

A photograph of a large, multi-story building with a white facade and a green roof, likely a university building. The building has several balconies with white railings. In the background, a tall, modern glass skyscraper is visible. The sky is clear and blue. The text is overlaid on the image.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN CONVOCATION LECTURE 2015

Wednesday 11 November, 2015

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**Challenges of
Good Governance
in an Emerging
Democratic Setting**
The Nigerian Perspective

Delivered by

His Excellency Senator Abiola Ajimobi
Executive Governor of Oyo State, Nigeria

Challenges of Good Governance in
an Emerging Democratic Setting

The Nigerian Perspective

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First published 2015

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ISBN: 978-978-53839-9-7

MEN ARE SOMETIMES MASTERS OF THEIR FATE
- BRUTUS, SHAKESPEARE

PROTOCOL

The Honourable Chairman of this Occasion,
Pro-Chancellor,
The Chancellor,
Mr. Vice Chancellor,
My Lords - Spiritual and Temporal,
Deans,
Directors of the Directorates,
Heads of Departments
Great Alumni,
Graduands,
Students and
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

PREAMBLE

I consider it a great honour for me to be invited to deliver the 2015 Convocation Lecture of this great Ivory Tower. I do appreciate the opportunity to join you and participate in the convocation and founder's day ceremonies. Like the little *acorn that grows into a mighty oak*, one can liken the University of Ibadan, which was established as far back as 1948 to the world renowned Harvard, the oldest University in the United States – established in 1636 – is not only waxing stronger day-by-day but also remains world's most prestigious university.¹ Thus, this citadel of learning too is not just the oldest university in Nigeria, but unarguably the best so far!

This premier University has grown from rather humble beginnings to a major institution of repute not only in Nigeria but in Africa and also a force to be reckoned with globally. This is a no mean feat. It is praiseworthy that University of Ibadan has shed its

1. See, Victor Olaoye, "Varsities and Crisis of Retiring Faculty", *Nigerian Tribune*, Ibadan, 14th October, 2015 p.18.

toga at its very inception; which no doubt in colonial Nigeria was traditional pre-occupation with manpower training cum Ivory Tower theorising and esoteric research. The intention of the founding fathers (the colonial masters) was perhaps majorly for Africans to be able to read and write. As a citadel of learning in post-colonial state (Nigeria) however, most of you here today are sufficiently aware that the University has carried out an impressive array of practical and relevant research activities that is germane to the socio-economic and technological progress of our great country.

I am cognisant of the present difficulties confronting the country, arising mainly from the harsh international economic environment. These will no doubt impact negatively on the resources available to the nation and hence this institution. However, as "main features" of knowledge and innovative ideas, I am very much optimistic that this institution think out of the box in ameliorate the effort to enable her continue the good work it is doing.²

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I am totally unaware of the criteria which had been used to invite your speakers in the past, but when I looked at the array of previous speakers, I hope, all things being equal, I will not disappoint you at the end of this lecture. Furthermore, when I received this invitation, I was neither given any topic nor restricted to any subject area. After some insightful reflection, I have decided to speak on this topic "CHALLENGES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN AN EMERGING DEMOCRATIC SETTING: THE NIGERIAN PERSPECTIVE". The choice was partly inspired by Nicolas Berggmen who posited that:

the biggest determinant in our lives is culture, where we are born, what the environment looks like. But the second biggest determinant is probably governance, good governance or a certain kind of governance makes a huge difference in our lives.

Before we delve into the lecture proper, it is apt to intimate you that for both ease of delivery and comprehension, it has been divided

2. See, Major-General Joseph Garba (CFR) "Nigeria in the United Nations: The Pursuit of National Interest in a Global Forum", 1988 Ilorin Lecture, November, 1988, p. 2.

into five major parts. With this introductory remark, the paper shall attempt a conceptualisation of good governance to be followed by African perspective of good governance in pre-colonial Africa. The third part discusses the challenges of good governance in contemporary times, followed closely with some food for thought for this audience. This convocation lecture ends with a number of policy recommendations for a better society that we all desire.

