

**INTRODUCING CHIEF JAMES ONANEFE IBORI
SPEAKER ON THE AGENDA FOR A NEW NIGERIA:
TO RESTRUCTURE OR NOT TO RESTRUCTURE
BY**

PROF. B.I.C IJOMAH

*Centre for Policy Studies and Research
Asaba, Delta State.
Tel: 08033238716*

Your Excellency,
The Rector, All Protocols observed

In recent times, many people have joined the debate on restructuring. A content analysis of the debates as published in Vanguard Newspaper, shows that more than 70 percent of those writing, do not honestly know what is meant by restructuring of Nigeria.

In 1951, Nigeria expected a constitution that would have given us a centralist Government. But the crisis that followed Chief Anthony Enahoro's motion, calling for self-Government convinced the Colonial Government that Nigerians could not operate a constitution that vests powers at the centre.

What we are witnessing under President Buhari vindicates the Colonial Government. President Buhari is drifting perilously to dictatorship. A drunkard does not believe he is drunk. So a dictator does not believe he is a dictator until he finds pleasure in blood shed. Dictators do not hand over power; it is generally snatched from them.

**At Ogwashi-Uku Polytechnic, Ogwashi-uku, Delta State on July 18, 2018.*

A post-mortem was pronounced by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the House of Commons: the “Closely Knit” federation envisaged by the constitution of 1951 did not prove workable; therefore, the constitution would be revised to provide greater flexibility and regional autonomy, and for the removal of powers of intervention by the centre in matters which can, without detriment to other regions, be placed entirely within regional competence.

Consequently, there was the constitutional conference of 1953 which transformed the structure of Nigerian Government from unitary foundations to regional foundations. That was how Nigeria got Independence with a regionalist constitution of 1954, which provided for separate states, and reduced the powers at the centre.

Soon after Independence, the Northerners, after several coups violated the constitutional powers of the Regional Governments and consolidated power at the centre.

This violated the spirit of regional autonomy which the British took pains to enshrine in the Independence Constitution for Nigeria. I have written and spoken at different fora that unless Nigeria returned to regional autonomy because of our irreconcilable diversities, there will be no peace in the country. The recent violation of the sanctity of the government of Ekiti State is exactly what the British Government feared in rejecting the proposed centralist constitution of 1951. I also fear, that if we do not shine our eyes, President Buhari might take our lands for grazing, because the state governments for selfish reasons are afraid to say what they believe to be correct.

Now that we have landed on our heads, how do we stand on our feet to address the question of restructuring?

We need a strong and focused government at the centre to be capable of introducing the required structural changes.

The split in APC Party and Government has further weakened the president's capacity to purposefully restructure the nation. The President is doing everything, including intimidation, to win 2019 elections.

His re-election is dicey: The present Federal Government does not inspire confidence. The only thing it has done is to maintain paralysing quietism in the face of all the nationwide killings. The silence may be because the Federal Government does not honestly know what to do. This silence is more deadly than the herdsmen's AK47. Such a government cannot purposefully restructure the nation because it cannot know what to do. *Nemo dat quod non habes*. You do not give what you do not have. It is in the light of the above observation that I consider it my privilege to preside over this search for objective restructuring of this nation that has lost its bearing.

The Rector, I present to you, the only man in my humble estimation, who was the governor of this state when the nation abandoned the search for solutions to national problems to pursue a man who gave Delta State its bearing. He was here when Nigeria began to lose its bearing. He spoke but they did not listen to him. It is to the glory of God, that his incarceration has not diminished his faculties; that he is here to today to teach Nigeria how to save Nigeria from itself.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure and esteemed privilege, to introduce to you, our first action governor. I prayed that his political son, His Excellency Senator Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa would follow his footsteps. But Okowa's achievement strides have come in geometric progression, out-pacing every earlier stride. So far, he has justified the confidence which Chief Onanefe Ibori and all of us have in him. I want to take this opportunity to assure you that his re-election is a fore gone decision. He also believes, as you do, that this nation should be restructured. But how? That is the question.

I am therefore pleased to introduce to you, a visionary leader, a political dynamite clothed in incredible humility, to discuss how to restructure our nation and save Nigeria from itself.

Your Excellency, Chief James Onanefe Ibori, please take the floor.

Prof. B.I.C Ijomah

AN ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 2018

My dear students, “Good bye” in certain circumstances is a very painful statement. It connotes the end of a relationship. At Madonna, our good bye shows that we are sending you into the world. It is an attestation to the fact that after six years of rigorous preparation, Madonna International College can confidently say to the graduating students, “go” we are sending you into the world with the amour of the college. Remember our motto: *nihil est amabilis virtute*. As long as you carry the shield of Madonna, the devil will run away from you. You will conquer all temptations and chest out as a proud product of Madonna International College. You are a product of this institution which belongs to the son of Mary, the noble mother of our Lord and saviour. This college has a spiritual insurance for all our students: As long as you are a child of Jesus, you must walk, and speak with boldness and confidence. The prayers we offer for our students will see you overcome all obstacles. As you step out into the world, believe and know that all obstacles must be subdued. Never give up when any challenge comes your way. Remember that you carry the spirit of Christ in you. You have been equipped to conquer the world. You must succeed in any venture. Never look at the **bigness** of the challenge but look at the **bigness** of the God in you.

I will establish a special fund to sponsor prayers for Madonna graduates. We will say special prayers and masses, praying God to protect our products wherever they may be.

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abide in you. We will open a register to follow our products and see how they are doing in the world. You must always keep in touch with Madonna.

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- 1) **AGBADI MERCY DOOSHIMA** graduated 2016
- 2) **EJIOFOR OLUEBUBE SANDRA** graduated 2016 now at UNN
- 3) **IBEMERE KOSISOCHUKWU JOHNPAUL** graduated 2016

These two are currently on Madonna scholarship

- 4) **EMEKA NOSIKE** SS1
- 5) **OLILI ISAAC** Basic 8

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