

**PEOPLES PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP)
RENEWING NIGERIA'S PURPOSE**

**Motto: Truth, Freedom and Progress Renewing Nigeria Purpose
MANIFESTO OF PEOPLES PROGRESSIVE PARTY**

Preamble

We meet at a remarkable time, a turning point and a crossroad in the life of our country. Our failed economy gives Nigeria a unique chance to confront persistent challenges and the many constitutional and structural defects in the federation. Our country, after four decades of purposeless drift, must now set itself to the important tasks and higher goals of facing up to painful truths; to correct constitutional and structural imbalances; to remove State erected barriers against self reliance and economic emancipation; to replace a welfare economy with a workfare economy; without which economic growth will continue to elude us as a people and a nation.

The Peoples Progressive Party has the vision and leadership to address these issues. Our platform is uplifting and visionary. It reflects the view of countless Nigerians all across this country, who believe in prosperity with a purpose - who believe in Renewing Nigeria's Purpose, Together.

This platform makes clear that we are the pally of ideas. We are the party that follows its bold words with bold deeds. A party you can believe.

PPP has a special calling - to advance the principles of freedom, decentralized governance and the dignity and worth of every individual. These principles form the foundation of both an agenda for Nigeria in the year 2007 and this platform for our party. They point us toward reforms in government, a restoration of timeless values, and a renewal of our national purpose.

Our party is equal to the challenges facing our country. After decades of bitter division in national politics, our party will bring people together, using the very things that divide us as a powerful force for unity, healthy competition and development, calling all citizens to common goals. To longstanding problems, we bring a fresh outlook and innovative ideas.

The PPP commits itself to bold reforms in education and the economy. In education, we plan to make every school a place of learning and achievement for every child. We will introduce local control of public schools, parental control, via government vouchers, to determine which school their wards will attend, while demanding high standards and accountability for results.

We recognize that the three root problems of the Nigerian economy are:

- i. Decayed Infrastructure
- ii. Overly centralized political structure

iii. Absence of law and order

Accordingly PPP plans to tackle these issues by correcting constitutional and structural defects, without which the problem will continue to defy known solutions.

We believe that the current constitutional structure strangulates creativity and rewards welfare and dependency by the majority on the minority. We believe that the Nigerian economy will respond to a constitutional structure that will allow wealth to be created rather than disbursed.

We will introduce a credible mandatory National Social Security plan, patterned after the all-inclusive NOIH American system, to keep the fundamental commitment between country and people, and give hope to the working class, as they become the senior citizens of tomorrow. Our social security system will serve as a national database and planning resource for corporate and income tax liabilities and payments, unemployment and welfare benefits, retirement contributions and benefits, universal health care and health insurance coverage, identification and categorization of citizens and aliens, etc.

We commit ourselves to revolutionary tax reforms that will sustain our nation's prosperity and reflect its decency, moving away from a wealth sharing mentality to a wealth creation mentality, always aiming at reducing the burden on all Nigerians, especially those who struggle the most.

We commit ourselves to aiding and encouraging the work of non-governmental charitable and faith based organizations, who can make great strides in overcoming poverty and other social problems, bringing new hope into millions of lives.

We strongly believe that for every Nigerian there must be a ladder of opportunity, and for those most in need, a safety net of care. This is a fundamental contract between country and people.

We commit ourselves to the values that strengthen our culture and sustain our nation: family; faith, personal responsibility, and a belief in the dignity of every human life.

We offer not only a new agenda, but also a new approach - a vision of a welcoming society in which all have a place. To all Nigerians, particularly minorities, women, youths and children, we send a clear message: this is the party of freedom and progress. A party without favoritism. A party of workfare, not welfare. This is your home.