ON GOOD GOVERNANCE

Without necessarily being definitional and as rightly noted by Chafe, "the primary requirement for debating anything is to understand, first and foremost, the critical thing being talked about". No one is likely to dispute the suggestion that this elementary fact is often being taken for granted particularly as it relates to the debate on 'good governance'. Also, if the view of W. B. Gallie (a philosopher) is anything to go by, concepts, most especially in social sciences, do not lend themselves to any universally accepted definition because of the ideological, cultural and historical contextualisation that under-pin them.

Thus, the concept of 'governance' has long been the subject of academic debate. Some writers use the term interchangeably with 'government' whilst others say that the two are anything but synonymous. In reality governance is distinct from government; governance is about both the relationship between government and its subjects, and the processes by which decisions affecting the parties to this relationship are made. It is often said however that you cannot have good governance without first having a good government.

As observed by Bola Ajibola SAN, CFR, governance is the process whereby public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources, ensure security among the governed and guarantee the realisation of human rights. Good governance accomplishes this in a manner essentially free of abuse and corruption, and with due regard for the rule of law.

It should also be noted that the concept of "governance" is not new. It is as old as human civilisation. Simply put "governance"

means: **The process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented).** Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance amongst others.

The true test of “good” governance is the degree to which it delivers on the promise of human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The key question is: are the institutions of governance effectively guaranteeing the right to health, adequate housing, sufficient food, quality education, fair justice and personal security?

Undoubtedly, good governance is one of the major canons of democracy. Globally it is assumed that only democratic governments in virtually all regions and climes of the world do satisfy basic requirements of good governance. In the opinion of Bentham, the basis of good government was the identity of interest between the government and the governed. This is possible only when democracy rules. In that wise, for a polity to be referred to as good government, it should have these qualities:

- (i) wisdom to discern the real interests of the people;
- (ii) goodness to endeavour always to pursue them; and
- (iii) strength of power to carry this knowledge and intention into action.³

From the aforementioned, good governance means the manner in which capability is demonstrated by governments in the management and distribution of a country's social and economic resources. It is the nature and manner of the capability that makes governance a bad or a good one.

From the foregoing, it would be observed that governance and democracy complement one another. Specifically, democratic governance simply refers to the situation in which the relevant societal institutions ensure adequate protection of the citizenry both with respect to their rights, as well as the design and implementation

3. See, A.K. Charturvedi, *Dictionary of Political Science*. EPP Book Services, Nigeria, p.132.

of public policies, programmes and activities. The establishment and functioning of these institutions are guided by the principles of democracy as enunciated earlier.

From an institutional perspective, democratic governance is viewed in terms of rights and limits in social relations. This means that institutions exist to project and enhance the exercise of individual rights and freedom. They also exist to define the limits of activities to ensure that an individual or agency whether public or private, is put in check when attempting to trample upon the rights and freedom of another individual or agency. Ideally, to ensure good governance, societal institutions must be strong enough to effectively check the excesses of government.

The literature has identified some basic elements of democratic governance. First, there must be broad-based consultation with and effective popular participation by the citizens in public governance. There must also be an uninhibited opportunity for the citizens to reflect their views and freely express their desires through various avenues, such as voting, freedom of speech, legal redress, and freedom of association. Second, there must be transparency and accountability on the part of government officials, political leaders, and public institutions. This will allow the citizenry to be well informed about the performance and conduct of government officials and allows an objective appraisal of quality of governance. In a nutshell, democratic governance requires that people are the beginning, centre and end of any public policy process.

Nonetheless, when resources are distributed to promote inequality or to achieve personal or group ambitions, the essence of governance which coincides with the essence of politics and essence of the state is defeated. Therefore, resources must be distributed responsibly, equitably and fairly for the realisation of the essence of the state. This brings us to the idea that governance can be aptly described as good or bad.⁴ It is significant to note however, that good governance as a norm cannot make sense unless

4. Ibitoye Sarafa Ogundiya, "Democracy and Good Governance in Nigeria's Dilemma", in *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, Vol. 4 (6), p. 203.

it is predicated in the presupposition that the experience and knowledge of bad governance is possible and real. On this basis, the norm of good governance is the political ethic that tends to challenge and replace the reality of bad governance.⁵

Good governance, as a concept, is applicable to all sections of the society such as: the government, legislature, judiciary, media, the university system, private sector, corporate bodies, trade unions, and lastly non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Public accountability and transparency are as relevant for the one and as for all others. It is only when all these and various other segments of the society conduct their affairs in a socially responsible manner that the objective of achieving the larger good of the largest number of people in the society can be achieved.⁶

According to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), good governance has eight major characteristics.⁷ It is participatory, consensus-oriented, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assumes that corruption is minimised, the views of minorities are taken into account and the voices of the most vulnerable in the society are heard in decision making.⁸ For diagrammatic representation of good governance please see the diagram in Figure 1.

