

# ALL PROGRESSIVES GRAND ALLIANCE MANIFESTO

## Nigeria and the World

Our position in the world of the 21st century will depend upon the action we take to rebuild our democracy, how robustly we act to transform our image as a pariah nation ruled by a corrupt and dictatorial elite, and how soon we repair the ruins of our battered economy to give citizens a comfortable living within our own borders. It is clear, however, that the re-structuring of the Nigerian economy will depend upon our linkage with the world in investment, trade and technology transfer. Diplomacy in the 21st century is bound to be primarily economic in character and our economic relations with the United States of America, the European Union, Japan, China, India, the OPEC countries, the WTO, ECOWAS and the African Union will dominate our foreign affairs. But while we pursue our national interests in all these relationships, Nigeria will always be sensitive to the need for good neighbourliness, peace, mutual security and multi-lateral approaches to global integration.

To achieve optimal economic growth and a good standing among the nations of the world, the All Progressives Grand Alliance will take the following measures:

- i. APGA will promote and expand all bilateral and multi-lateral agreements which will strengthen Nigerian democracy and support our economic development.*
- ii. APGA will strengthen our ties with ECOWAS nations and our leadership position in the West African sub-region and hasten the operation of the treaties for the free movement of goods and persons and for the introduction of a common currency.*
- iii. APGA will continue to support MINCOMAR, UASC and other sub-regional treaties of understanding to promote trade and development of shipping in the West African sub-region.*
- iv. APGA will work for the full realization of the African Union as a platform for African development, for the negotiation of international agreements upon an advantageous footing with great nations of the world, and for the uplifting of the dignity of the black people of the world.*
- v. APGA believes that Nigeria, as the sixth largest oil producer and a major player in gas production could become a force to be reckoned with in the world energy sector and that its strength in this regard could be turned to diplomatic advantage.*
- vi. APGA will work through the African Union and in concert with other organizations of the Third World to achieve better terms for countries of the Third World in the WTO.*
- vii. APGA will continue to discharge Nigeria's obligations as a member of the United Nations and its agencies and to pursue policies of mutual cooperation and coexistence with all other nations of the world.*

*viii. APGA will support the establishment, through the United Nations, of a just peace in the world and the end of terrorism as the means of solving political problems.*

We offer this manifesto as a covenant between the All Progressives Grand Alliance and the people of Nigeria and as a binding oath of what we will do if the nation gives us its support.

## Youth, Sports & Culture

The All Progressives Grand Alliance considers that policies for the development of youth, sports and culture are an aspect of national education. Their overriding aim is the creation of a new generation sound in body and mind, full of confidence and team spirit that has been developed in the field of competitive sport at the highest level, and capable of every challenge of an unpredictable world with easy assurance. In giving the youth a secure footing: in our cultural heritage, we give them an anchor which enables them to appropriate the technology and business sophistication of the modern world without losing their grounding in a secure traditional system of values. In club activities and team sports, experience are garnered which are directly applicable to nation building and future leadership responsibilities.

For the attainment of this goal, an APGA government:

*i. Will initiate and monitor the implementation of legislations that fully protects the rights of the child defend the child against all forms of abuse and societal exploitation keeping with Geneva Convention on the Rights of Child.*

*ii. Will supports morally and financially, all existing youth groups whose programmes are consistent with the moral, physical and intellectual nurturing of the young.*

*iii. Will encourage the youth to take part in community development activities and programmes as a way of preparing them for future leadership roles.*

*iv. Will seek ways of making the National Youth Service programme more attractive to the youth by improving service conditions.*

*v. Will use intensive awareness campaign both in the media and through organized youth groups to sensitise the youth to the dangers of cultism, alcoholism, drug abuse, promiscuity and all other forms of social vices.*

*vi. Will create vocational and skill acquisition centres for the training of youths who do not have the benefit of formal education.*

*vii. Will encourage in more concrete terms, youth who are involved in sports, athletics through the provision of better facilities for training and recreation. In the same vein our national sports team shall*

