processes, and sanctions to stop this practice should always be enforced as a matter of seriousness.

In order to safeguard the sanctity of separation of powers and rule of law, which have always been disobeyed by executive leaders and functionaries, the Nigeria Police Force must be reformed, re-orientated, empowered, and strengthened towards enforcement of laws and court judgments and execution of other independent functions without interference from the executive or any section. This is in line with stakeholderism's principle of independence and non-interference of governance entities.

9.2 State Government Level

9.2.1 State Legislature

Generally, state level arrangements are similar to those of federal level with room for necessary modifications. Without prejudice to the choice of a state to adopt unicameral legislature, it is recommended that state legislatures should also be bicameral and consist of two chambers, viz:

- State House of Representatives
- State House of Technocrats

The extant state constituency demarcations will be used to establish State House of Representatives which will operate side by side with State House of Technocrats while the familiar State House of Assembly will take on a new definition as shown in Section 9.2.1(c). State House of Representatives and State House of Technocrats will each elect a speaker as its presiding officer. Each member of the state legislature will be entitled to three-year renewable tenures. Legislators can be recalled by their constituencies, groups, or assemblies as applicable provided necessary procedures are followed.

Following necessary processes, a former member of the House of Technocrats can run for membership of the House of Representatives or any other eligible post. Similarly, a former member of the House of Representatives can run for membership of the House of Technocrats or any other eligible post.

(a) State House of Representatives

State House of Representatives will be made up of members primarily elected under the auspices of Equity Group of Assemblies (Geo-ethnicity, Religion, *Speciability*, Women, and Young Persons) and ultimately elected by the people. Each member of State House of Representatives will be elected through the following process:

Stage 1: Intra-assembly Election for Membership of State House of Representatives

Each of the five assemblies under the Equity Group will elect its candidate for State House of Representatives for each of the existing state constituencies through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries.

Stage 2: Inter-assembly Election for Membership of State House of Representatives

For each of the existing state constituencies, member of State House of Representatives will be elected through universal suffrage in the constituency from among the five candidates primarily elected by the respective assemblies.

Special Stage: Arrangement for Special Seats in the State House of Representatives

The incidence of poor representation of women, young persons, and *speciable persons* is not peculiar to the federal legislature. In addition to the regular seats in each State House of Representatives which all eligible members of all equity assemblies can contest for, provisions will be made for special seats as follows:

- Two (2) seats in each of the 36 State House of Representatives to be occupied by women, such that each state will be demarcated by appropriate authorities into two constituencies for this purpose.
- One (1) seat in each of the 36 State House of Representatives to be occupied by youths, such that the state as a whole will be the constituency for this purpose.
- One (1) seat in each of the 36 State House of Representatives to be occupied by *speciabies*, such that the state as a whole will be the constituency for this purpose.

Based on mutual consultations and agreements, the above special seats will rotate equitably across relevant constituencies from one legislative election cycle to another.

(b) State House of Technocrats

State House of Technocrats will be made up of members primarily and ultimately elected under the auspices of Sectoral Group of Assemblies. Like the Federal House of Technocrats, there will be equal number of regular members from each constituency in the state. Each member of the State House of Technocrats will be elected through the following process:

Stage 1: Intra-group Election for Membership of State House of Technocrats

Each of the groups under the Sectoral Group of Assemblies will elect its candidate for State House of Technocrats for each of the constituencies (to be adopted or newly delineated) through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries. A state can adopt its senatorial districts, development zones, local government areas, or some other constituency demarcations for this purpose, depending on the size and distribution of its population, and other factors. For instance, a state may opt for 4 members per senatorial district to have total membership strength of 12 in its House of Technocrats. A bigger state may decide to allocate 6 members per senatorial district to have total membership strength of 18. States will be at liberty to choose what works best for them in the different dimensions of the process. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) or any other appropriate body to be designated will take responsibility for any further delineation of constituencies to accommodate election of candidates.

Stage 2: Inter-group Election for Membership of State House of Technocrats

For each of the adopted or newly delineated constituencies, member of State House of Technocrats will be elected by all sectoral groups in the constituency from among the candidates primarily elected by the respective groups.

(c) State House of Assembly

As and when the need arises to discuss general issues of common interest, reconcile gray areas, or harmonize positions of the two houses of the state bicameral legislature, arrangement will be made for convocation of State House of Assembly, which is a joint meeting comprising all members of

the State House of Technocrats and the State House of Representatives under the co-chairmanship of speakers of the two houses.

For states that choose to continue with unicameral legislature, joint sessions will not be applicable as the State House of Assembly will be equivalent to the State House of Representatives. It should therefore be noted that the term ‘State House of Assembly’ in relation to state bicameral legislature under the stakeholder system takes on a different meaning that should not be confused with the meaning it carries under the current system.

9.2.2 State Executive

Generally, state level arrangements are similar to those of federal level, with room for necessary adjustments.

- State Executive Council will consist of the governor, deputy governors, and council commissioners. The secretary to the state government, who will be appointed by the Council of Governors, will be the secretary of the State Executive Council
- State Cabinet will consist of the premier, deputy premier, and cabinet commissioners. The secretary to the state government, appointed by the Council of Governors, will also be the secretary of the State Cabinet

Following necessary processes, a former governor or deputy governor can run for the office of premier or any other eligible office; and a former premier can run for the office of deputy governor (which provides opportunity to become governor) or any other eligible office.

(a) Governor and Deputy Governors

There will be a Council of Governors (also referred to as Governorship Council) comprising three (3) deputy governors – one from each of the three existing senatorial constituencies (to be referred to as gubernatorial constituencies for this purpose) of the state. The deputy governors will be primarily elected under the auspices of Equity Group of Assemblies (Women, Young Persons, Religion, Geo-ethnicity, and *Speciability*) and ultimately elected by the people. Each zonal deputy governor will be elected through the following process:

Stage 1: Intra-assembly Election for the Post of Deputy Governor

Each of the five assemblies under the Equity Group of Assemblies will elect its candidate for the post of deputy governor for each of the three gubernatorial constituencies through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries.

Stage 2: Inter-assembly Election for the Post of Deputy Governor

For each of the three gubernatorial constituencies, a deputy governor will be elected through universal suffrage in the constituency from among the five candidates primarily elected by the respective assemblies.

Each of the three elected zonal deputy governors will be entitled to single term of six years and will assume the post of the governor on two-year rotational basis during the six-year tenure. The tenure of the three deputy governors will be co-terminus such that, in the event of a deputy governor's death, resignation, impeachment, removal from office, infirmity, or other reasons, a replacement deputy governor will be elected from the affected gubernatorial constituency to just complete the predecessor's tenure and not to start a fresh tenure. This will enable the state to, more often than not, have a stable cohort of deputy governors who plan and execute policies and programmes together based on shared vision during each six-year tenure.

In order to avoid a vacuum in the Governorship Council, a temporary quick-fix arrangement can be made by the Equity Group of the gubernatorial constituency concerned to appoint an eligible member of the State House of Representatives as acting zonal deputy governor for a minimal period pending the election of a substantive deputy governor from the constituency.

In the possible circumstance that the zonal deputy governor to be replaced had originally been elected based on an affirmative action in favour of his or her equity assembly or some other sub-group, the replacement deputy governor must satisfy the call of the affirmative action.

(b) Premier and Deputy Premier

At the state level, there will be a premier and a deputy premier with joint co-terminus single term of six years. The premier and the deputy premier will be primarily and ultimately elected through the following process under the auspices of Sectoral Group of Assemblies:

Stage 1: Intra-group Election for the Posts of Premier and Deputy Premier

Each of the groups under the Sectoral Group of Assemblies will elect its candidate for the post of premier through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries.

Stage 2: Inter-group Election for the Posts of Premier and Deputy Premier

Each candidate from a group will choose his or her deputy from any of the other groups who must be one of the nominees sponsored by each of those other groups, following which the premier and the deputy premier will be jointly elected by all the sectoral groups in the state from among the pairs of candidates primarily elected by the respective groups.

In the event of the premier's death, resignation, impeachment, removal from office, infirmity, or other reasons, the deputy premier will take over to complete the remaining tenure in the joint ticket. However, in the possible circumstance that the premier had originally been elected based on an affirmative action in favour of his or her sectoral assembly or some other sub-group, the deputy premier or whoever is going to take over to complete the remaining tenure must satisfy the call of the affirmative action. This means that, in this situation, it is not automatic that the deputy premier will take over unless he or she qualifies to benefit from the affirmative action. In any case, the deputy premier can take over as premier in acting capacity for a minimal period pending the election of a substantive premier.

In the event of the deputy premier's death, resignation, impeachment, removal from office, infirmity, or other reasons, each of the sectoral groups other than that of the premier will nominate three eligible persons and the premier will choose one from each group. From among the candidates chosen and presented for election, all the sectoral groups in the state will elect the new deputy premier who will join the premier to complete the joint tenure.

(c) Council commissioners

Council commissioners, who unlike their cabinet counterparts do not necessarily have to be core stakeholders or subject-matter experts in the sector allocated to them, will be appointed for the various state ministries by the Council of Governors based on nominations from relevant assemblies of the Equity Group of Assemblies subject to the approval of the State House of Representatives. Council commissioners are members of the State Executive Council under the leadership of the governor.