In broad terms, "good governance" implies or requires transparency, equity, justice, promotion of and respect for human rights, whether civil, political or economic policies, open, free and fair elections and popular participation.⁹ Specifically, good

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5. Mogobe, R. "Good Governance Another Export to Africa", in Oguejiofor J. Obi (ed.), *Philosophy, Democracy and Responsible Governance in Africa*. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, pp. 36-63.
 6. Medhav G. Report of the One Man Committee on Good Governance (July), Human Rights Watch, 2007, also cited in Ilufoye S. Ogtundiya, "Bureaucracy and Good Governance . . .", op cit, p. 203.
 7. See, UNESCO Report, Good Governance, cited in Ogtundiya, op cit., p. 203.
 8. Ibid., p. 204.
 9. Andre Mbata B. Mangu, Separation of Powers, Independence of the Judiciary and Good governance in African Union Member States, op cit., p. 8.

governance involves: enthronement of a democratic government which guarantees equal participation of all citizens in governance, promotion and sustenance of the rule of law which includes provision and protection of constitution, promotion and protection of the fundamental human rights of the citizens.¹⁰

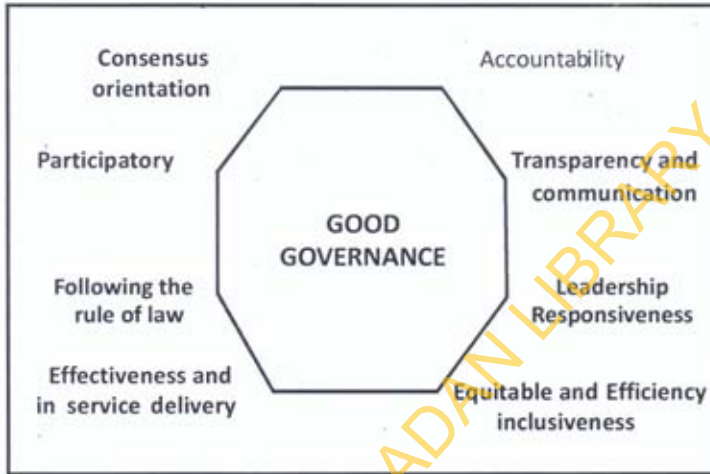


Figure 1: Attributes of Good Governance

Source: Adapted from www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governanc.pdf

In a nutshell, for a government or any of its organs to be assumed or perceived to have qualified as passing 'good governance' test, it must be responsible and responsive. This is in line with the World Bank recommendations viz:

- (1) Improving management capacity of the public sector;
- (2) Establishing and reinforcing mechanisms for accountability of public officer;

10. Charlie Nwekekwa, "The Rule of Law, Democracy and Good Governance in Nigeria," in *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration*, Vol. 2 No. 1 March, 2014, pp. 26-35.

- (3) Instituting and promoting rule of law; and
- (4) Improving transparency and free conduct of government business.¹¹

These prescriptions are aimed at enhancing the fulfillment of social responsibility of government and encouraging direct and indirect participation of the people in governing their society.¹²

GOOD GOVERNANCE IN PRE-COLONIAL AFRICA

Prior to the European penetration of Africa, our forefathers had their system of government which in all intents and purposes was imbued with mechanisms of checks and balances to guarantee good governance. Typical examples which are relevant to this discourse are the Oyo Empire of Nigeria, the Ashanti Kingdom of Ghana and the Gao Empire of Samora Toure of the present Republic of Mali.