*receive full government support at all times and youth who excel in this pursuit will receive national recognition.*

*viii. Will sponsor individual sportsmen and women to participate in international sports competitions outside the country.*

*ix. Will encourage physically disabled youth who show interest in sports by providing specialized equipment and facilities for training.*

*x. Will support the building of sports centres in every local government area of the country.*

*xi. Will lay the foundation for our youth to begin to participate internationally in sports like gymnastics, cycling, fencing, swimming etc.*

*xii. Will encourage the promotion of our rich cultural heritage through annual cultural fiestas and participating in international cultural festivals.*

*xiii. Will promote annual exhibitions of arts, artefacts and crafts during which prizes are awarded.*

*xiv. Will ensure that cultural studies are introduced into the academic curriculum at all levels of education. This will keep alive our heritage in the consciousness of the youth.*

## **Policy on Women**

Although women in Nigerian societies have played every role including those of being monarch, warrior or priest, there is no doubt whatsoever that in the allocation of power and resources we have favoured men. In the spirit of post - Beijing reconstruction for the achievement of gender parity and a more inclusive democracy, the **All progressives Grand Alliance** will take the following measures for the empowerment of the fair sex who, according to the 1991 National Census, constitute half (49.6%) of the Nigerian electorate.

i. APGA will sponsor public enlightenment programmes to fight gender inequality and gender insensitivities in every aspect of our national life.

ii. APGA will promote affirmative action by employers to place women in positions of authority.

iii. APGA will use the media and other means of persuasion to promote the education of the girl child on a basis of equality with the boy child and as we proceed into an era of compulsory education, it will be a breach of the law to withdraw girls from the school system for any reason whatsoever until they attain the age of sixteen years.

iv. APGA will review credit guidelines in the relevant sections of the banking industry to make it easier for women (who are active in agriculture and the informal sector) to have access to credit.

v. APGA will sponsor legislation forbidding marriage before the age of 18 which is the recognized age for adulthood. In addition, a deliberate programme of re-orientation would be embarked upon to protect

the dignity of the girl child by discouraging harmful customary practices and imposition of marriage partners upon young girls.

vi. APGA will support through scholarships and special grants, girls and women who show exceptional skills in their academic pursuits.

vii. APGA will review all labour laws which are insensitive to the special position of women as mothers and home builders.

viii. APGA will ensure that every facility is made available for women athletes to excel in their special discipline in athletics and sports.

ix. APGA will encourage women to seek elective office in local governments, the states and at the federal level.

APGA will give women senior political appointments in the spirit of Beijing Declaration.

## Labour Policy

Nigerian labour unions have shown in the last few years that they are still at the fore front of the movement for good government and a democratic order. Under General Sani Abacha, they were unfailing in the sacrifices they were ready to make to defeat that evil regime. Since 1999, they have pioneered the demand for negotiated agreements and an equitable social order. With the purchasing power of the Naira still falling and increasing default of the payment of salaries as and when due, it is clear that in the next few years labour disputes will remain a recurrent factor in our public life. In dealing with labour APGA will be guided by the principle that a worker alienated from his labour by poor salaries will be a poor worker and that the Nigerian economy cannot prosper until we have industrial peace.

The **All Progressives Grand Alliance** will take the following measures in its labour relations.

i. APGA will set up a permanent Labour Council for discussion of all matters which have to do with workers.

ii. APGA will recognize and encourage independent labour unions, uphold all laws which protect their right and strengthen the machinery/or collective bargaining with public and private sector.

iii. APGA will review all laws dealing with trade disputes and ensure that they conform with democratic practice in other countries.

iv. APGA will ensure that the salaries and other entitlements of workers are paid as and when due.

v. In addition to the various efforts which are being made to create employment, APGA will set up direct

labour forces, farm settlements and other emergency agencies to take up some of the unemployed manpower within the nation.

vi. As the purchasing power of the Naira has not fallen to less than 1% of the original value, APGA will set up a Commission to review the entire question of salaries and conditions of service as they affect the entire economy.