(d) Cabinet commissioners

Cabinet commissioners, who are supposed to be competent stakeholders in the sector they are to oversee, will be appointed for the various state ministries by the premier based on nominations from relevant assemblies of the Sectoral Group of Assemblies subject to the approval of the State House of Technocrats. With the separation of the post of state attorney-general and commissioner of justice, the state attorney-general will be equivalent to the cabinet commissioner of justice. Cabinet commissioners are members of the State Cabinet under the leadership of the premier.

9.2.3 State Judiciary

Judicial reforms recommended at the federal level will also be implemented at the state level to the extent of their relevance. States will be allowed to establish their own State Judicial Councils so that they do not have to continue to depend on the National Judicial Council.

9.3 Local Government Area (LGA) Level

9.3.1 LGA Executive and Legislature

Each local government area will be headed by a chairman in line with the current practice. The extant designation 'chairman' is gender-unfriendly and gender-insensitive. It will be replaced, as reflected henceforth in this book, by the term 'chairperson'.

Unlike the federal level and possibly state level, the legislature at the LGA level will continue to be unicameral but cease to operate as a merged entity of the legislature and the executive based on the principle of separation of powers. The LGA Legislative Council will therefore consist of only the councillors, with one of them elected as the speaker, while the LGA Executive Council will

consist of the chairperson, one or two vice chairpersons, and possibly experts to be appointed as technical advisers.

In line with the principle of democratic flexibility, it will not be out of place for a local government to continue to operate its unicameral legislature as a merged entity of the legislature and the executive. In that case, the LGA Executive cum Legislature, which is the LGA Council, will consist of the chairperson, one or two vice chairpersons, and councillors as members.

In either case, big, municipal, or buoyant local governments can make provisions for appointment of a certain number of experts as technical advisers who can be co-opted as members into the LGA Executive Council or constituted into a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to support the local government in key areas of development such as health, education, agri-business, social infrastructures, and small / medium industries.

Reassuringly, autonomous and well-resourced local governments of the coming dispensation must be development-oriented and will be expected to do far more in many areas of grassroots development. Grassroots development is the missing link and crucial springboard that can catapult us towards sustainable national development.

(a) Chairperson and Vice Chairperson(s)

There will be a Committee of Chairpersons comprising two (2) vice chairpersons – one from each of two zones of the LGA (already in existence or to be delineated by relevant authorities). The two vice chairpersons will take turns as the LGA chairperson during their tenure. Big, municipal, or buoyant LGAs can opt for three instead of two vice chairpersons among whom the office and power of the chairperson will rotate. The vice chairpersons will be primarily elected under the auspices of Equity Group of Assemblies (Geo-ethnicity, Religion, *Speciability*, Women, and Young Persons) and ultimately elected by the people. Each vice chairperson will be elected through the following process:

Stage 1: Intra-assembly Election for the Post of Chairperson

Each of the five assemblies under the Equity Group of Assemblies will elect its candidate for the post of vice chairperson for each of the two or three existing / newly delineated LGA zones through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries.

Stage 2: Inter-assembly Election for the Post of Chairperson

For each of the two or three existing / newly delineated LGA zones, a vice chairperson will be elected through universal suffrage in the zone from among the five candidates primarily elected by the respective assemblies.

Each of the two or three elected vice chairpersons will be entitled to single term of six years and will assume the post of the LGA chairperson on three-year rotational basis (two-year rotational basis in the case of LGAs that opt for three chairpersons) during the six-year tenure. The tenure of the vice chairpersons will be co-terminus such that, in the event of a vice chairperson's death, resignation, removal from office, infirmity, or other reasons, a replacement vice chairperson will

be elected from the affected LGA zone to just complete the predecessor's tenure and not to start a fresh tenure. This will enable the LGA to, more often than not, have a stable cohort of vice chairpersons who plan and execute policies and programmes together based on shared vision during each six-year tenure.

In order to avoid a vacuum in the Committee of Chairpersons, a temporary quick-fix arrangement can be made by the Equity Group of the LGA zone concerned to appoint an eligible councillor as acting vice chairperson for a minimal period pending the election of a substantive vice chairperson from the zone.

In the possible circumstance that the vice chairperson to be replaced had originally been elected based on an affirmative action in favour of his or her equity assembly or some other sub-group, the replacement vice chairperson must satisfy the call of the affirmative action.

(b) Councillors

Councillors will also be entitled to single term of six years. They will be elected through the following process:

Stage 1: Intra-assembly Election for the Post of Councillor

Each of the five assemblies under the Equity Group of Assemblies will elect its candidate for each of the wards through direct, indirect, or consensus primaries.

Stage 2: Inter-assembly Election for the Post of Councillor

The councillor for each ward will be elected through universal suffrage in the ward constituency from among the five candidates primarily elected by the respective assemblies.

9.3.2 LGA Judiciary

At the moment, judiciary is practically non-existent in many local governments of the country. With the establishment and operation of area courts and customary courts by many state governments, it is a matter of concern that the current Constitution and the judicial system we are operating have practically empowered state governments to supplant local governments in their vantage position as the closest level of government to the people at the grassroots. Customary / Area courts are supposed to be local courts under the purview of local governments. Local governments are closer to local communities whose members are stakeholders and potential beneficiaries of customary laws relating to matters like marriage, divorce, custody of children, inheritance, and family disputes. Local governments are better positioned to formulate by-laws at the local level alongside dispensation of justice at the local area / customary courts.

Stakeholderism therefore advocates that customary courts operated in the south and area courts in the north should be constitutionally and properly positioned within the structure of the local government instead of the state government.

Critics may argue that local governments do not have the capacity to run area / customary courts. Truly, the local government level, as it currently is, will find it difficult to handle this and other major governance responsibilities. Only a few viable local governments can cope administratively, technically, and financially. However, with necessary restructuring and autonomies in place, the local government level, as it should be and will be, can do far more than the current system of making them function like administrative branch offices of other levels of government.

9.4 National Assembly

Whenever there is an important national question that requires urgent legislative consultations between the three levels of government, arrangement will be made for convocation of National Assembly, which is a joint meeting comprising representatives from the federal, state, and LGA levels. What this means is that the term ‘National Assembly’ connotes a different interpretation under stakeholderism compared with what we are familiar with under the current system.

The National Assembly will consist of the following:

- i. All members of the Federal House of Representatives
- ii. All members of the Federal House of Technocrats
- iii. Speakers of all State Houses of Representatives
- iv. Speakers of all State Houses of Technocrats
- v. Two speakers of LGA Legislative Councils per state [or LGA chairpersons in the case of LGAs with merged executive and legislature]

9.5 National Council of State

The existing National Council of State will be expanded to comprise not just the current members but also two (2) representatives of serving LGA chairpersons per geo-political zone and some responsible senior citizens, elders, and statesmen / stateswomen to be appointed by the Council of Presidents.

CHAPTER 10

HIGHLIGHT OF POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY SHARING BETWEEN GOVERNANCE ENTITIES

*“One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.” –
Plato*

10.1 Summary of Elective and Appointive Posts

As discussed in the previous chapter, eligible persons can contest for elections into any of the following executive or legislative positions through relevant groups at the appropriate level:

Federal Level

- Vice President [with rotational opportunity to assume the post of President]
- Prime Minister
- Deputy Prime Minister
- Member of Federal House of Representatives
- Member of Federal House of Technocrats

State Level

- Deputy Governor [with rotational opportunity to assume the post of Governor]
- Premier
- Deputy Premier
- Member of State House of Representatives
- Member of State House of Technocrats

LGA Level

- Vice Chairperson [with rotational opportunity to assume the post of Chairperson]
- Councillor

Appointments into federal level posts will be made based on recommendations from relevant assemblies to the president or the prime minister (as applicable) who will present his or her choice from the list of nominees to the relevant federal legislature for consideration and confirmation, where necessary. Appointments into state level posts will also be made based on recommendations from relevant assemblies to the governor or the premier (as applicable) who will present his or her choice from the list of nominees to the relevant state legislature for consideration and confirmation, where necessary. The relevant legislature for confirmation of nominees for appointment from the president or the governor is the House of Representatives while the relevant one for nominees from the prime minister or the premier is the House of Technocrats.

The following appointments, among others, are possible at the specified levels:

Federal Level

- Council Minister
- Cabinet Minister
- Secretary to the Government of the Federation
- Head of Civil Service of the Federation
- Chair or Member of Governing Board of a Federal Agency
- Chief Executive Officer of a Federal Agency
- Ambassador

State Level

- Council Commissioner
- Cabinet Commissioner
- Secretary to the State Government
- State Head of Civil Service
- Chair or Member of Governing Board of a State Agency
- Chief Executive Officer of a State Agency

LGA Level

- LG Technical Adviser
- LG Secretary
- Chair or Member of a Local Board
- Administrative Head of a Local Board

Even though merit is the primary consideration in the Sectoral Wing, it is recommended that efforts should be made by all entities within the wing to mainstream equity, for example, by ensuring that fair numbers of qualified women, youths, and *speciabies* are also nominated, elected, and appointed into public posts. Similarly, efforts should be made by all entities within the Equity Wing to mainstream merit by ensuring that candidates nominated, elected, and appointed are competent even though equity is the primary consideration in the Equity Wing. Qualified women, young persons, and *speciable persons* will be elected or appointed not simply because they are women, youths, and *speciabies* but in spite of their gender, youngness, and *speciability* respectively.