Both historical and archeological evidences attest to the fact that the system of government by our progenitors is worthy of preservation but for colonialism and imperialism the twin evils that terminated the heritage of our forefathers. For instance, Oyo Empire was very unique and exceptional in its system of governance. One could recall that in the sixteenth century, Oyo was one of the rare empires that had in-built checks and balances and this contributed to its stability for centuries. The *Alaafin* was the head of the empire (government) and was resident in the capital. He was regarded as the "Lord of many lands". The *Alaafin* was assisted in his administration by a retinue of officials made up of Priests, Officials

11. Cited in A. E. Davies, "Reflections on the Imperative of Transparency and Accountability for Good Governance," in *Ilorin Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, Vol. 8 Nos 1 & 2, 2003 pp. 1 and 2. For contemporary perception of what 'good governance' means, see, Nathaniel D. Danjibo, "Democracy in Nigeria Between Adjectives and Good Governance", in Tajudeen A. Akanji, Nathaniel L. Danjibo and Willie A. Esellebor (eds.), *Challenges of Democratic Governance in Nigeria*. John Archers (Publishers) Limited, Ibadan, 1991, pp. 126-143.

12. Ibid.

and Eunuchs. He had a well organised court system too. Law making had its root in social norms and practices over time.

From the foregoing analysis, one can reasonably infer that good governance was not completely alien to our forefathers! It was a system that could not tolerate absolute power. Long before the popular aphorism by Lord Acton which popularised that 'power corrupt, absolute power corrupts absolutely', the African system of government was antithetical to bad governance and abuse of fundamental human rights.

One could reasonably surmise however that good governance was well entrenched in pre-colonial African political systems. In this historical journey we could recall with nostalgia that family and community leaders knew very well that they held in trust family and community landed properties. In essence, good governance demarcates personal property from the state's. The African Pre-colonial system of government had very strong aversion to corruption.

In contemporary nations of Africa, Hastin Kamuzo Banda of Malawi provided a relative classic example of good governance as worthy of emulation. He was able to establish legitimacy of government by election that was free and fair. He formulated policies and embarked on services delivery. He emphasised respect for human rights and the rule of law.

CHALLENGES TO GOOD GOVERNANCE IN COMTEMPORARY NIGERIA

Having hopefully safely and satisfactorily attempted a treatise on the terminology 'good governance', it is apt to highlight the relevant issues which, though inexhaustive, could be seen as leading us where we are today:

Underdeveloped Instructions

Nigeria gained political independence from Britain on 1 October, 1960 and became a Republic on 1 October, 1963. The democratic government along with the structure bequeathed unto us was being gradually built and developed when the military took over the

government by a coup d'état in 1966 and terminated the process. The military was in power for over 29 years from 1966 to 1999 with only a four-year stint of democratic governance.

The first major challenge of good governance is the relatively underdeveloped institutions, especially the democratic institutions and structures in Nigeria. Quite a number of people have not understood the workings and intricacies of democratic government before it was truncated. Under this situation and circumstance, it becomes difficult to establish and practise good governance because majority of people could not understand and practise democratic government which structure is young and weak, but which is an imperative for good governance. This deficiency is affecting the development and performance of other institutions.

Poor Political Governance and Representation

The second major challenge to good governance is poor political governance and representation. This is not unexpected, since the democratic institution is weak and young, poor political representation is inevitable. Many people in Nigeria do not yet understand the workings of democracy itself. This is why people can be bribed to vote for a candidate of questionable character during elections.

There have been instances where people without education, nor adequate knowledge won an election against good candidates. Rigging of elections and snatching of ballot boxes are usually witnessed and even common in Nigeria. This leads to poor representation at the level of governance. There is no way such incompetent candidates who won elections through rigging can perform adequately well in positions of authority.

Weak Social Structure and Institutions

The social structure and institutions in Nigeria are also fraught with a lot of problems which hinder good governance. Such problems include ethnicity, tribal sentiments and vote buying. During elections, candidates are sometimes voted for based on ethnicity and tribal sentiments. Consequently, qualified and capable candidates may not win elections due to tribal sentiments. Wrong

and unqualified candidates hold political power for which they lack understanding of its workings, therefore the evolution of good governance from this scenario looks impracticable.

EFFECTS OF THESE CHALLENGES

Poor Political Leadership?

The issue leads to distrust and lack of loyalty to the political leadership by the led. When and if wrong and incapable persons hold political power good governance becomes elusive again because of the apparent disconnect that will emerge.

These issues lead to the following which could be seen as both challenges and effects.