We commit to initiatives that will recreate respect for law - and law that is worthy of respect: We affirm that law enforcement that works must be

locally based. This is where the primary responsibility for law enforcement resides. While we support community policing and other proven initiatives against crime, we strongly oppose the continued and dictatorial usurpation of that responsibility by the federal government, which has led to the current state of gross insecurity of life and property in the land. PPP governors, legislators, and local leaders will take a zero tolerance approach to crime, and will be empowered under a localized law enforcement structure to implement crime fighting initiatives, with local accountability, to drastically lower crime, assassination and murder rates in their sphere” of influence, We commit ourselves to rebuilding the Nigerian military and returning to a non-political, professional military under complete civil authority. A military committed to strength and purpose, not overly dependent on foreign technology, but used to propel technology transfer and advances in the country. A military with identifiable imprints on the national economy and a key player in the nation’s technology objectives.

We believe that the many ethnic nationalities, which make up our country is a source of strength and unity, not weakness and disunity. The potency of the many ethnic nationalities can be properly harnessed by implementing political, economic and security restructuring to give ‘substance to current geopolitical entities, thereby unleashing healthy inter zonal competition in the development of the country.

The diversity of our nation is reflected in this platform. We ask for the supply and participation of all who substantially share our agenda. In one way or another, every Progressive is a dissenter. We are bound together in a great struggle for a great enterprise for posterity and the future of our children.

We seek to move control of government out of Abuja, back into the hands of the people. We believe in service to the common good - and that good is 11 Ot common until it is shared.

We believe that from freedom comes opportunity; from opportunity comes growth; and from growth comes progress and prosperity.

Our vision is one of clear direction; new ideas, civility in public life, and leadership with honor and distinction.

This is an election with clear alternatives. The Peoples Progressive Party offers Nigeria a chance to begin anew: To give purpose to our plenty; To apply enduring principles to our challenges; To extend to all citizens the full promise of a fulfilling life - THE NEW NIGERIAN LIFE.

With faith ill God, confidence in our fellow Nigerians and great hopes for the future of our country, we respectfully submit this manifesto to the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

1. Aims & Objectives of PPP

The AIM of the party shall be to democratically acquire, utilize, sustain and retain political power for the sole purpose of rendering total service to the people of Nigeria, Black and African people and humanity as a whole, based on the ideological and principle and practice of federalism and progressivism.

To the above end, the party shall pursue and undertake the following objectives:

- a. To set constitutional and administrative structures to ensure a big, strong and durable Party;
- b. To sponsor suitable and committed members to contest general elections as representatives of the Party, to all elective offices of government;
- c. To present to Nigerians a manifesto encapsulating the philosophy, programmes of service, project proposals and modus operandi of the Party in order to lobby and earn their electoral, moral and social support;
- d. To pursue the entrenchment in governance of the utilitarian best principles of “The greatest happiness for the greatest number”;
- e. To setup, at all levels, government that will ensure that the basic needs of modern living, namely, food, portable water, shelter, primary health care, electric power access, road/waterways, base education (literacy/numeracy/skill),recreation/social amenities information/public enlightenment, etc. are available in a fair and just manner to all Nigerians;
- f. To promote self-reliance through active and practical encouragement of small and medium scale industrial initiatives, handicraft and agriculture;
- g. To establish a policy of poverty prevention through active government intervention in youth unemployment and redundancy;
- h. To protect, promote and elevate the status of womanhood through various deliberate equalization and parity schemes including compulsory basic education, abrogation of antisocial discriminatory cultural practices, equal employment and electoral opportunities etc;
- i. To provide welfare support for pensioners, the elderly, the handicapped, widows and unemployed;
- j. To protect the rights and privileges of children, including the unborn child, through appropriate legislations and welfare schemes;
- k. To represent the interest of the Nigerian masses by participation in key and strategic sectors of the economy e.g. oil mineral/solid mineral exploitation, exploitation and marketing; defence industry/aviation industry; shipping industry; telecommunications; housing; fiscal/monetary control; scientific research and technological development, etc.
- l. To create a congenial private sector atmosphere for manufacturing, import business to thrive and prosper in Nigeria;