## Communications Policy

The consumption of steel was at one time the yardstick by which the development of nations was measured. Later plastics displaced steel as the index of economic development. In today's world, telecommunications and information technology have become rough and ready indices of the progress of nations because they are fundamental structures for economic growth and human fulfillment.

In this critical area, Nigerian government policy has been at best haphazard and marred by vested and personal interests, instead of being guided by national interest. The communications sector has, therefore, continued to lag behind. GSM operators have, in the last nine months, added 900,000 lines to the national telecommunications network. But the increase has not thought us into par with Southern and Northern Africa.

The **All Progressives Grand Alliance** will vigorously pursue a policy that will lead Nigeria into the modern communications age with a ten-fold increase in available service. To this effect, APGA will proceed along the path of deregulation, privatization and democratization.

It will take steps:-

- i. To liberalise the sector by licensing more telecommunication carriers.*
- ii. To reduce or abolish, as appropriate, all import duties on communications, computer and other IT equipment, raw materials and spares.*
- iii. To abolish excise duties on locally manufactured or assembled communications and IT equipment.*
- iv. To support local manufacturers and assemblers of communications and IT equipment through differential import duties, tax rebates and duty draw-backs for exported products made in Nigeria.*
- v. To provide basic infrastructure for communications and IT operators.*
- vi. To pursue a vigorous programme of rural telephony to bring producers in remote areas into the main stream of national and global markets.*
- vii. To introduce compulsory computer studies in the education system.*

## Transport Policy

Nigerian transporters deserve credit for the work they have done in transport services especially in air transport and in inter-state luxury bus services. The transport system lacks coherence, however, and several sectors, notably water transport and commuter services within our busy cities need planning and systematisation.

The transport policy of the All Progressives Grand Alliance proposes the following aims and objectives:

- i. To create an efficient, interlinked national transport network capable of moving people and good comfortably and safely throughout the country.*
- ii. To develop efficient and serviceable capabilities in water transport and rail transport.*
- iii. To review the institutions and regulations governing transport services*
- iv. To democratize and decentralise the institutions responsible for road construction, road maintenance and transport generally.*

### **Air Transport**

APGA will initiate the following measures for the re-organization and development of air transport.

- i. APGA will constitute the Nigeria Airport Authority into a compact professional agency charged with responsibilities for planning, the supervision of construction, the maintenance of facilities and inspection. It should raise enough funds from the fees it charges for it to operate without statutory allocations.*
- ii. Every Nigerian airport will be operated on commercial lines by a private limited liability company.*
- iii. APGA will commercialize the Nigerian Airways immediately and gradually position the undertaking for privatization.*
- iv. APGA will encourage Nigerian entrepreneurs presently operating in air transport to form a joint stock partnership that will enable them to improve their services and operate long-haul trans-continental services in competition with air carriers of the European Union and the United States of America.*
- v. To assist Nigerian air transport companies in acquiring aircraft. APGA will authorize the operation of an Aircraft Purchase Loan Fund on the same basis as the Shipping Fund which facilitated the purchase of ships by Nigerian shipping companies.*
- vi. APGA will ensure for the convenience of the public, that every geographical zone in the country has an international airport.*
- vii. For the safety of Nigerian air travelers, there shall be a strict reinforcement of the regulations for aircraft maintenance.*

### **Sea & River Transport**

*i. APGA will constitute the Nigerian Ports Authority into a compact professional agency on the same lines as the Nigerian Airport Authority in 2(i) above.*

*ii. Similarly, every Nigerian Seaport or river port will be operated on commercial lines by a private limited liability company.*

*iii. To assist Nigerian shipping lines in acquiring ships, APGA will re-introduce the Ship Acquisition Fund and ensure that it operates without abuse.*

*iv. To expand river transport and make it safe, the dredging of major rivers will be continuous.*

### **Railways**

Started in 1893, railway services were the mainstream of transport in Nigeria up to the early 1950. But they were slow and did not extend sufficiently throughout the country. Gradually their dominant position was taken over by road and air transport.