Lack of Respect for the Rule of Law and Lack of Respect for Human Dignity

There is also lack of respect for the rule of law and respect for human dignity. These twin attributes of good governance are sometimes absent in democratic governance in Nigeria, leading to bad governance in the Nigerian situation.

General Indiscipline Among the Populace

Indiscipline, disobedience and similar social vices are common scenes in Nigeria. The political and ruling class themselves are indiscipline and break laws indiscriminately. They find it difficult and/or impossible to establish good governance.

Bribery and Corruption

Another major challenge to good governance is corruption across all strata of the Nigerian society. Here, accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law. Secondly is a badge of fraud as is sometimes said, corruption is the bane of governance. The abuse of public office for private gains coupled with nepotism and bribery somehow encapsulate the demise of good governance in a society.

The World Economic Forum has highlighted some of the effects

the failure to minimise corruption can have on an economy. Surveys consistently show that a major concern of business operating in developing countries like Nigeria relate to the high levels of corruption and the inability to do business without paying bribes. It is also clear that businesses operating in such countries that have a poor record of controlling corruption are never going to be as accomplished as those in places which minimise corruption through good governance.

Wide Inequality

There is a feeling of wide gap between the rich and the poor, the haves and the have-nots. There is also a feeling of wide gap of inequality and disparity of income distribution. These feelings sometimes lead to insecurity and threat to life and property.

Insecurity and Threat to Life and Property

These feelings are antithetical to the building and establishment of good governance in the country.

Poverty in the Land

Evidence of this abounds in the land. Nigeria with a population of over 170 million with more than half of them living below poverty level cannot attain good governance because abject poverty is antithetical to good governance.

Underdeveloped Economy and Poor Public Planning Habit

In a cursory look, Nigerian economy is underdeveloped. It is saddening to note that since independence in 1960, Nigeria is not food secured. A country that cannot feed her citizenry but imports rice, fish, toothpick and other food items is not toeing the path of good governance. Recent data from the health of the economy is far from being charming. Nigeria's poverty conundrum and underdevelopment have assumed a frightening dimension. As Magnus Kpokol observe, **"The number of Nigerians living below poverty line in 1980 was estimated to be 20 million, 28.1 million in 1985, 46.3 million in 1992, 70 million in 1709 and . . . million in 2013"**.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, it is estimated that from 1980 till date, 15 to 20 percent of Nigeria import bill is being spent on food to the tune of 2 billion dollars annually. In the recent years, over 1.30 million dollars was spent on wheat, 200 million dollars on frozen chicken (before its ban on importation) and 1 billion dollars on rice, while another 100 million dollars was spent on sugar. With the dwindling revenue due to fall in international price of crude oil, the country may no longer sustain food importation. It is germane to mention that whereas in 1980, the exchange rate of the Naira to the dollar was 1 Naira to 1.2 dollars, but today it is more than 200 Naira to 1 dollar! The Nigerian economy has really plummeted.

On the employment side, it is unfortunate that unemployment rates have been on the increase in the last ten years. The Labour Force Sample Survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics (2015) reported that the overall unemployment rate amounted to 19.7 percent of total labour force in March 2009 indicating an increase from 14.9 percent in March 2008, and reaching an all time high of 23.90 percent in 2011 and still growing.

As observed by Ozon Eson, Adewoye, Trenchol and Aganga, for several years, the increasing population and expanding outputs of educational institutions have not been matched by available employment opportunities. Although, high rates of economic growth have been recorded in the country, the growth has largely been jobless. The National Bureau of Statistics also reported that while the real GDP had been strong for each of the last five years measuring at six percent or higher each year between 2005 and 2014, the national unemployment rate has risen annually geometrically.

The public perception is that there has been little job creation despite the growth in real GDP. This has resulted in a situation where the employment problem has continued to fester such that presently there is a monumental employment crisis in Nigeria. This crisis according to Umo consists of four elements in human resource wastage – unemployment, underemployment, low wage employment and outright social exclusion. Under this unemployment situation, the practice of good governance in Nigeria is bound to face some challenges.

Poor Attitude to Work and Lack of Job Commitment

In the past and up to the present, there is an erroneous perception that government work is nobody's work and therefore commitment is rarely desirable. This poor attitude to work may not lead to rapid economic development. In effect, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) may not experience any boost without a complete change of attitude to work.