For purpose of clarity of reference, Equity Group of Assemblies, Presidential Council, Federal Executive Council, Federal House of Representatives, president, vice presidents, council ministers, members of the Federal House of Representatives, and other entities empowered through the Equity Wing will be seen as belonging to the Equity Wing of Government at the federal level while Sectoral Group of Assemblies, Federal Cabinet, Federal House of Technocrats, prime minister, deputy prime minister, cabinet ministers, members of the Federal House of Technocrats, and other entities empowered through the Sectoral Wing will be seen as belonging to the Sectoral Wing of Government at that level.

By the same token, Equity Group of Assemblies, Governorship Council, State Executive Council, State House of Representatives, governor, deputy governors, council commissioners, members of the State House of Representatives, and other entities empowered through the Equity Wing will

be seen as belonging to the Equity Wing of Government at the state level while Sectoral Group of Assemblies, State Cabinet, State House of Technocrats, premier, deputy premier, cabinet commissioners, members of the State House of Technocrats, and other entities empowered through the Sectoral Wing will be seen as belonging to the Sectoral Wing of Government at that level.

In general, appointive posts such as cabinet minister and cabinet commissioner coming through sectoral assemblies will require candidates for appointment to have relevant competences in the sector or sub-sector which he or she is being called to serve by belonging to a relevant sectoral assembly. Elective posts such as prime minister, deputy prime minister, premier, and deputy premier coming through sectoral assemblies will require general competences, and not necessarily specific competences, from any background which implies that candidates for election into any of these posts can belong to any sectoral assembly of interest.

Elective and appointive posts such as president, vice president, governor, deputy governor, chairperson, vice chairperson, council minister, council commissioner, member of Federal / State House of Representatives, and councillor coming through equity assemblies will also require general competences, and not necessarily specific competences, from any background which implies that candidates for election or appointment into any of these posts can belong to any equity assembly of interest.

While assembly membership is important for election and appointment into public posts, there will be room for a few exceptions whereby an assembly can include a non-member of that assembly in the list of nominees for an appointive post as long as the nominee is qualified for the post. In the event of conflicts between or within assemblies concerning nomination of candidates for an appointment, a relevant joint assembly will be constituted to agree and make necessary recommendations to the relevant head of the executive branch of government.

10.2 Sharing of Powers and Responsibilities

Having diffused powers to more than one power centres with its associated advantages including greater checks and balances in the exercise of powers, it is not impossible to have some frictions between the different players operating in each power centre. There is therefore a need to clearly delineate responsibilities to enable smooth discharge of functions by the various individuals and bodies concerned. Towards this end, stakeholders will be expected to agree and bring up a schedule that separates and shares responsibilities along the following lines:

1. Among the vice presidents;
2. Among the deputy governors;
3. Among the vice chairpersons;
4. Between the president and the prime minister;
5. Between the governor and the premier;
6. Between the Federal House of Representatives and the Federal House of Technocrats;
7. Between the State House of Representatives and the State House of Technocrats;
8. Between the Federal Executive Council and the Federal Cabinet;
9. Between the State Executive Council and the State Cabinet;

10. Between the council minister and the cabinet minister of a ministry;
11. Between the council commissioner and the cabinet commissioner of a ministry; and
12. Between the upper chamber and the lower chamber of each assembly.

A little peep into power and responsibility sharing arrangements between governance actors at the federal level is given below as a guide while detailed arrangements will be developed by stakeholders at the appropriate time and revised as the need arises. Arrangements similar to the ones highlighted below for the federal level can be applied at the state level with necessary modifications to suit specific situations.

The president and the prime minister will be co-heads of government at the federal level. The president will be the head of the Equity Wing of Government while the prime minister will be the head of the Sectoral Wing. In addition, the president will be the head of state and commander-in-chief.

Reporting to the Presidential Council under the headship of the president, each of the vice presidents will have shared oversight responsibilities on issues of general concern and on issues relating to his or her zone. All governance entities will have their specific responsibilities demarcated but, in general terms, the powers and responsibilities of the prime minister, deputy prime minister, cabinet ministers, Federal Cabinet, Federal House of Technocrats, and sectoral assemblies will border on issues relating to policies, plans, strategies, programmes, projects, and other core issues of the various sectors while the president, vice presidents, council ministers, Federal Executive Council, Federal House of Representatives, and equity assemblies will focus, inter alia, on issues bordering on territorial integrity, financial stewardship, procurement, project locations, manpower, and balancing of geo-ethnic, religious, gender, and other equity considerations in public affairs.

For instance, technical and economic proposals, justifications, decisions, legislations, and approvals concerning the establishment of federal projects will be the responsibility of entities within the Sectoral Wing while socio-political discussions, decisions, legislations, and approvals concerning location of the federal projects will be the responsibility of entities within the Equity Wing. As expected, there will certainly be needs for mutual consultations and cooperation between and among the two major wings with a view to balancing social, political, and economic considerations and ensuring effectiveness, efficiency, and equity in the distribution of projects.

In each federal ministry, the cabinet minister will be the technical lead and chief executive officer, the council minister will be the chief accounting officer, and the permanent secretary will be the administrative head reporting to the two ministers on their respective functions. The cabinet minister will oversee core functions of the ministry such as development, coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans, strategies, programmes, projects, and other technical functions while the council minister will oversee the ministry's non-core functions such as human resources, finance & accounts, audit, procurement, ICT, media & public relations, reform coordination & service improvement, legal services, general services, and allied functions.

In the long absence of the cabinet minister, a qualified member of the same or relevant assembly from the Sectoral Group will be assigned by the prime minister in acting capacity. In the long absence of the council minister, an eligible member of the same or relevant assembly from the Equity Group will be assigned by the president in acting capacity. This will encourage ministers to always give adequate briefings to their respective assemblies and ensure that they are on the same page with them. It will also extend institutional memories and transparency in governance beyond the walls of the Bureaucracy and strengthen stability and continuity of policies and plans. Proven allegation of information hoarding against any minister can constitute a basis for recommendation by his or her assembly for removal from office by the relevant head of government.

Unless otherwise specified and justified, board chairpersons and members / commissioners of agencies, commissions, and organizations will be appointed by the Council of Presidents while their administrative heads / chief executive officers will be appointed by the prime minister. For example, board chairpersons and members / commissioners of Nigerian Ports Authority, Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority, Federal Civil Service Commission, Revenue Mobilization, Allocation, and Fiscal Commission, and Federal Character Commission (which will be broadened and renamed Equity Commission) will be appointed by the Presidential Council while their chief executive officers will be appointed by the prime minister.

The Council of Presidents will have the power to appoint non-career ambassadors, council ministers, and secretary to the government of the federation while the prime minister will appoint career ambassadors, cabinet ministers, head of civil service of the federation, and permanent secretaries.

It will be the responsibility of the Presidential Council to appoint accountant-general of the federation, auditor-general for the federation, and the auditor-general for the federal government while the prime minister will appoint accountant-general of the federal government. It will also be the responsibility of the Presidential Council to appoint chief justice, justices, and minister of justice while the prime minister will appoint attorney-general of the federation.

The power to appoint military service chiefs, inspector-general of police, and heads of other government security agencies such as Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Nigeria Customs Service, Nigeria Immigration Service, Nigerian Correctional Service, and Federal Fire Service will reside in the Presidential Council and exercised collaboratively under the leadership of the president as the commander-in-chief.

Unless otherwise stated and justified, appointments to be made by the Council of Presidents under the leadership of the president will come through recommendations from relevant equity assemblies and will be confirmed, where necessary, by the Federal House of Representatives while those to be made by the prime minister will come through recommendations from relevant sectoral assemblies and will be confirmed, where necessary, by the Federal House of Technocrats. However, based on the principle of interdependence and the need to balance the core values of equity and meritocracy, nothing should stop the Presidential Council, acting through the president, from making justifiable consultations with or getting justifiable nominations from relevant sectoral assemblies for certain appointments (such as accountant-general, auditor-general, chief justice,

justices, minister of justice, and heads of military and para-military agencies) in addition, or as an alternative, to normal consultations and requests for nominations from relevant equity assemblies. Nothing should also stop the prime minister from making justifiable consultations with or getting justifiable nominations from relevant equity assemblies for certain appointments in addition, or as an alternative, to normal consultations and requests for nominations from relevant sectoral assemblies.

While House of Representatives will handle the business of discussing, investigating, oversighting, legislating, and making recommendations on geo-ethnicity, *speciability*, religion, youth, and gender dimensions of issues, House of Technocrats will handle core technical components of issues.

It should be noted that, notwithstanding the need for sharing of powers and responsibilities, some powers and responsibilities will be operationalized as shared tasks between two or more entities irrespective of their belonging to different wings of government. For instance, both equity and sectoral wings of government will be involved in annual budget preparation through their respective assemblies as well as executive and legislative organs. Draft budgets separately passed by Federal House of Representatives and Federal House of Technocrats will be harmonized and passed by the Federal House of Assembly which is a joint session of both houses. Once the annual budget is approved, following mutually-agreed amendments, it will be enacted by the Federal House of Assembly and signed into law by the president in consultation with the Presidential Council for implementation by all concerned.

10.3 Seniority Protocol

Between the president and the prime minister, the president is the senior partner; but between the council minister and the cabinet minister, the cabinet minister is the senior partner. This is so because what is paramount at the macro leadership level is the executive and political power of the president delegated by the people but what is paramount at the sectoral level of each ministry is the expertise of the cabinet minister who, unlike the council minister, must have knowledge of the sector. However, each of them will be guided by the principles of independence and non-interference as well as interdependence and intervention in discharging their responsibilities. The fact that the council minister and the cabinet minister of a ministry are appointed by two different heads of government and the reverse in the seniority order between the two ministers vis-à-vis the seniority order between their respective heads of government will assist in breaking the flow of negative ‘order from above’ and strengthening checks and balances in the use of power in each ministry.