- m. To respect and protect the right and provide the basic needs of the working class, market women, students/youth/religious leaders, traditional rulers and political class;
- n. To provide leadership, strategic and economic support (where appropriate and possible), for Africa and Blacks in the Diaspora;
- o. To honour international treaties, support and promote international co-operation between and among friendly nations and contribute social, culturally and economically to the maintenance of world peace and order;
- p. To defend the territorial integrity and unity of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- q. To actively entrench, encourage and regard observance of the nations ethical values and morality, especially truth, justice, honesty, equity, and the fear of God.
- r. To wage an ideological, moral, constitutional/legal war against corrupt practices, ethnicity and indiscipline in private and public life;
- s. To undertake all' innovative activities that would eliminate or reduce practices, misery and uncertainty, foster liberty; enhance confidence, inculcate patriotism and nationalism, galvanize national unity and increase the quantum of happiness among Nigerians.
- t. To offer free primary health care and free/compulsory basic education to Nigerians.
- u. To sponsor scientific research for technological development in agriculture, genetic engineering, medicine and nuclear power for industrial ends.
- v. To undertake, any other activities or programmes that would usher in positive change for the lasting benefit of all Nigerians.
- w. To achieve all the foregoing under the umbrella of a federalist platform with power continually devolving to the federating units.

2. The New Nigeria Dream: Prosperity with a Purpose

3.1 Timeless Truths for the Nigerian Economy:

The highest hopes of the Nigerian people- a country at peace, scientific and technological progress, a just and caring society- cannot be achieved by prosperity alone, but neither can they be fulfilled without it. Yet prosperity is not an end in itself. Rather, it is the means by which great things can be achieved for the common good. Our commitment to the nation's economic growth is an affirmation of the real riches of our country: the works of compassion that link home to home, community to community, and hand to helping hand. This is the foundation upon which Nigeria must be built. It is a sound foundation.

Yesterday's wildest dreams are today's realities, and there is no limit on the promise of tomorrow, if our orientation is right. The headiness of technological progress has made the world in which we must participate more future-oriented than ever before. But the fascination with the future means that, more, than ever, we need to urgently secure and preserve

this foundation that has served the developed nations so well. We must not overlook the practical experience of the past. To successfully shall where we should go in the years ahead, we must first look back. To see how we got where we are today. This is the beginning of wisdom.

Today the economy is in shambles. Unemployment is conservatively pi4 at over 50%. Inflation is runaway into hundreds of percent. The Nigerian currency is almost without worth domestically and internationally. Interest rates are at 22% to 30%.

The framework for the New Nigerian Economy, one that brings hope and opportunities, must reform the tax code, restructure the polity to allow for wealth creation at all levels, eliminate state barriers to self reliance, eliminate constitutional defects that produce beggar states in place of one that produce donor states, decentralize infrastructure delivery to empower local solutions to local problems, decentralize law enforcement to achieve lasting and enduring internal security, institutionalize a workfare state in place of the destructive welfare state, etc. The result would be tremendous growth within the decade and the realization of the capital and environment to launch the much desired technology revolution in Nigeria.

3.2 Taxes and Budget:

The Nigerian tax codes, federal and state, are dysfunctional and uncoordinated. They are a nightmare to implement This is due to the mono-economy based on oil and the unbelievably uncreative means of revenue generation that foster the unjust practice of “reaping where one did not sow”. There is no popularly defined concept of direct taxation, the very foundations without which lasting prosperity will continue to be a mirage.

Now, this is done for a purpose by those who continually frustrate the yearnings of the average Nigerian for a popularly realizable and distributed economic growth. Unfortunately, these people, having imposed forced rule over Nigerians through the barrel of the gun, continue to sustain themselves in power by similar or other selfserving corrupt means.

The plan is simply:

- i. Appropriate all natural wealth of the country to the center.
- ii. Get multinational corporations to exploit and dispose of the wealth.
- iii. Arrange to receive commission from such corporations
- iv. Get all their State cohorts to assemble and share the commission according to some voodoo formulae.
- v. Steal most of the shared wealth and move it offshore.

- vi. Use the leftovers to barely keep alive the nation's infrastructure" health, education, agriculture and security, and provide subsidies in petroleum products.