Illiteracy

Illiteracy is generally believed to be a disease which has to be cured before any development be it economic or political can take place. In a situation where a sizeable proportion of the populace are illiterate, it would be difficult for those people to make meaningful contribution to economic development.

Lack of Dependable Data for Economic Planning

In Nigeria there is general lack of reliable and dependable data for economic planning. Reliable data is needed for planning and economic development.

Infrastructural Decay and Poor Maintenance Culture

In Nigeria there is general infrastructural decay, poor network of roads under developed health care delivery system coupled with poor maintenance culture of even the few available ones. The situation hinders socio and economic demand which enhances good governance. In a situation where movement and communications are hampered good governance cannot be effective.

In sum total, the challenges to good governance are identified to be myriad and complex efforts have to be made to ameliorate the situation so as to enhance good governance in the country.

NECESSARY INTERVENTION AND SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

This section of the lecture is an attempt to proffer suggestions for the development and institutionalisation of good governance in Nigeria. However it is a herculean task to develop and

institutionalise good governance. It should be noted that achieving good governance is a long process. Fortunately, the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria declares in section 14(1) that:

The Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a State based on the principles of democracy and social justice. It also determines as the primary purpose of government the security and welfare of the people.

Thus section 16 of the constitution charged the State to control the national economy in a manner which secures the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality.

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has also repeatedly linked good governance to an enabling environment conducive to the enjoyment of human rights and promoting growth and sustainable human development. By linking good governance to sustainable human development, emphasising principles such as accountability, participation and the enjoyment of human rights, the resolution stands as an implicit endorsement of right-based approaches to good governance. This is the solid base for the entrenchment of good governance in any democratic society.

The Commission also suggested that a good governance initiative in the economic sphere should be sensitive to the following indices:

- (1) Policy document setting out in clear terms development goals and financial as well as time frame for its realisation.
- (2) Fiscal and Budget Management.
- (3) Service Delivery
- (4) Communication and transparency – good governance requires that government should establish a feedback and monitoring mechanism so as to gauge the impact of policies on citizens. Government should also provide practical examples of activities that have proved effective in promoting good governance including through development cooperation.

Other remedial measures to enhance good governance include:

- (1) Promotion of good political governance through credible political representation.
- (2) Promotion of good political and social governance to result in good economic governance.
- (3) Eradication of bribery and corruption.

Pratiths Patil of India stated that “corruption is the enemy of development and of good governance. It must be got rid of, both the government and the people at large must come together to achieve this national objective.

There is no simple one best way to eradicate corruption. The creation of effective anti-corruption institutions is a step in the right direction. The civil society in particular has key roles to play in ensuring transparency which will promote eradication of corruption.

At this juncture, it is imperative to address one major national issue that has to do with good governance. As posited by Emeka Anyaoku, a former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth:

At the heart of the several conflicts plaguing the Nigerian state today is the consequence of the practice of true federalism. The power-shift debate that characterised the politics of transition from military to civil rule and which has persisted months after largely out of the frustration of large segments of the political system that has shut significant sections out of the corridors of power for most of the post-independence period.

Empirical data emanating from the Nigerian government and politics has demonstrated that Nigeria's federal structure is indeed far from being a balanced one, both structurally and in terms of power relationships. Virtually all segments of the federation both majority and minority ethnic groups – are complaining of marginalisation, thereby driving home the significance of federal character principle as a mechanism for national integration.

Enhancing good governance in a federal arrangement is a function of equity and justice among diverse ethnic groups and this can only be guaranteed by scientific application of federal character principle. The federal arrangement as it is now is like robbing Peter to pay Paul thereby making the system to be

convoluting. The implementation of the federal character principle has caused a lot of tension among the different federating units in the country. There is the fuzziness that pervaded its application in certain areas. Although, celebrated by some as the 'cornerstone of ethnic justice and fair government in Nigeria', the federal character principle is also being denounced by others as a euphemism for federal discrimination at best, or geographical apartheid at worst.

In an extensive nationwide survey carried out by Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), the impact of the 'federal character' policy on citizenship was explored. It is widely believed that it has caused three types of Nigerian citizens:

- (1) The most privileged are those who belong to the indigenous communities of the state in which they reside.
- (2) Those citizens who are indigenes of other states are less favoured.
- (3) The least privileged are those citizens who are unable to prove that they belong to a community indigenous to any state in Nigeria and women married to men from states other than their own.