At the state level, between the governor and the premier, the governor is the senior partner; but between the council commissioner and the cabinet commissioner, the cabinet commissioner is the senior partner. Justifications and implications for this are similar to the ones given above.

Unlike the current system whereby the Senate is considered as the upper chamber of the bicameral federal legislature and the House of Representatives is considered as the lower chamber, there is no issue of echelon or seniority between the proposed House of Representatives and the House of

Technocrats. At the federal and state levels, the two legislative houses will operate side by side as equals, with each of them focusing on its specific responsibilities and both of them jointly meeting as House of Assembly to harmonize and legislate on gray areas and general issues. Upper and lower chambers will relate only to stakeholder assemblies as discussed in Section 8.0.

CHAPTER 11

MERITS AND DEMERITS OF THE STAKEHOLDER SYSTEM

“When politics is a game of perception not policy, everyone loses.” – Lenore Taylor

“Nothing is perfect on the human stage.” – Winston Churchill

11.1 Merits

The following are the merits of the stakeholder system which will be discussed one after the other:

1. Increase in democratic ownership and control of platforms of governance
2. Support for participatory, equitable, inclusive, and competent governance
3. Boosting of consultation, cooperation, collaboration, consensus, and coordination
4. Consolidation of shared values and ethics
5. Greater seriousness and sincerity of purpose
6. Enhancement of continuity, stability, sustainability, and long-term perspectives
7. De-concentration of power
8. Reduction in workloads of leadership and governance responsibilities
9. Reduction in cost of election, cost of governance, and level of corruption
10. Shift in governance process from ‘top-down’ to ‘bottom-up’
11. Shift in electoral outcome from ‘winner-take-all’ to ‘all-are-winners’

11.1.1 Increase in Democratic Ownership and Control of Platforms of Governance

Viewed from the prism of a market, Nigeria’s public governance system is like a monopoly. Part of the strength of stakeholderism in this regard is the multitude of assemblies that can concurrently participate in governance. The idea of many assemblies simultaneously being part of the power equation as equitable partners challenges the monopoly of a single ruling party and the possible oligopoly of a few ruling coalition. Modern societies have become too cosmopolitan, too complex, and too dynamic to be governed by a supreme leader surrounded by few sycophants and praise-singers. Power will not operate at its best if it is fully concentrated in the hands of one or a few persons or groups. An average human being will misbehave with enormous powers at his disposal. And believe it or not, most human beings are on the average when it comes to the intoxicating power of power. Even men and women that could be considered to be above board may misbehave with enormous powers.

“And remember, where you have a concentration of power in a few hands, all too frequently men with the mentality of gangsters get control. History has proven that. All power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely.” – Sir John Dalberg-Acton (Lord Acton)

As politicians own and control political parties, stakeholder *assemblists* will own and control stakeholder assemblies. With respect to public issues, assemblies will serve as control knobs in the

hands of the people in their own interest as bona fide owners of sovereignty and in the general interest of the society. All stakeholders cannot be in public office at the same time, but those who are not in office will be part of governance process through their membership of assemblies which will have powers to nominate persons for election and appointment into public offices, recommend removal of public officers, participate in public discourses, make policy recommendations to the executive and the legislature, and oversight those who are directly in government and in office. The people will therefore have greater ownership and control of platforms of governance under stakeholderism than under the conventional party system.

The stakeholder system will thrive on working through and with all interested stakeholders. The system will reduce the influence of professional politicians and checkmate the excesses of tyrannical leaders through assemblies. It will be interesting to see whether the people will like to be governed as a true democracy by a government of the people by the people for the people or they will like to continue to be ruled, controlled, and dominated by a government of the politicians by the politicians for the politicians.

11.1.2 Support for Participatory, Equitable, Inclusive, and Competent Governance

Nigeria stands to benefit from a broad-based participatory system such as the stakeholder system. The conventional party system that we operate is narrow and is not working for the people. It is not yielding for them the much-desired dividends of democracy as shareholders in the democratic enterprise. It has only created space for a few politicians leaving many who are even more competent and capable outside the corridors of government. Our oligarchic party system should give way to a more participatory democracy which the stakeholder system offers. No amount of multi-party alliance under the current party system can bring the people into democratic governance the same way that the stakeholder system can. Through the wide range of identities and expertise of members of the various assemblies, stakeholderism supports broad, equitable, inclusive, and competent participation in goal / priority setting, law making, policy formulation, plan / budget development, decision making, implementation, and all aspects of democratic process. These will generate better quality of laws, policies, plans, and decisions, higher degree of ownership and buy-in, stronger drive for implementation, and greater sense of belonging and commitment to the common heritage called Nigeria.

People will not be coerced to participate in stakeholder governance but every suitable person will be allowed to contribute their quota in one way or the other. As many as have something to contribute and have the eligibility and the time to do so are encouraged to come forward and join relevant assemblies of their choice. All relevant stakeholders will be involved at all stages of governance and in all activities from planning to implementation and to post-implementation. This gives room for plurality of opinions which is one of the hallmarks of democracy.

In the spirit of popular participation, equity, merit, and inclusive governance, marginalized groups such as youth, women, *speciabies*, as well as representatives of ethnicity and religion will be given guaranteed opportunities under stakeholderism to present candidates for elections as vice presidents (who are potential rotational presidents), deputy governors (who are potential rotational governors), LGA vice chairmen (who are potential rotational chairmen), members of Federal

House of Representatives, members of State House of Representatives, and councillors. Members of these groups who also belong to relevant sectoral assemblies have additional opportunities (though not automatic unless favoured by some affirmative action) to contest in all elections for eligible posts of prime minister, deputy prime minister, premier, deputy premier, members of Federal House of Technocrats, and members of State House of Technocrats. In addition, in the event of losing out completely in the elections, such marginalized groups will be compensated with some posts such as council ministers, cabinet ministers, council commissioners, and cabinet commissioners in order to inject some measure of equity into the leadership and governance system.

Under the current system, there are many crucial small issues that do not and may never receive the minutest attention of both the executive and the legislative branches of government due to inadequate levels of awareness, competence, interest, legislative time, or advocacy platform concerning the issue. The separate and combined cumulative effects of these seemingly small sidelined issues, sooner than later, become big and of great importance that they cannot be wished away anymore. Under the stakeholder system, such small sidelined issues that normally get swept under the carpet will have opportunities of being brought to the fore resulting in inclusive governance for stakeholders interested in those issues. The broad range of assemblies to be made available to stakeholders will give opportunities to present and discuss even small but important issues in the appropriate assemblies which will be escalated to higher levels of the relevant legislature or executive.

11.1.3 Boosting of Consultation, Cooperation, Collaboration, Consensus, and Coordination

Government ministries, departments, agencies, and other public entities operate largely as stand-alone outfits with weak intra-sectoral and inter-sectoral consultation, cooperation, collaboration, consensus, and coordination. They also have weak linkages and partnerships with the private sector, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders. Many of the consultations that presumably happen under the current party system in our democracy are window-dressing consultations that do not truly bring the views of the spectrum of stakeholders into democratic relevance. With stakeholder democracy, the many networks of assemblies to be established will improve effective consultation, cooperation, collaboration, consensus, and coordination between and among the various groups of stakeholders. The multidimensional networks of mutual oversight controls between assemblies will constitute checks and balances on the works of the assemblies and improve transparency, accountability, and quality of decisions.

The fact that spirits of consultation, cooperation, collaboration, consensus, and coordination will reign between assemblies is by no means an indication that there will be no contentions and contestations between or among them. However, compared with the stiff competitions and rivalries within and between political parties, conflicts between assemblies or between different tendencies in an assembly are expected to be at lower levels, magnitudes, and dimensions. They will be subjected to necessary conflict resolution mechanisms before they generate negative effects on the process of governance.

11.1.4 Consolidation of Shared Values and Ethics

Unlike our political parties whose members are usually considered to be strange bedfellows, one of the good things about stakeholder assemblies is that members of each assembly are organic members either on account of their shared youth, gender, or *speciability* characteristics, shared professional, vocational, or occupational callings, shared sectoral interests, or other shared parameters of belongingness. For instance, a woman is an organic member of the Women Assembly if she chooses to be a member, a pharmacist or any other health care professional is an organic member of the Health Assembly if she chooses to belong, and a Nigerian in the diaspora is an organic member of the Diaspora Nigeria Assembly if he chooses to join. Even for assemblies that are made up of different identities such as Geo-ethnic Assembly and Religion Assembly, there are inherent common values of tolerance, equity, justice, and unity expected of the different identities that stand to be consolidated and turned to advantage in the overall assembly.

By creating assemblies for geo-ethnicity and religion, stakeholderism will encourage members to speak and demand for tolerance, equity, justice, and unity within their platforms in a peaceful, civilized, reconciliatory, and mutually beneficial manner as against the extant practice of allowing politicians, ethnic warlords, and religious fanatics to hide behind ethnicity and religion to whip up avoidable ethno-religious sentiments and conflicts to gain personal political advantage. While politicians fan embers of ethno-religious disunity to win elections and call the shots, stakeholders will fan embers of ethno-religious unity in recognition of diversity and the need to harmoniously work together for peace.