The plan is a master in the act of deception. Simply put; appropriate the resources of the voiceless minority; use it to placate the rest of country and corruptly enrich the elite, and the majority is not likely to be concerned. After all they have cleverly been led to believe that the resources are the Government's and does not belong to the people. So why should they care? As long as the wealth being stolen, mismanaged and wasted does not come from the pockets of the average Nigeria as taxes to the Government, the apathy will continue, AND AN APATHETIC SOCIETY CAN NOT SUSTAIN ECONOMIC GROWTH.

Consider the timeless admonition; "You can fool some of the people all of the time or all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time". The time has come to wake up Nigerians to the hard truth. If you want good economic times, you must pay for it. Any thing that comes easy always goes easy. Costly things are valued. If we must value our economy, we must be willing to pay for it. To keep the government in check and the population ever vigilant, the concept of fair and equitable taxation must be institutionalized in the polity. The public will no longer feel unconcerned if they hear of massive looting or wasting of government money generated as taxes from their hard earned money. The implementation of direct taxation will initiate the process of the people refocusing on their government and leaders.

Taxes at all levels of government should absorb not more than 30% of the net national product. 70% should be left in the hands of the private sector to grow the economy. This is the equation that works. The long-term role of government should be to provide enabling environment for fair, just and equitable economic growth, one that is seen to benefit both the working citizen and the corporations. GOVERNMENT HAS NO BUSINESS IN BUSINESS.

In the most simplistic and all embracing way, government can be defined as an entity that taxes and spends.

Whenever it goes beyond that bound, the result is often destructive. A growing economy must see less of Government and more of the private business community. And it does not mean that government cannot play a role, especially in a 1:1iled economy. We commit to the economics of inclusion, a set of tax reforms that engenders self-supporting principles, and one that will let people keep more of what they earn and accelerate movement up the opportunity ladder.

We therefore endorse the principles of Tax Code with a Purpose - Replacing the nation's confusing tax codes with a simple code of six

progressive brackets, fair, just and equitable; 5% on low income wage earners to 30% for high-income households, Business and corporate tax brackets may not exceed 45% and should be progressive as well. Tax rates should be set by legislative bodies or via direct referendum by the people.

Our growth oriented tax code is the engine to lasting economic boom, and shall be used to:

- Encourage entrepreneurship and targeted growth of the private sector.
- Promote Research and Development.
- Promote charitable giving and education.
- Foster capital investment and savings to boost personal savings rate.

This is more than just an economic program to promote growth and job creation. It is our blueprint for the kind of society we want for our children and grandchildren.

To guard against unpopular tax increases, we commit to legislation requiring a super-majority vote in the relevant legislative or governing assemblies to raise taxes. Retroactive taxation will be prohibited and the courts will not be used to impose taxes. Because of the vital role of religious and fraternal benevolent societies in fostering charity and patriotism, they should not be subject to taxation.

Income taxes and payroll taxes are the most obvious parts of the public's tax burden directly tied to government. This is the type of taxation that should be encouraged in order to foster public scrutiny and government accountability. Indirect taxes, such as Sales Taxes, Value-Added Taxes, Excise Taxes and User Fees should be discouraged and made constitutionally difficult to impose in order to avoid under- radar taxation. These kinds of taxes shift the burden to the consumer, while exempting government from direct responsibility. Unpopular governments use these taxes to shift public resentment to the businesses that are forced to collect them.

3.3 Homeowner-ship:

Every citizen's dream is to own a home. Homeownership is central to an expanding economy. The Peoples Progressive Party wants to make it more accessible for everyone. That starts with access to capital for entrepreneurs and access to credit for consumers. To sustain economic growth, the nation must commit to assist millions of low-income families move from renting to owning their homes via grants, government guarantees and affordable low interest long-term mortgage loans. These mechanisms can open up more housing opportunities than government programme. PPP will look for solutions to homeownership where the monthly rent of the household is enough to pay monthly mortgage for a

home. Affordable housing is in the national interest. A balanced national housing policy must recognize that decent housing includes apartments, and addresses the needs of all citizens, including renters.

