

**COMMUNIQUE OF THE 4th EDITION OF THE FIXING NIGERIA CONFERENCE,
TAGGED “ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR A BETTER NIGERIA” HELD ON THE
20th OF OCTOBER, 2021 AT THE SHEHU MUSA Y’ARADUA CENTRE**

The 4th edition of the Fixing Nigeria Conference, organised by the Ernest and Ibrahim Foundation held on the 20th of October, 2021 at the Shehu Musa Yaradua Centre, Abuja to discuss **“ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR A BETTER NIGERIA”**.

2. The conference brought together delegates from across the nation both from Government, Private Sector, CSOs, Media/Press, Corp Members, as well as students.

3. Activities of the one-day event included registration/accreditation of delegates, Opening Ceremony by Shola Olapade, Speech by Rt Hon. Ghalil Umar Na’Abba, Presentation by Mr Ezenwa Nwagwu. The event continued with 2 plenary sessions. The first panel was focussed on the CSOs, discussing **“Engaging divided society in the nation building process”** which was moderated by Josie Itoyah. Likewise, the second panel (legislative panel) was focussed on the legislatives from the government discussing **“Dynamics of Political Engagement in Nigeria Political Space”** which was moderated by Amb. Chibuzor Okereke. There was room for Q/A after each panel discussions which made for an interactive session with the delegates to share their opinions and ask questions. The events rounded up with an award segment, where the organizers honoured the speakers from previous events. This was followed by cutting of the cake and closing remark by the Project Director, Rukayyah Iyayi.

4. The objectives and rationale for plenary sessions, panel group discussions are:

- To increase knowledge and assess innovative strategies for the development of citizen engagement and civic/social responsibilities
- Share experiences and showcase practices in leadership and explore the latest trends, developments and challenges in youth engagement
- Identify future directions and strategies to enhance cooperation and leadership across diverse stakeholders

5. The CSOs plenary moderated by Josie Itoyah-Splendour had Sam Itodo (YIAGA Convener), Zainab Galadimawa, Sola Olapade, Jeanette Washington, and Mr Ezenwa Nwagwu as discussants. The discussions touched issues on gender, current unrest with the youth, cultural diversity and religion, and game of politics in Nigeria. The Legislative panel moderated by Amb, Chibuzor Okereke had some of our current law makers and aspiring law makers, Hon. Akinjo Kolade, Bldr. Shamsudeen Yusuf, Mr Alexander Ogbe, Hon. Muntari Dandutse as discussants. In this panel, the line of discussions took the form of a masterclass which focussed on the intricacies of the political space in Nigeria. The discussants shared their personal experiences getting into the intricacies of the Nigerian political space and how the youth can engage correctly to get their voice heard.

5. Key recommendations during the plenary sessions, panel group discussions, and interactive question and answers sessions of the conference are:

- The need for the youth to move from destructive engagement to constructive engagement
- Because we cannot defeat what we don't understand, there is the need to engage/participate from our local communities and learn/understand the polity before looking to run for office.
- The need for mass education of the youth to pay heed and understand the governance processes, follow the budget process and engage properly to understand what happens in the political space.
- Do not create heroes, rather solve problems.
- The need for young people to be properly educated, not just classroom education to be able challenge the current concepts and ideologies.
- Young people to take ownership of the democratic space