In general, the change in governance system, structure, and process that stakeholderism brings will usher in new and improved values, ethics, attitudes, expectations, behaviours, and ways of doing things that are better than what the current social, political, and economic orders offer. With the positive dynamics of group influence waxing strong and dictating the tune, the shared values and ethics of each assembly can be synergized and amplified towards achieving better public governance outcomes and impacts for the country.

11.1.5 Greater Seriousness and Sincerity of Purpose

In practical terms, the primary purpose of political parties is to win elections and to continue to win elections over and over again. Any other purpose in their calculation, however laudable and beneficial to the people, including fulfilment of campaign promises, is secondary to electoral victory. Political parties always work hard to gain, regain, or retain power and to further the interests of the party and its chosen loyalists with only residual regard for public interest. They generally abandon important issues of human security, social welfare, and economic rationality as they take decisions largely based on political expediency, self-preservation, or some high-level vested interests.

Politicians are never as serious and sincere as they should be concerning purpose of leadership and governance. They pay lip service to the real purpose of leadership and governance in favour of electoral values and electoral survival. They spend only about two years out of a four-year tenure

for serious governance, the rest being spent on fiercely competitive and distracting campaigns, strategies, schemings, and struggles before, during, and after elections.

With stakeholderism, there will be a restoration of the purpose of leadership and governance which is service. Indeed, the central focus of good leadership and good governance is service to the people and not just power. Since assemblies and other governance entities will be assigned their respective clear mandates without having to fiercely contest for them, they will be able to devote more quality time to the business of governance with greater seriousness and sincerity of purpose. As seriousness and sincerity of purpose are being brought into leadership and governance even without the familiar jumbo pay packs, the razzmatazz of office, and other paraphernalia of office, public office will henceforth be more attractive to authentic and patriotic men and women who have genuine intentions to serve rather than those who are lustful for money, power, fame, flamboyance, and other ephemeral things. Desire for selfless service with sacrifice and commitment will be the magnetic attraction and driving force for the new stakeholder political actors.

11.1.6 Enhancement of Continuity, Stability, Sustainability, and Long-Term Perspectives

Continuity, stability, and long-term sustainability are rare commodities in the monopolistic and oligopolistic markets of our politicians. In the Nigerian education sector, for instance, the 6-3-3-4 system has suffered many rounds of policy flip-flops. The system has been considered by some stakeholders in the education sector to be laudable with the potential to yield good fruits but it has not been allowed to grow to maturity due to inconsistencies. Experts have observed that a number of state governments have been using and dumping articulation, de-articulation, and re-articulation policies concerning junior and secondary education.

We have witnessed many other occasions whereby policies, plans, and priorities were changed as power changed hands from one party or leader to another. The frequent turnovers of political leaders and public functionaries in the various sectors always lead to unnecessary changes in policies, plans, and priorities. Even within the same administration, there are inconsistencies in government direction. But, where is the public service in this whole scenario?

Anytime a new government assumes power, the masterful posturing of new political leaders, the competitive desire to erase the legacies of the previous government, the hunger and thirst for quick ‘dividends of democracy’, the handshake of corruption between political leaders and public servants, as well as the political and bureaucratic correctness of public servants having to shift allegiance to the new government, including bad ones, go a long way in compromising the important role of the public service as a ‘going concern’ that should preserve institutional memory and continuity of government policies and plans.

Like their counterparts in most other countries, Nigerian political parties and politicians are generally not fulfilled with the limit of their tenures in power and so they scheme aggressively to be in power for as long as possible. They think long-term in terms of political power retention but they act largely short-term in terms of providing socio-economic, infrastructural, and other

solutions. It is generally a good strategy to think long-term and act short-term but the main motive behind politicians' strategy in this context is self-interest and self-preservation. The average Nigerian politician is interested in sharing ready-made cakes and not in baking more and bigger cakes. He is not inclined towards delaying gratifications, saving for the rainy days, investing in youth education, developing human capital, or planning and implementing other long-term development projects. He is always disposed to short-term 'tangible' projects that the electorate can see as bases for re-election. He is normally under pressure to deliver and achieve short-term glory with visible white elephant projects that end up being uncompleted and abandoned.

Under stakeholderism, continuity, stability, sustainability, and long-term perspectives in governance will be enhanced as focus will shift from changeable political parties and their propensity towards quick-fixes to dedicated assemblies that have longevity and security of tenures. Win or lose in executive and legislative elections, assemblies will continue to contribute to governance and exercise oversight responsibilities over their respective sectors. As assemblies stay committed to their various mandates, the advantage of guaranteed tenure that they enjoy will make them not to be unnecessarily in a hurry but allow sufficient space and time to sow, nurture, and reap bumper harvests from long-range investments.

Stakeholderism believes in government of continuity, stability, sustained implementation, and long-term focus on well-thought-out futuristic projects with some short-term focus on the so-called low-hanging fruits, quick-wins, and rapid response projects. Certainly, sustainability of good leadership and good governance is a critical success factor for sustainable progress, growth and development.

11.1.7 De-concentration of Power

Stakeholderism de-concentrates executive power from one leader leading at the tip or apex of power to more than one leader leading at the top of power. For example, instead of having one powerful president calling the shots all through, power is de-concentrated by bringing in more leaders to form a Council of Presidents consisting of six vice-presidents who are to collaborate and take turns as the president. Similarly, at the state level, there will be a Council of Governors consisting of three deputy governors who will collaborate and take turns as the governor. And, at the LGA level, there will be a Committee of Chairpersons consisting of two or three vice chairpersons who will take turns as the LGA chairperson. The system also de-concentrates power from legislative power centres and executive power centres to other centres including stakeholder assemblies which will statutorily be part of governance process. All these come with advantages derivable from building strong structures and institutions as against strong leaders, curtailment of tyrannical exercise of power by potential dictators, and promotion of broad participation and equity in leadership.

By creating spaces for more players, the stakeholder system allows simultaneous participation of many, not few, in governance. It thus reduces the rat race among contenders for leadership. Let us look at executive leadership positions at the federal level as an example to illustrate this point. Under the current system, we can theoretically have one (1) president and one (1) vice president being in power for 8 years [i.e., 2 maximum terms each of 4-year tenure] or one (1) president and

one (1) vice president being in power for 4 years [i.e., 1 single term of 4 years]. This implies that, during a given 24-year period [i.e., 6 terms each of 4-year tenure], there will be a minimum of 3 presidents and 3 vice presidents or a maximum of 6 presidents and 6 vice presidents. But, under stakeholderism, using single term of 6 years, we can have 24 presidents / vice presidents plus 4 prime ministers and 4 deputy prime ministers during the same 24-year period.

11.1.8 Reduction in Workloads of Leadership and Governance Responsibilities

In view of the fact that many stakeholders are involved in governance, the workloads of governance responsibilities on leaders will be drastically reduced. Also, the speed of governance has the potential to increase because of the involvement of more players. At the federal level, these many stakeholders include the six vice presidents, the prime minister, the deputy prime minister, two ministers per ministry, and the fact that the business of governance will be supported by the bicameral legislature and the various assemblies. Relevant issues bordering on policy, legislation, or general governance will be handled by relevant assemblies before being passed to the appropriate executive or legislature for necessary consideration, enactment, approval, or implementation.

With the increase in the number of players in leadership and governance, the span of control and burden of leadership will decrease to more bearable levels. As a deliberate strategy, stakeholderism makes the office of president, governor, chairperson, minister, commissioner, and other leaders less powerful but more participatory, more manageable, more accountable, more effective, more efficient, and less stressful. Leaders have no need to be overburdened with excessive workloads, information overloads, and worrisome expectations that make them develop premature gray hairs.

11.1.9 Reduction in Cost of Election, Cost of Governance, and Level of Corruption

Candidates for elective posts usually spend far more than the maximum amounts stipulated by relevant law or guideline. Candidates and their sponsors exceed limits of prescribed and reasonable expenditures on campaigns and elections with the selfish aim of recouping their expenses after they get into office. And they do recoup their expenses and make enormous 'profits' at the expense of the impoverished public. There will be no reason under stakeholderism why candidates coming to serve the public will have to spend a fortune using personal savings, credit facilities, or other funding sources to get elected. As the stakes, processes, and requirements will be within the reach of candidates, cost of election into various public offices will be more affordable.

Cost of governance will also come down partly because assembly-sponsored part-time legislators who will only earn modest allowances will replace party-sponsored legislators who have been operating supposedly on a full-time basis, drawing jumbo salaries, allowances, and severance packages, and becoming fat cats. Salaries and allowances of public office holders will be reviewed to moderate levels. There will be no need for them to have more than reasonable number of special advisers, special assistants, and personal assistants who are mostly political jobbers that do not necessarily add significant value to the system. Public office holders will get better advice from their respective assemblies and other relevant assemblies. Beyond cutting down on recurrent costs,

the stakeholder system also supports activation of mechanisms for bringing down capital expenditures towards reducing cost of governance.

In addition, the new governance reforms will bring down the level of corruption. For example, there will be no need for party patronage as stakeholder groups, assemblies, and *assemblists* will not be under any pressure or obligation to corruptly induce or reward anybody or group for electoral support. Also, elected and appointed public officers will no longer have absolute powers of command and control that force corruption down the throat of subordinates in the power structure. Public office holders will be answerable to relevant governance entities including assemblies which will be in government – though not necessarily in office – contributing to governance and protecting the interests of the people. Other necessary mechanisms for checks and balances, transparency, accountability, monitoring and evaluation will be constantly enforced towards reducing corruption to minimal levels.

