



Lower Niger Congress

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RESOLUTIONS OF THE SOLEMN ASSEMBLY OF THE PEOPLES OF THE LOWER NIGER HELD MONDAY 27TH APRIL 2015

At a Solemn Assembly of the Peoples of the Lower Niger (hereinafter called “the Assembly”) convened by the Lower Niger Congress (hereinafter called “the Congress”) on 27th April, 2015 at the Atlantic Hall of Hotel Presidential, Port Harcourt, the Delegates, observed and deliberated as follows:

- i. That Nigeria at inception in 1914 was purely a commercial venture of the British Crown which paid the Royal Niger Company the sum £865,000 in 1900 to acquire proprietary rights over the vast territory it later christened Nigeria. It was not a Union of willing Allies.
- ii. That the lopsided Constitutional arrangements, emplaced by the Colonial Authorities of the time simply created a Master-Servant Union in which Southern Nigeria including the Lower Niger was constitutionally subjugated to the then Northern Nigeria.
- iii. That the imbalances orchestrated by that structure left behind by Britain in 1960, quickly imploded between 1961 and 1966 resulting in two bloody coups d'états and xenophobic massacre of more than a hundred thousand peoples of the Lower Niger (then Eastern Nigeria), living in the North of Nigeria, further deteriorating to the collapse of the Nigerian Union and its Federal Constitution.
- iv. That the attempt to restore the failed Nigeria Union via a Conference of the then Military Leaders in Aburi Ghana was frustrated when upon return to Nigeria the Government of the rest of Nigeria led by Yakubu Gowon abandoned the agreement reached in Aburi and chose instead to wage a genocidal war which consumed more than 3 Million lives of the People of the Lower Niger between 1967 and 1970.
- v. Subsequent attempts to return to discussions that will bring everybody back to the Union on equitable terms had been rebuffed and blocked by the alliance led by the “Born to rule” of the conservative North and supported by the renegade wing of the South-West, the latest being the 2014 National Conference where they (North/South-West alliance) declared that the terms of the Nigeria Union (and therefore the enslavement of the Lower Niger) was not negotiable.

- vi. On the point of blocking dialogue, it will be recalled that President Goodluck Jonathan, while inaugurating the Presidential Advisory Committee on the 2014 National Conference, expressly stated that **“the Conference is aimed at realistically examining and genuinely resolving, long standing impediments to our cohesion and development, as a truly United Country”**. The North/South-West Alliance at the Conference riled against this clear position of the President by procuring the first decision of the Conference that the terms of our Unity was not up for discussion.
- vii. That the current Constitution imposed by Decrees made exclusively by officers from the rest of Nigeria between 1966-1999 enslave the Peoples of the Lower Niger, severely constricts our development as a society and exposes us to routine mass slaughter under the guise of religion and politics.
- viii. Specific provisions in the imposed 1999 Constitution which injure and enslave the Lower Niger, for which reason we reject the document as the basis of our Union include;
- (a) The claim in the preamble that “we the people” solemnly resolved to submit our Peoples and our lands into the Union of Nigeria and therefore made and enacted that Constitution. This claim is patently false and therefore renders Nigeria’s sole title document (the Constitution) a forgery and a fraud against the Lower Niger. Until this is fully addressed, Nigeria and its licencees in our Territory hold our assets with forged instrument.
- (b) The 36 States and 774 Local Government structure imposed via decrees by officers from the rest of Nigeria render the Lower Niger an insignificant minority both in the places of decision making (the National Assembly - NASS) and in terms of sharing revenues and other benefits.
- (c) The 68 item Federal Exclusive List which confiscates both our assets and our rights to deploy those assets towards our developmental needs. Chief amongst these Constitutional deprivations includes the right to generate, transmit and distribute electricity from our huge endowments, in coal, oil, gas and hydro resources. Same goes for our right to secure our spaces by way of policing, ports, railways, highways and other infrastructure. The North/ South-West titrates our development from the centre.
- (d) The so-called Federal Character and its concomitant Quota System that has imposed mediocrity as the standard of Nigeria to which the Lower Niger must fit itself. The damage to the Lower Niger from this is unquantifiable.
- (e) The several mentions of Sharia in the Constitution in the face of Section 10 of the same document that prohibits adoption of State religion, has left a leeway for several States in the far North to impose Sharia, which in turn activated an enforcement army

called Boko Haram, which owes it an obligation to their faith to kill the “infidel”, a category to which the Peoples of the Lower Niger fall, in their warped estimation. To now be face to face with the spectre of having as President in the name of one Nigeria, a known sympathizer of the Sharia whose role in the 1966-1970 xenophobic and genocidal campaigns against the Peoples of the Lower Niger remain starkly unaddressed, presents a grave concern to the peoples of the Territory.