IDEA observes further that such a multiple system of citizenship inevitably engenders discrimination in jobs, land purchase, housing and admission to educational institutions, marriage, business transactions and the distribution of social welfare services. We cannot but suggest that in the current democratic dispensation it is not out of place for the National Assembly to re-examine the application of federal character principle vis-à-vis good governance in Nigeria.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, without necessarily boring you let me add that one other issue germane to good governance in our contemporary federal system is a very contentious and vexatious issue of fiscal federalism. No doubt, "public finance is one of those subjects which lie on the borderline between economics and politics". The national assembly will do well if this issue is trashed once and for all. In an high flung editorial comment, a national daily identified five major objectives that revenue allocation formula must accomplish, viz:

- (i) National unity;
- (ii) Economic growth;
- (iii) Balanced development;
- (iv) High standard of living for the citizens.

The snag in the Nigerian context is how best to resolve these complex revenue allocation problems to achieve the aforementioned objectives. Thus, on several occasions successive governments have revised the revenue allocation formula till date. So far an acceptable formula is yet to be arrived at which this institution may take a cursory look at even if it is not solicited.

ROLES FOR THE UNIVERSITIES AND OTHER LOWER TIERS OF EDUCATION

Educational institutions especially the university have major role to play in the promotion of good governance. This can be achieved through:

- (i) Enhanced quality of policy-oriented research in good governance.
- (ii) Development of theoretical and applied module of good governance that can be implanted in the society.
- (iii) University as Ivory Tower can provide exemplary leadership role model and example for the society to emulate and copy.
- (iv) Provision of effective town-gown linkages for community public impacts.
- (v) Intensification of teaching and research on good governance in all aspects of instruction life and activities.
- (vi) Students' union activities should imbibe good governance as example for immediate communities.
- (vii) Continuous public enlightenment on the need for the entrenchment of good governance in all levels of Nigerian societal life through publications, conferences, seminars and group discussions.

How? Products of our schools should not only be found worthy in learning but also in character. These are the people that will go out there to run the system in the future. If they are not well moulded character-wise, the system will suffer for it. It is imperative that managers of the system do a kind of general overhaul of the curriculum to meet the societal needs.

From another perspective, in a democratic dispensation the role of the political parties in enhancing good governance cannot be over emphasised. The process of candidate selection has a kind of concomitant effect on the polity. For now what we require is guided democracy. To leave the system ajar while picking candidates for election may be antithetical to good governance when politicians of questionable characters are presented for elections the system suffer enormously from what political scientists call legitimacy crisis.

If the public sector and the political space need to be sanitised, the corporate world too must wake up to the reality of good governance. The recent experience of banking sector crisis which led to the collapse of a number of them is not unconnected with bad governance in the private sector. If the last resort in public sector management is Public-Private-Partnership (PPP), the private sector cannot afford to be immune from the challenges of good governance.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

From the foregoing, it is apt to conclude this lecture with a very strong advice by Emile Lahoud that:

Democracy, good governance and modernity cannot be imported or imposed from outside a country.

Thus, all strata of the Nigerian society must be mobilised in the pursuit of good governance. For instance, in both the public and private sectors, subjective interview process may have to stop. Where selection process is tailored to favour a candidate the outcome becomes counter-productive. In the same vein, where juniors are promoted far and above their seniors, it does great damage to the system. Good governance however entails the governed developing

minimum confidence in the government. Where there is a disconnect between the government and the governed the system may not produce good governance.

Please permit me to add that in Oyo State we have made giant strides and still not resting on our oars in delivering good governance. This has been made possible by aggressive pursuit of our tripodal policy of Restoration, Transformation and Repositioning based on the identification of the state's hierarchy of needs, which has engendered a high level of development that residents of the state can bear us witness.

Finally, as we seek to make Nigeria a better place, let us join Josiah Gilbert Holland in praying:

God give us men! A time like this demand
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands;
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom then spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honour, men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking!
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog in public duty,
and in private thinking;
For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds,
Their large professions and their little deeds,
Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps,
Wrong rules the land and waiting Justice sleeps,

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, let me say a big thank you for your rapt attention.

Happy celebrations!



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