*i. APGA will continue the process of reconstruction, requirement, modernization and expansion of the railways especially for bulk haulage and for cheap long distance travel.*

*ii. In this regard, conversion to the standard gauge and the purchase of well-equipped modern coaches for the comfort of long-distance travelers will be a priority.*

*iii. New lines from Lagos to Calabar and from Sokoto to Maiduguri and Yola will be built.*

*iv. The Nigerian Railways will be fully commercialized then privatized and its operations decentralized for greater efficiency.*

### **Road Transport**

*This is a fully privatized public services which should, with the improvement of roads, the training of transport personnel, and the operations of regulatory services, be a model of public self-reliance. APGA policies will address the areas of need.*

*i. APGA will create Highway Authorities on the analogy of the Ports Authority and the Airports Authority to provide planning, the supervision of construction and maintenance and inspectorate services for road transport. The Authority will operate in the three tiers of government with the state tier being primarily responsible for operations.*

*ii. It is quite clear that the state of the roads is one of the fundamental difficulties of road transport, and that until dualisation, asphaltting, drainage, and sustained maintenance is achieved road transport will continue to be dangerous. APGA will ensure that these difficulties are removed.*

*iii. Highway Authorities will create institutes of transport for the training of personnel in transport services. APGA believes that this measure will lead to greater knowledge and discipline in the use of the road.*

*iv. APGA will continue the programme of financing assistance for mass transit. The programme will be extended to taxi services in the main urban areas where congestions are severe as a result of the increasing cost of new vehicles.*

*v. APGA will instruct its local government councils to build fully equipped (with waiting rooms, cafeterias and telephones) for inter-city and inter-state transport.*

*vi. Airports, seaports and railway stations will also have bus stations to ensure easy linkage between various transport systems.*

## Housing and the Environment

The problem of housing Nigerians especially in urban areas has remained intractable since the days of the good old day of the Third Development Plan (1995) when it was thought that 202,000 housing units would deal with the problem. But every attempt so far made has failed often before it started. At the moment the estimate is that we need about 100,000 new housing units every year costing about N 1 million each which makes a total of N100 billion. It is safe to say that this bill cannot be met at public expense. But the 1991 National Housing Policy which set out to create a massive revolving loan fund financed by mortgages is still in force. What is lacking is the political and bureaucratic will to enforce the law. Similarly with regard to the environment the laws to end pollution and protect the water supply, the atmosphere and the surroundings are in the books. What is lacking is public compliance. On these matters, the All Progressives Grand Alliance believes that with the right programmes of public enlightenment and democratic dialogue with the people, a great deal can be achieved.

The programmes of the All Progressives Grand Alliance will be as follows;

*i. APGA will simplify the processes for the acquisition of land for building purposes by a massive use of the estate system.*

*ii. APGA will promote research for new building technologies to reduce costs.*

*iii. APGA will support the two tier system of fund mobilization in which the Federal Mortgage Bank is an apex institution working with private savings and loans institutions.*

*iv. At the same time. APGA will encourage private building societies and private savings and loans funds to be created in local government areas and states for savings mobilization.*

*v. APGA will use federal mortgage insurance organizations for re-financing mortgages.*

*vi. Re-discounting facilities for mortgages will be established to enable insurance companies and banks participate in mortgages thereby raising the enormous loan fund that is needed for housing.*

*vii. APGA will encourage employers, local government councils and private entrepreneurs, using the low interest housing fund to create low cost estates for sale to the public No estates will be put on the market until they have paved roads, light, water and drainage, and are environment - friendly.*

*viii. APGA will ensure that public conveniences are created in strategic places and that members of the public are not forced to indecency and the discharge o[refuse ever where in the streets.*

*ix. APGA will establish agencies for the monitoring of environmental protection, public sanitation and the restoration of tidyness and order in all public places.*