11.1.10 Shift in Governance Process from ‘Top-Down’ to ‘Bottom-Up’

Experience has shown that the Nigerian governance system has been a victim not only of structural defects but also of process defects. Our government institutions at all levels make policies and laws with little or no consultations with stakeholders. Imagine the National Assembly at a time banning export of certain agricultural commodities without consultation with affected commodity associations. Even when legislatures engage in consultations through public hearings, technical committees, or investigation panels, such consultations are rarely done for the purpose of building genuine consensus. The consultations are usually nothing more than political window-dressing and attention-diversion strategies. That explains why invaluable contributions, expert findings, and recommendations from such exercises are utterly discarded or minimally used in policy and law making. What a wanton waste of wonderful resources!

Executive and legislative businesses are normally conducted as top-down activities in a manner that public good is sacrificed for self-enrichment, self-empowerment, or self-preservation. Legislatures always bring for public discussion what suit them, accept what suit them, and throw away excellent opinions of experts and rational voices of the people on the altar of political expediency and pecuniary benefits. In most cases, useful public opinions are discountenanced simply because the opinions do not favour their political and financial calculations. Similarly, executive organs of government often set up special committees with the unfortunate result that the reports of such committees end up decorating the shelves.

The present top-down approach in our governance system encourages influential local and international NGOs, development partners, private individuals and organizations to access our public trees from the top, agree unfavourable deals for harvesting the fruits of our common wealth with the *‘oga’ at the top*, and get the boss and his foot soldiers to give further directives that must trickle down for immediate implementation irrespective of the clear inconsistencies of such orders with extant laws, policies, plans, priorities, rules, regulations, and procedures. As against the regime of ‘order from above’, stakeholderism’s bottom-up approach will allow the system to leverage the wealth of informed expert opinions from relevant stakeholders, assemblies, groups, and bodies for formulation and execution of sound laws, policies, plans, and decisions. It will make

it inappropriate and relatively more difficult for wrong orders to be given from above and implemented by all concerned with impunity and without consequences. By so doing, the system will promote ownership, collective responsibility, consultation, cooperation, collaboration, consensus, and coordination.

Relevant stakeholder assemblies that will be set up will help and contribute to the works of legislatures and executives not as randomly-chosen bodies of individuals by public servants but as purposely-constituted bodies of stakeholders who are part of governance process in their own right. Public servants in Ministries, Departments, and Agencies will provide necessary support to the works of the stakeholder assemblies. In terms of working relationships between the assemblies and public servants, there will be a shift from the current bureaucratic practice of the tail wagging the dog to that of the dog wagging the tail. What that means is that more ownership and control of governance process will be given to the people through stakeholder assemblies whose memberships will also include serving and retired public servants, military personnel, policemen, and others who will like to contribute their knowledge, skills, and experiences to public governance. The bureaucratic system, which has always been an important tool in the hands of politicians, will be repositioned to align with new bureaucratic order and to make it fit-for-purpose.

11.1.11 Shift in Electoral Outcome from ‘Winner-Take-All’ to ‘All-Are-Winners’

In many democracies that operate first-past-the-post electoral system like ours, political competitions create unhealthy rivalries and win-lose situations and outcomes between contending parties. Parties that lost out in elections find themselves outside in the cold. The consequential challenges of these are very obvious in developing countries that are yet to attain satisfactory levels of free and fair elections and political maturity to deal with electoral loss. With the current conventional system, what we normally have is ‘winner-take-all’ whereby one party, having won an election possibly with just a slight majority or a narrow plurality of votes, gets crowned as the ruling party and takes all the electoral prizes to the exclusion of all other parties whose substantial share of the votes have to be dumped in the dustbin of political history. Sometimes, a coalition government is established whereby only two or a few parties are involved in governance while all other parties go home empty-handed.

With the stakeholder system, democratic practices will thrive on cooperation and collaboration and create win-win scenarios between assemblies, groups, and other governance entities. Assemblies and groups that lost out in elections will still be part of governance process to a large and significant extent. All entities are to be involved in governance process and are expected to do their best in specific and general terms. Win or lose, an assembly that is supposed to be the default or one of the default go-to assemblies in filling a public post or handling a public issue will not be denied. This will be on account of the assembly’s technical, professional, or other competences, or its recognized identity rights.

Each assembly will have its well-defined operational space. Its lead, primary, secondary, and tertiary responsibilities will not be subjects of arbitrary competition or hijack by another assembly. Assemblies can however exercise influence on each other based on the principle of interdependence and intervention through the legislature, joint assemblies, or other approved

forums. Simultaneously, therefore, while some assemblies will be winners, others will be champions, and some others will be victors in their own ways. It is a case of ‘all-are-winners-in-their-own-right’. The system of ‘winner-take-all’ will give way to ‘all-are-winners’ which is better for all stakeholders and which makes the overall system to cooperate and operate at its optimum.

11.2 Demerits

The following are the demerits of the stakeholder system which will be discussed one after the other:

1. New system, same Nigerians
2. Complexity and acceptability
3. Speed of decision making
4. Limitation of extraordinary leaders
5. Reduced franchise and influence of illiterates, semi-illiterates, and lowly-educated stakeholders

11.2.1 New System, Same Nigerians

Critics may reason by saying: What is this idea of new political platforms they are talking about? Is it not the same Nigerians that will occupy and run the new platforms? Yes, critics are right to some extent. But we all know that the overt and covert behaviours, intentions, attitudes, beliefs, and social norms of people are partly influenced by group-related factors and the environment of their actions. The culture, dynamics, forces, societal expectations, peer pressures, and *esprit de corps* operating among fellow politicians in a partisan terrain of win-lose competitions with focus on humongous pecuniary benefits are not the same as those that will operate among members of stakeholder groups and assemblies in a non-partisan win-win environment with focus on selfless service for common good. If you take students to a lively musical concert, they will be ecstatic and noisy; but if you take the same set of students to a library, they will be serious and quiet. Platforms and rules of engagement matter!

In other words, the rules, processes, and practices that will be in place in running the proposed stakeholder groups and assemblies, for which appropriate sanctions will be meted out when flouted, will not be the same as those of political parties. And that makes significant difference! This is in spite of the fact that the people who will participate in the enterprise of governance under stakeholderism will include not only new stakeholder political actors but also eligible party politicians who are equally credible stakeholders in their own right.

11.2.2 Complexity and Acceptability

It may be argued that the stakeholder system appears more complex to run than the party system. This is due to the multiplicity of stakeholder groups and assemblies and the collaborative networks of interactions between them which are actually a good thing. Moreover, new systems typically

come with their own complicated teething problems and sacrifices. A new way of doing things will definitely come with some challenges but these should be taken as challenging opportunities rather than threats. The stakeholder system may be complex to operate in the beginning but with time, effort, technology, and practice, it will become relatively simpler. As implementation progresses, we will get used to the system and the initial complexity will considerably diminish. Such is the case with almost all new ways of doing things compared with old familiar ways. In our globalizing world, complexity and dynamism cannot be wished away or totally avoided but managed.

On the flip side, one can actually contend that the relative simplicity of operating the party system is the same simplicity with which the party politicians craft and push through bad anti-people policies and self-serving jumbo entitlements. Indeed, the relative ease that may be associated with operating party democracy in comparison with stakeholder democracy is unfortunately the same ease with which the so-called strange political bedfellows and political enemies get united in corruption and in permanent self-interest.

However, in spite of the failings of the party system in Nigeria, it cannot be taken for granted that the new system will be readily accepted by all stakeholders. With the introduction of a new system, some level of apathy or resistance is expected as aversion to change is a natural phenomenon with humans. When people have mastered, imbibed, and accepted an old practice and have created complacent comfort zones, they would not willingly want to abandon it even when it is not working optimally. Politicians in particular have mastered the dirty old game of partisan politics and would naturally not want the game to be over. The desire to hold on to and sustain existing ways blocks new and alternative ways of doing things better. But society must outgrow its comfort zones and fear of the unknown to outgrow its limitations and achieve its breakthrough.

11.2.3 Speed of Decision Making

Consensus building and decision-making processes involve plurality of assemblies and require wide networks of consultations. In view of the need for wider consultations with stakeholders and the perceived complexity of the process, decision making may be relatively slower under stakeholder democracy than under the current system we operate.

Even though the networks of mandatory consultations among and between assemblies may, on one hand, slow down decision making by leaders, the shared and reduced workloads of leadership and governance responsibilities may, on the other hand, increase their speed of decision making. These could have resultant counter-balancing effect on the overall speed of government business. Besides, the slow speed can be compensated for by the thoroughness and multidimensional perspectives of contributions from the various assemblies as well as the increased quality, ownership, implementability, and sustainability of policies and decisions arising from the wide consultations. The slowness can also be regarded as a short-term cost whose long-term benefits are worth waiting for. Hasty decisions are not necessarily the best. Moreover, technology can facilitate and fast-track the various processes.

11.2.4 Limitation of Extraordinary Leaders

When power is diffused, as proposed under stakeholderism, from one person leading at the tip to more than one person who are to lead at the top, with the need for greater consultation, cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, it brings some of the advantages we have seen under Section 11.1. However, in the likely and occasional event that a society is blessed with a strong, visionary, dynamic, innovative, benevolent, or otherwise extraordinary leader, his or her caring moves to leapfrog the society can be restricted under stakeholderism by the wide consultative networks of the executive and the legislature.

