

## **COMMUNIQUE: FIXING NIGERIA 2.0**

### **Introduction:**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Fixing Nigeria Project organised by the Ernest and Ibrahim Foundation held on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2018, at the NICON LUXURY Hotel, Abuja. The theme of the Conference was ***“Promoting Good Governance, and Active Youth Participation in Politics”***.

### **Overview:**

The 1 day meeting had the presence of over 600 youth from across the nation, and appreciated the attendance, participation and invaluable contributions of all participants, particularly the speakers / facilitators amongst whom were, INEC Chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu; Sentel Barnes - Country Director, International Republican Institute; Ms Comfort Lamptey - UN Women Country Rep; Dr Mohammed Nurudeen, Fmr. Minister of State, Foreign Affairs; Shamsudeen M.D. Yusuf - Bulaman Zazzau; Commodore Kabiru Aliyu, Rep for the Centre for Crises Communication; Peter Cole - CEO, Ocean Glory Commodities Ltd; Samson Itodo - Convener, #NotTooYoungToRun; Ayisha Osori - Author, Love Does Not Win Elections; Aminu Gamawa - Havard Lawyer; Jakie Ikeotuonye - Good Governance Advocate; Ifeanyi Aniago, Snr Special Assistant, Youth Development and Digital Entrepreneurship, Anambra State; Emmanuel Njoku, ED, Connected Development (CODE); Hajiya Hadiza Aminu Dorayi; Zainab.....; Amada Chisom - CEO, TournBlaze Media Consult; Emeka Diru, Fellow, IVLP, United States; Orezi Emeotu, Convener, GymNetwork; Uju Nwachukwu, OAP, KissFm and NEKA, Singer and Songwriter.

Rukayat Ibrahim, presided the opening ceremony which was followed by series of Speeches and 3 panel discussions including the Political Market Square. The conference commended the efforts of the Fixing Nigeria Team on taking the initiative of pushing for more active youth involvement in politics.

### **Presentations / Discussions**

Rukayat Ibrahim in her opening remark welcomed all participants and expressed optimism in the line-up of speakers present for the event. In her speech, she stated

*“We can’t have good governance, youth participation and decision making in politics without being patriotic participants in the process. I see patriotism as an important aspect of any nation building because without national loyalty, strong devotion, and support towards each other and our country Nigeria, we cannot achieve the greatness we are striving to reach.*

*To become true patriots and unite together as a nation, we must appreciate the many differences, complexities, and diversity that makes us Nigeria. We must fight against bigotry and discriminatory practices across our institutions and public offices. We must celebrate together our various spiritual, ethnic, and tribal differences to become the Nigeria we all hope and pray so much to one day witness”.*

This was immediately followed by a Paper titled.....by Dr Nurudeen Mohammed who highlighted on the importance of mobilizing ideas towards specific goals with which we can hold the government accountable. He also stressed the need for need for youth to mobilize along political lines to challenge their ideals.

The second paper “Indices of Good Governance” by Commodore Kabiru Aliyu representative of the Center for Crisis Control and International Development highlighted the six dimensions of good governance, Accountability, Political Stability, Rule of Law, Government Effectiveness, Transparency, Control of Corruption, and Regulatory Quality. He also stressed the need for transformational leadership style as a model for achieving good governance.

The Convener of the #NotTooYoungToRun Samson Itodo, in his thought provoking speech highlighted the ills that we’ve become accustomed to due to political correctness. He stated that the greatest threat to 2019 elections are uninformed voters. With over 60% of our population as youth, yet only 29m voters determined our fate. He said “politics is everything, and as youths, we must get involved and ask the right questions”. We must engage our elected reps and hold them accountable. He further stressed the need for youths to Unite and to achieve this we must align in our values and interests.

The First plenary anchored by Rukayat Ibrahim on the topic “Youth in Politics” had on the panel Smason Itodo, Dr Nurudeen Mohammed, Engr. Ifeanyi Aniago, and Aisha Osori who talked about her experience as a young person who ran for office stated that, politics in Nigeria is an industry that doesn’t like outsiders. She stated that Nigeria still has the lowest number of women in parliament today and encouraged young people to think differently, join a political party, get your PVCs, and to Love Nigeria before Nigeria Loves us. Mr Ifeanyi Aniago in his statement said, Power is not given, that if the youth want power, they must dare to take it. He said, young people should get tired of listing our challenges but focus on developing ourselves and come up with ideas to address our current issues.

The participants were not left out, as they were given opportunities to ask their questions and also make contributions to the conversation.

The Royal Father of the day Bldr. Shamsudeen Yusuf- Bulaman Zazzau delivered a compelling paper he titled “Nobody”....

The second plenary on “Good Governance and Right Leadership” was anchored by Orezi Emeotu with discussants; Mrs Jackie Iketuonye, Emmanuel Njoku, Amb.Peter Cole, Hajiya Hadiza Aminu Dorayi, Zainab.....,

The third plenary “Political Market Sqaure” anchored by Emeka Diri, was a platform given to the representatives of the various political parties to share their party ideologies. On this panel we saw the representatives of the APC Mr Abu Andrew Abu, Engr. Ifeanyi Aniago, representing APGA, Dennis Inyang for Social Demcratic Party, Kunle Lawal for KOWA Party, Dr Tanko Yunusa for NCP. Also on the panel was the representative of the UN Women Mr Desmond Oseloboa who spoke on the role of the UN Women in the political space. Also the country Director of the International Republican Institute, Mr Sentell Barnes talked about the work of the institute on engaging the youth through the political process.

### **Comments and Suggestions**

- INEC to make the process of registration and collection of PVCs easier
- Character, Capacity and Competency is key criteria into an elected office.

## **Recommendations and Conclusion**

The main recommendations and conclusions from the conference are as follows:

1. The youth must mobilize their ideas towards specific goals (education, healthcare, insecurity, etc) and use it to drive the change they desire.
2. You must register to Vote and must vote.
3. To be heard, the youth must belong to a political party
4. The youth must unite and align our values and interests.
5. The youth must organise themselves, disrupt the process and engage actively with the elected reps
6. There must be a positive attitude to political engagements both at the Federal, State and Local Government Level
7. We must set high political standards for the electorates by engaging and asking the right questions.
8. Amb. Peter Cole recommended that the Fixing Nigeria team to organise another conference in Lagos on Democracy day.
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