In view of viii (a-e) above, those who sit in Lagos, Abuja, London and Washington to hail what is going on in Nigeria as “democracy”, will do well to remember that in the apartheid era South Africa, elections were held every 5 years in what Margret Thatcher and her co-travellers hailed as “democracy” but which Nelson Mandela, Oliver Thambo and the blacks of South Africa rued as internal colonialism. Like the Blacks of South Africa of the Apartheid era, we in the Lower Niger feel the pangs of internal colonialism thrust upon us by erstwhile compatriots in Nigeria.

The men of God, the Lawyers and the so-called Civil Society Activists who go about pontificating on “democracy”, “free and fair elections” and such jaded hogwash, whilst closing their eyes to this weighty question of internal colonialism are either ignorant or dishonest. The Lower Niger Congress challenges them to speak up on these issues as silence mean connivance with our tormentors. The youths whose future is at stake here should invest a fraction of the time they spend on Man U and Arsenal to join this debate and action.

Those who gather in Abuja every month to share proceeds from the oil and gas confiscated in the name of a war that ended in 1970 should ponder over their role in this continuing criminality.

- ix. That the geo-political realities presented in the electoral map of the 2015 contest is one in which the rest of the country ganged up in conspiratorial alliance against the Lower Niger, constitutes a clear REFERENDUM on the notorious National Question regarding our mutual co-existence as one Political Union (One Nigeria).

Upon presentations made to the Solemn Assembly by the Lower Niger Congress, the Solemn Assembly resolved that having been openly rejected by the rest of Nigeria and in view of our Right to Self Determination as enunciated in the United Nations Declaration and the Right of Indigenous Peoples 2007 Article 3,4,&5, to take steps in exercise of that Right by seeking a future outside the Union of attrition called Nigeria via a Non-violent process driven by Consensus of the Peoples of the Territory verified through a Referendum. The Assembly adopted the 1885 map of the Lower Niger as the geographical basis of our proposed Federation.

ACCORDINGLY, the following steps were Mandated by the Solemn Assembly:

1. The distillation of a Charter of Relationship by the Ethnic Nations of the Lower Niger according to the aforesaid 1885 map which may become the basis of the Federating Constitution of the proposed Lower Niger Federation.
2. A Referendum of the Peoples of the Lower Niger on the Question of Self-Determination to be preceded by extensive consultations with the populace mainly through Town Hall Meetings as well as consultations with international Stake-Holders via direct representations.
3. To avoid a repeat of the wicked expropriation of Assets enacted against the People of Lower Niger in 1970 via the Abandoned Property Decree, AN ASSETS PROTECTION AND GUARANTEE SCHEME (APGS) to secure, at least in value, the Assets of the Peoples of the Lower Niger situated outside the Lower Niger Territory within Nigeria.
4. A recall home for consultations of all persons of the Lower Niger elected or appointed, present or prospective, or in any other way connected with the management of Nigeria under the current Constitution with a view to determining the propriety or otherwise further participation, in the affairs of the Union (formal announcements specifying dates and venues for such consultations shall be made in due course).
5. A Standing All-purpose Committee of the Solemn Assembly to be constituted to oversee the processes herein outlined and to deal with discussions involving all Persons and Institutions in furtherance to these Mandates of the Solemn Assembly.

AS WE PREPARE FOR THIS ALL IMPORTANT REFERENDUM ON SELF DETERMINATION. LET IT BE KNOWN TO THE WHOLE WORLD THAT THE UNION OF NIGERIA IS NOW A DISPUTED PROJECT AND UNTIL THE DISPUTES ARE FULLY RESOLVED, ALL INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS ARE HEREBY PUT ON NOTICE AND ADVISED TO TAKE THESE REALITIES INTO ACCOUNT IN THEIR DEALINGS.

SIGNED: for and on behalf of the SOLEMN ASSEMBLY:

IKEMBA (COL.) JOE ACHUZIA (RTD)
CHAIRMAN OF THE SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

Signed for and on behalf of the Conveners:

FRED AGBEYEGBE ESQ
PRESIDENT - LOWER NIGER CONGRESS

OGORIBA, TIMI KAISER-WILHELM
CO-CONVENER

TONY NNADI
SECRETARY GENERAL
LOWER NIGER CONGRESS