The consolation is that strong, visionary, dynamic, innovative, and benevolent leaders are also susceptible to being restricted under the party system especially by strong opposition parties which may be in legislative majority, uncooperative anti-party members of the ruling party, or a generally hostile conservative legislature that refuses to see, understand, or share the leader's vision. Besides, if a society is left with only one choice, it is better to go for strong institutions than strong extraordinary leaders. It is acceptable to trade off the potential great benefits of extraordinary leadership that does not come in every season for the good-enough benefits of strong sustainable systems that we can always bank on. Such indeed is life: You win some, you lose some.

That said, a possible win-win option to help such an extraordinary leader and help the society in situations where consensus of the network of assemblies for laudable initiatives may be difficult, impossible, or face dangerous delays to achieve is to make a legal provision for the legislature to grant the leader special / ad hoc powers (that can easily and quickly be withdrawn in case of abuse) that will make him or her progress with the vision with less democratic bottlenecks. In special circumstances – such as war, anarchy, developmental emergency, and other extraordinary circumstances – without taking anything away from the imperatives and merits of following stipulated democratic processes, a proactive special arrangement that temporarily relaxes democratic bottlenecks to enable an extraordinary leader achieve some desired good purpose is nothing but productive. In such circumstances, a purposeful and productive potentate is better than a drift and dysfunctional democrat.

11.2.5 Reduced Franchise and Influence of Poor Illiterates, Semi-illiterates, and Lowly-Educated Stakeholders

The stakeholder system may be seen by critics as being discriminatory against poor illiterates, semi-illiterates, and lowly-educated stakeholders by reducing their voting rights and assembly membership rights. The counter argument is that, even though these categories of stakeholders are not limited in terms of membership of political parties and voting rights, they are like pawns on the electioneering chessboards of political elites due to their illiteracy and poverty.

Whatever we do to limit these groups of stakeholders from continuous exposure to manipulation by the elites and delivery of massive votes is not really a discrimination but a strategic repositioning for the good of all. Of what use, by the way, is the partisan electoral equality given to the poor illiterates that normally gets hijacked by politicians, induced for wrong voting, and results in bad governance and socio-economic inequity against all of us? Of what use is the partisan

key of full electoral franchise given to the weak and ill-informed that cannot be used to open the door of abundance and human security for all of us? And on what basis will one argue for automatic enjoyment of voting rights by any group without arguing for automatic discharge of civic obligations such as payment of tax by that group? I believe, with all sense of equity and progress, that these groups of vulnerable voters are too much at the mercy of the political elites and should therefore be removed from the politicians' apron strings in their own interest and in the larger interest of the society.

11.3 Conclusion

On account of the foregoing merits and demerits, I wish to submit that the stakeholder system will give opportunities for better, cheaper, faster, and more sustainable results for all stakeholders than the party system. It is not as if we cannot achieve anything under the current party system with gradual changes in the democratic process. It is just that the positive changes that are happening or are likely to happen under the control of the politicians are too inadequate, too isolated, too uncoordinated, and too checkmated by taking one step forward and two steps backward. The positive changes are moreover too slow for a country that aspires to catch up with the rest of the world that are already in motion and not slowing down. The party system should therefore be replaced with the stakeholder system.

In all fairness, the current party system is not all about tales of woe. As a strategy, stakeholderism will separate the wheat from the chaff of the current system by consolidating constitutional provisions, laws, rules, regulations, procedures, and practices that are considered to be good and discarding those that are bad.

Some people with nostalgic sense of history will submit that the party system worked in Nigeria especially during the parliamentary period from pre-independence to the first republic, and that it is still working in advanced democracies. They will argue that the party system should not be abandoned bearing in mind the good works of leaders such as Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Sir Ahmadu Bello, and other past and contemporary leaders. We should however remember that whatever good was achieved or is being achieved with the party system at those times and in those climes should not necessarily be considered as the ultimate. Those periods had their own shortcomings and things could have been done better. Contentment with current achievements is a virtue but, if taken to the extreme, can lead to complacency. The good is certainly good but it is not good enough if there is ample room for the better which can also be changed or improved upon to get the best.

We should also remember that our society stands to benefit more from strong beneficial systems that are sustainable and can influence or almost force leaders towards good governance rather than from strong benevolent leaders that come and go. This is an important feature that has been missing in our own version of the party system compared with those of developed countries. Society will not develop to its fullest potential if it is left to the discretionary benevolence of good leaders who come seasonally and are followed by series of bad leaders who will undo the good works of their predecessors. Society will be at its ultimate if strong benevolent leaders emerge from and operate within strong beneficial systems.

The party system appears to me as one of the many systems that are no longer sufficient for our country and our globalized world. There is an urgent need for significant paradigm shifts in many areas of our national life and our global society. We must proactively begin to have a quick turnaround in the way we see and do things to enable us change many things around.

CHAPTER 12

ARISE, O STAKEHOLDERS OF NIGERIA! PLEASE, BEGIN TO ASSEMBLE FOR NAIJA REPUBLIC

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.” – Barack Obama

12.1 Message to the Political Establishment

In line with Section 4.2, one of the objectives of stakeholderism is to replace political parties with stakeholder groups and assemblies. This is a demand against the party system in Nigeria and not against the government in power or any particular leader. It is not about whether the current set of leaders, beginning with the president down to the councillors, are doing well or not, and whether or not they will continue to do well. It’s not about whether those who may govern after the current set will do well or not. It’s really about the people preferring to put their trust not in strong leaders who may or may not do well but in strong institutions that will enforce and institutionalize good governance in a land full of opportunities.

We are for peaceful transformative change and not for bloody revolutionary change. We are for peace and not for war. We have nothing against progressive and selfless politicians. They are men and women of good faith and goodwill, and are an asset to the society. Rather than putting all politicians in the same pigeonhole, we believe that some are like good old wine that can be repackaged in a new bottle for the new dispensation. Such politicians are encouraged to dump the party system and join forces with stakeholders to usher in stakeholder democracy in the larger interest of the society.

With groups and assemblies working together synergistically as replacements for political parties under the new system, the democratic space will witness credible sets of stakeholder democrats replacing partisan autocrats, stakeholder *assemblists* replacing party politicians, mutually-tolerant stakeholder collaborators replacing identity champions, political professionals replacing professional politicians, and servant leaders replacing master rulers. In order to make these happen, you will see stakeholders in their numbers planning, coordinating, and implementing their strategic actions towards creating a new progressive society that they desire.

Our eminent personalities who are in power and are vested with authority that we must and do respect are hereby invited to kindly receive this message on behalf of the political establishment. The great people of Nigeria are bored and stressed out with the unfulfilled promises of many politicians. In fact, progressive Nigerians at home and abroad have had enough of deceitful rhetorics, empty soundbites, meaningless mantras, partisan antics, ethno-religious politics, and selfish intrigues of the politicians. They have decided to break free from the politicians’ firm grips and break away from their self-serving partisan system to enable them break new grounds and achieve socio-economic and political breakthroughs. They have decided to work and pull their resources together through assemblies and groups as progressive partners on equitable terms of engagement. They will come together with great spirits of togetherness and common laudable

objectives in mind. Progressive people are indeed a wise set of people! They know what they really want and they will achieve their hearts' desires to the glory of the Almighty.

In the light of this, I humbly wish to implore our political leaders who are in or out of power and authority to listen as the angel of the Lord in me is whispering to the angels of the Lord in you to let go of the people as they arise and begin to assemble to build Naija Republic for the benediction of the people and to the glory of God.

12.2 Message to Framers of the 1999 Constitution

Thank you very much for the good job of formulating the 1999 Constitution, even though a better job could have been done. One wonders why a supposedly honourable document such as the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was made to lie against the people by deliberately and strategically including in it the phrase "We the people" to portray the people as the author of the Constitution whereas the Constitution was originally a military bequest. With their eyes and minds open to see reason, how and why will the people constitutionally give themselves some fundamental rights and take those rights back immediately as being unenforceable? That could only have been done by some mean 'masters' who fully recognized that their 'slaves' would get hungry and thirsty but counted them out of food and water while they as masters misappropriated to themselves more than enough to eat and drink.

To the extent that the Constitution is truly not the complete voice or choice of "We the people", the supreme will of the people should override all anti-people and pro-establishment provisions of the Constitution. Indeed, we are at the verge of witnessing constitutional reform through the supreme will and action of the great people of Nigeria. Members of the ruling class have taken Nigerians for granted over the years because Nigerians have given them the impression of being docile and having the ability to cope by suffering and smiling; but the other side of the same Nigerians is that they are assertive and progressive and will demand for their rights in the fullness of time. And the time for that begins NOW. Now is the time to begin to upturn the illogical practice of servants of the people becoming and acting as masters of the people. Now is the time to begin to change the irony of rulers, who are in minority, having their crooked way while the people, who are in majority, only have their say.