PPP will encourage local communities and the masses to take over foreclosed and abandoned government housing projects in order to revitalize such projects. We commit to open housing, without favoritism, quotas or lengthy bureaucratic controls, and we will encourage proactive efforts by the realty and housing industries to assure affordable access for everyone.

In many areas, housing prices are higher than they need to be because of corruption and regulations that drive up property and building costs. Some regulation is of course necessary, and so is sensible zoning. But we will empower states and localities to work with local builders and lenders to eliminate necessary burdens that price many families out of the market. We see no role for any federal regulation of homebuilding, but we do foresee a larger role for State and local governments in controlling the federally assisted housing that has been so poorly managed from Abuja. We also encourage the modification of restrictions that inhibit the rehabilitation of existing distressed properties.

3.4 Small Business:

We affirm that the small business is where prosperity starts. This is the store in the marketplace, the corner shops, and neighborhood centers. Small businesses are the underlying essence of a vibrant economy, this is the place where the man on the street creates and sustains his wealth. If the small business is successful, the economy will follow. If it fails, the larger economy fails as well. Small businesses create most of the jobs and they are a measure of the opportunities within the polity. They are the primary engines of economic advance by the Nigerian trader, man or woman. The more entrants to this sector, the more success in the nation's economy.

The macro economy is not isolated from the micro economies. The summation of the micro economies equals the macro economy. It stands to reason that whither the people's businesses go, so goes the country's economy. Therefore, Government effort should be to develop and implement policies that support the growth of the trade 'in the marketplace. This is a key ingredient to unleash sustainable economic growth.

In a dynamic and efficient Nigerian economy, small businesses generate more than half the gross domestic product. Any other equation is a mirage. Inherent in a small business is the willingness to give people a chance

and the ability to train individuals new to the work force. These are prerequisites to a welfare economy.

In recognition thereof, we will provide initiatives, such as lower tax rates, zero inheritance tax, minimum red tape, limited legal and product liability, and the aggressive expansion of regional and overseas markets for their goods and services. We will end the constant harassment of small businesses by federal agencies and set up a Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Board to liaise with trade unions and organizations in order to protect the small business from corrupt and overzealous federal agencies, requiring the States and Local Governments to do the same.

Providing health insurance is a major challenge for small business owners. Self-employed business men and women or workers employed by small businesses are generally uninsured. This is one area that government must focus to implement private sector cooperative initiatives to band small businesses nationwide in order to buy functional health insurance premiums, either through health insurance companies or directly in hospitals and health care centers.

3.5 Trade - The Force of Economic Freedom:

The fearful build walls; the confident demolish them. International trade has become the world's most powerful economic force. International trade is not the creation of the world's rulers, but of the world's peoples, who strive for a better future and break down any barriers governments may erect to it. The result is today's global economy of open markets in democratic nations. That system is poised to sweep away the vestiges of counterproductive protectionism.

For our economy to grow, we must overcome the welfare mentality that keeps us imprisoned in a single export product, which constitutes almost our entire economy. Nigeria can be a key player in the international market for a number of mineral resources and agro-based products. This is where our strength lies. We commit to a call for action, not mere words. In general, average wages in export-related industries are significantly higher than those of domestically focused industries. As for agriculture, expanding exports is the key to regaining what was lost. This ought to be the measure--that all agro-based government agencies, such as River Basin Authorities, be reformed into export-oriented concerns, with specific product strength set by geo-location. There is no point in spending lots of government money for decades in agencies that do not produce anything, but hide under the pretext of being research facilities. Success should be measured by the capacity of such agencies to meet their specific product quotas for export or local consumption.

Non-performing agencies should be re-assessed, reformed or relocated for effectiveness.

We should go back to the agricultural cooperatives of old, using the agro-based agencies as clearing houses for pre-harvest and post-harvest support and resources for the local farmer and the cooperatives. New ideas in small and low cost mechanization should be developed and directed to the local farmer.

3.6 Technology and the New Economy - The Force for Change

Governments do not create wealth. The people do - through creativity and enterprise and risk-taking. With information technology, people in bondage can taste freedom, and people in freedom can bond more securely with each other. People who used to work for others can now be independent entrepreneurs. And citizens can drill through layers of entrenched bureaucracy to directly access information and transact business.

PPP has embraced this change, for it advances the central values of our party and our country: a reduced role for the central government, greater personal liberty, economic freedom, reliance on the market and decentralized decision-making. This is the national revolution - rewarding creativity, hard work, tenacity, and a willingness to take (entrepreneur) risks.

PPP recognizes that the role of government in the New Economy is to foster an environment where innovation can flourish. The information Revolution is the product of the creative efforts and hard work of men and women in the private sector, and not of government bureaucrats. At the same time, we recognize the magnitude and pace of change require vigilance to make the most of its opportunities and to mitigate its possible difficulties. For what we have experienced thus far is surely only the beginning of almost unimaginable growth, change, and more change. Let others be timid in the face of it, but let our country seize the opportunity and join the brave.

The Peoples Progressive Party commits to the following E-Contract with the Nigerian people:

An Internet Tax Freedom Act, which puts a five-year moratorium on new Internet taxes to ensure that electronic commerce is not smothered but encouraged.

A visa program for highly skilled expatriate labor in information technology.

A Liability Reform Act to prevent shield companies in new cutting-edge technologies. The threat of huge liabilities must not be allowed to cripple the capital formation that will drive the information Revolution.

- Extended research and development initiatives and tax credits to allow companies to innovate.
- Practical, purposeful and effective deregulation of telecommunications, to eliminate monopolies and open the door to worldwide communication.
- Commercial law granting electronic signatures used in the formation of contracts online the same legal validity as pen and ink signatures on paper. With this law, business-to-business e-commerce will explode, paperwork costs will decline, and convenience will increase.

These initiatives are grounded in a steadfast commitment to open markets, to minimal regulations, and to reducing taxes that snuff out innovation - principles at the heart of the new economy and our party.

The impact of the Internet on the daily workings of government to make it more responsive and citizen-centered is an important aspect of our reform platform. Democracy thrives on well-informed citizens, and with this initiative, the public will have unprecedented access to the workings of government, including the voting records at their legislative members and the written opinions of judges, whose decisions will now be available for review in the court of public opinion.

We commit to global markets and free trade. We call for a permanent ban on access taxes for Internet transactions.

We must cultivate and maintain a highly educated work force so that continued progress need not depend on imported personnel. Instead of burdening schools with red tape and narrow government programs, we will give them maximum flexibility in using federal education technology dollars to meet their specific needs - whether it be for computers, teacher training, software development, or systems integration.

We must speed up the research and innovation that drive technological progress, using the military as a key vehicle to achieve the same.

We must protect the technology industry from modern day pirates at home and abroad: both those who violate copyrights and those who loot by litigation.

We must restrain the hand of government so that it cannot smother or slow the growth of worldwide commerce and communication through the Internet.

We must encourage government at all levels to work with the private sector to ensure that the Internet must be a medium for everyone. PPP

embraces a creative, incentive-based, public/private approach to solving national technology problems, and a PPP president will use the influence of his/her office to urge high-tech philanthropy, such as the creation of one community technology center every year in each local government area. The centers will provide such services as free Internet access and technology skills training.

What holds true for the Internet applies as well to other areas of scientific advance, from biotechnology to chemistry. These fields require enormous infusions of capital, as well as regulatory-flexibility by government. The federal government must refocus and reinvigorate its role in promoting cutting-edge, basic research, and the tax code must foster research and development. These policies will increase the pace of technological developments by de-emphasizing the direct role of government while strengthening private-public partnerships and the role of the private sector. In addition, PPP will promote purposeful (commerce-oriented) involvement in space research and exploration. We will ensure that this Nation can expand our knowledge of the universe, and with the support of the Nigerian people, join the global community in a purposeful (commerce-oriented) exploration of Mars and the rest of the solar system. In the long-term, we will consider space travel and space science a national priority with virtually unlimited benefits, in areas ranging from medicine to micro-machinery, for those on earth. Development of space technology will give us a growing economic resource and a source of new scientific discoveries. The potential benefits of new science and technology to the new Nigerian economy are incalculable and can only be hastened by the international free market in ideas that the Information Revolution has created.