Stakeholders, especially the millennials, Gen Zs, and newer generations of youths, do not believe in the concept of government as an esoteric conclave of cloned, recycled, and sit-tight leaders. Stakeholders strongly believe in open government. They believe that, if what is due to Caesar must be given to Caesar, democracy as a government of the people by the people for the people must involve active participation of the people. By the time stakeholders get their acts together and come together as organized legal entities within the framework of the current Nigerian Constitution, though they do not believe that the Constitution is truly a people's constitution, you will begin to hear them, especially the youths among them, singing with enthusiasm as they call others to join them to dance with joy:

We the People

Who are the people?
We stakeholders
We are the people
We the people

We are mobilizing
The stakeholders
We are mobilizing
We the people

We are organizing
The stakeholders
We are organizing
We the people

We are synergizing
The stakeholders
We are synergizing
We the people

We are drafting Constitution
Constitution of the people
Constitution by the people
Constitution for the people

We are reforming our government
Our government of the people
Our government by the people
Our government for the people

Who are the people?
We stakeholders
We are the people
We the people

12.3 Message to Stakeholder Democrats and ‘Peaceful Warriors’

With the myriad of challenges in Nigeria emanating from years of poor organization, poor leadership, and other factors, kindly permit me to ask you this simple question: Are you one of those who just complain in their homes, workplaces, newspaper stands, or other places? Or one of those who are willing, able, and ready – like a ‘peaceful warrior’ – to join others to take non-violent strategic actions towards making positive change happen?

I challenge you to come in peace and operate as an awesome peaceful warrior with loads of strategies and charitable words, not abusive and aggressive words, from your arsenal. You are a

realistic non-revolutionary change agent who must believe in change as a strategic process. You have a big stake in the country, and you will not allow stakers to continue gambling with your interests. Otherwise, all of us will continue to pay dearly for not holding and using our stakes. You have all it takes to bring about positive change, and you will give all it takes to kick-start, sustain, and complete the process.

Stakeholder Democrats and 'Peaceful Warriors'

If you're WAR, meaning you're Willing, Able, and Ready
To work for peaceful transformative change in the society
You're a 'peaceful warrior'
Against the corrupt establishment
An awesome warrior in the kingdom of goodness
Not an awful warrior in the kingdom of evil
A great asset to present and future generations of the society

Our war is not a war of judgment and violence
But of repentance and acceptance
Our war is not a war of dispossession of power and authority
But of repossession of sovereignty
Which, in the first place, belongs to 'we the people'
Our war is not a war of spoils and perks
But of the greatest good for the greatest proportion of the people

Be you in the north, south, east. or west
Here's a clarion call to all
A clarion call to join the great movement of stakeholders
Arise, O ye that are willing, able, and ready!
Arise, O stakeholder democrats and peaceful warriors!
Please, begin to assemble to build Naija Republic
For the benediction of the people and to the glory of God

12.4 Key Implementation Strategy

The need has arisen for us to strategically organize ourselves for action. Part of that is the need to register as a political party. People will definitely wonder and ask why we are going to register as a party, since the focus of our demand is actually against the party system. Registering as a political party truly sounds paradoxical and self-contradictory for a group that is against the party system, but that is the constitutional way out unless they want us to become ordinary noise makers. Due to the extant constitutional requirement of membership of a political party as a precondition for contesting for public posts, stakeholders will need a legitimate platform of their own to ventilate their ideologies and to contest for and win elections. This will be a stopgap measure that will enable them push for stakeholder politics of development as against partisan politics of power.

It is really not the perfect desire of stakeholder democrats to have anything to do with the party system but, since the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has no provision for non-party politics, stakeholders will have to get into the ship of party politics to adjust the sails. They will have to play a sucker to catch a sucker. They will have to act like a monkey to catch a monkey. And step by step, you can catch a monkey in the forest. If it takes flying in the air like birds to checkmate the birds of bad governance, stakeholders must fly, not with the futile flapping wings of an ostrich but with the strong soaring wings of an eagle. And soar they will, like eagles, through the eye of the political storm with excellent vision, focus, and determination.

It is in this wise that all stakeholders who would like to key in to stakeholderism, push for, and bring about the desired developmental change are invited to join the great movement of stakeholders to be established soon, with a view to contesting for elections into public posts. All stakeholders are more than welcome as the struggle for change is not a ‘one man show’. The movement will become a progressive party bearing in mind that it will only be a political party in the interim to satisfy all constitutional righteousness. Detailed arrangements will unfold as stakeholders meet and build consensus towards plans, strategies, and implementation.

12.5 Stakeholders’ Proclamation

This is the end of our beautiful story and, by God’s grace, the beginning of the journey towards the realization of the vision and mission of a new Nigeria. We have to work for the new Nigeria of our dream because it will not come overnight and be served at breakfast *à la carte*. On the march towards our vision and mission, I humbly wish to present to you, for your consideration, input, adoption, and action, the Stakeholders’ Proclamation on the next page:

STAKEHOLDERS' PROCLAMATION:

The Great Proclamation of People's Sovereignty, Progressive Participation, and Inclusive Governance

Recognizing the unity and Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
Considering Nigeria's social, political, and economic antecedents
Conscious of the people's inalienable human and democratic rights
Concerned about the people's security, welfare, liberty, and dignity
Willing, able, and ready to help our country and ourselves by God's grace

We the united and progressive people of Nigeria
The resourceful and resilient people of Nigeria
The great and dynamic people of Nigeria
Against whom the decreed Constitution told a lie
Do hereby proclaim this day:

That, as free civilized individuals
And as free civilized groups and nationalities
We have resolved
To free ourselves from the bondage of oppression
And from the shackles of leadership failure

That, as bona fide owners of sovereignty
We have resolved
To reclaim our sovereignty from party politicians and their cronies
Those who are expected to be our servant leaders
But have turned out to be our master rulers

That, as people of sound minds
We have resolved
To dissolve any presumed social contract with the politicians
To the extent of its solo presumption
And, more so, to the extent of its serial breach and failure

That, as people of destiny
We the people have resolved
To selflessly carry our common destiny in our own hands with thanks and praises to God
To chart the path towards the realization of our great potential
As the most populous black country in the world

That, as results-oriented team players filled with Naija spirit
We the people have resolved
To purposefully come together and get organized in the name of the merciful God
To cooperate and collaborate under and not against the law of the land
With seriousness and sincerity of purpose, unity, and faith

That, as responsible and sensible Naija stakeholders
We the people have resolved
To collectively participate in leadership and governance with trust in the blessing of God
To bring about sustainable good governance, growth, and development
Towards the shared values and common good of our society

Arise, therefore, O people of Naija!
Arise, O friends of Naija!
Arise, O stakeholders of Naija!
Please, begin to assemble to build Naija Republic
For the benediction of the people and to the glory of God

About the Author

Bolaji Oladejo, also known as Mobolaji Lateef Oladejo, is an alumnus of the London School of Economics & Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, and University of Ilorin. He is also an executive alumnus of Harvard School of Public Health, University of Nagasaki [under the auspices of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)], and University of Maiduguri. He is a Certified Management Consultant (CMC), a Fellow of the Institute of Management Consultants (FIMC), a Fellow of London Goodenough College, and a registered member of African Health Economics and Policy Association (AfHEA).

During his civil service career spanning about 30 years largely in Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Health where he retired as a director, he acquired skills in development, management, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans, programmes, and projects as well as coordination of public-private partnership. Before then, he had worked as Assistant Leasing Manager with SCOA Motors, Lagos.

Bolaji strongly believes in tolerance, fairness, equity, justice, and peace. He is enthusiastic about people-oriented public leadership, good governance, socio-economic development, and societal welfare. He speaks Yoruba as his mother tongue and has advanced proficiency in English, intermediate proficiency in French, basic proficiency in Hausa, and intermediate reading proficiency in Classical Arabic. He is happily married with three children.

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About the Book

Democratic Stakeholderism believes that, within the uncontrolled premises of poverty, illiteracy, ethnicity, religion, and corruption, the party system in Nigeria has been advancing the course of party politicians and their collaborators but has been yielding disappointing dividends of democracy for ordinary stakeholders.

With the goal of building, by 2035, a progressive society of servant leaders leading public affairs with broad participation, transparency, accountability, integrity, equity, merit, effectiveness, and efficiency towards good governance, the book proposes constitutional reforms that include, but are not limited to, the following: Introduction of stakeholder groups and assemblies as replacements for political parties; Establishment of Council of Presidents comprising six zonal vice presidents who will rotate power as president; Creation of the post of prime minister who will share powers with the president; Establishment of Council of Governors comprising three zonal deputy governors who will rotate power as governor; Creation of the post of premier who will share powers with the governor; Rotation of LGA chairmanship powers among two or three vice chairmen as members of the Committee of LGA Chairmen; Operation of bicameral legislatures at the federal and state levels while the legislature at the LGA level will continue to be unicameral but cease to operate as a merged entity of the legislature and the executive based on the principle of separation of powers; Adoption of part-time representation in legislatures; Reversal of top-down approach to bottom-up approach in governance process; and Restructuring of the federal republic through diffusion of powers, devolution of powers, and fiscal federalism.

The book consists of 12 chapters, viz: (1) Wake Up! Take Back Your Sovereignty (2) Democratic Stakeholderism as a Win-Win Restructuring Option (3) Vision and Mission (4) Goal and Objectives (5) Underlying Philosophies and Ideologies (6) Core Values (7) Guiding Principles (8) Introducing Stakeholder Groups and Assemblies as New Governance Entities (9) Restructuring Existing Governance Entities (10) Highlight of Power and Responsibility Sharing Between Governance Entities (11) Merits and Demerits of the Stakeholder System (12) Arise, O Stakeholders of Nigeria! Please, Begin to Assemble for Naija Republic

The book uses a bit of poetic language in some of its sections to motivate stakeholders to arise and collaborate within extant laws to bring about developmental change.