3.7 Privacy and Secure Technologies:

Government also has a responsibility to protect personal privacy, which is the single greatest concern people have about the Information Revolution. Citizens must have the confidence that their personal privacy will be respected in the use of technology by both business and government. That privacy is an essential part of our personal freedom and our family life, and it must not be sacrificed in the name of progress. At the same time, consumers should have the benefit of new products, services, and treatment that result from the legitimate use of data with appropriate safeguards.

4. Education and Opportunity: Leave - No Nigerian Behind

4.1 A New End of Responsibility:

Sometimes it is important to stare the obvious. This is one of those times. Nigeria has great potentials, but it is a basket case. There are many reasons for this as enumerated; in various sections of this document; foremost among them the constitutional structure, which has

institutionalized state welfare and dependency, 2/3 of the federating states being consumers and not contributors to the nation's economy. Therefore, it is not surprising that 2/3 or more of the populations are tradition of personal responsibility, the demand for high standards and clear values, and the central importance of family in the social and economic progress of the policy.

In the year ahead under the leadership of the Peoples Progressive Party, Nigeria shall move away from this irresponsible and destructive culture, to once again embrace the qualities that made her great before the dictatorship spellers usurped power and authority. Beginning with the structural flaws in the political and social landscapes, the nation will have to acknowledge past mistake, fix them, learn from them, and then move on to a bright future. There is no other option, if we are to survive as a policy and remain faithful to the contract between people and country.

We must understand that a good and civil society cannot be packaged into government programs but must originate in our homes, in our neighbourhood; and in the private institutions that bring us together. This calls for personal responsibility and community vigilance across the board, a culture that centralization or coercion cannot inspire. Only local governance with local control and resources can, particularly so in light of our diversity.

We commit to the enduring principle that challenges ought to be approached with compassion to evolve a society where everyone has a responsibility to follow the rules, but no one would be left behind.

4.2 Real Education Reform: Strengthening Accountability & Empowering Parents

No child in Nigeria should be segregated by low expectations, imprisoned by illiteracy or abandoned to frustration and the darkness of self-doubt.

We have to ask the question, "Are our schools better off today than they were in the past?" At a time of remarkable change, when a world of opportunity awaits students who are prepared for it Nigeria colleges and universities are offering remedial courses and Nigerian business are unable to find enough qualified or trainable workers to meet local demand. Worst of all, so many of our children, Nigeria's most precious asset, are headed toward failure in school, and that will hold them back through their lives. The People Progressive Party desire a better result. We believe that every child in this land should have access to a high quality; indeed, a world-class education, and we're determined to meet that goal.

It is long past time to debate what works in education. The verdict is in and only entrenched bureaucrats and parties with corrupt interest turn away from globally arrested facts that functional education must have:

- i. Strong parental involvement
- ii. Excellent teachers
- iii. Safe and orderly classrooms.
- iv. High academic standards
- v. Commitment to teaching the basic from an early start in phonics to mastery of computer technology.

Federal programs that fail to support these fundamental principles are sadly out of date, out of sink, and if not corrected soon out of time.

For dramatic and swift improvement in education, we, at the PPP, endorse the following to:

- i. Raise academic standards through increased control and accountability to parents, shrinking a multitude of dysfunctional federal programs into few flexible grants in exchange for real, measured progress in student achievement.
- ii. Assist state in closing education and achievement gap and empower needy families to escape persistently failing schools by allowing federal money to follow their children to the school of their choice.
- iii. Expand parental choice and encourage competition by providing parents with information on their child's school, increasing the number of model schools, and introducing government matching funds for education savings accounts, which working class parents can use to finance their ward's education from kindergarten through college or the university.
- iv. Ensure that all children learn to read by introducing and encouraging nationwide "Early Start Program" for pre-school children and by facilitating state reading initiatives that focus on scientifically based reading research, including phonics.

Nothing is more importance that literacy, and yet children have trouble reading. Problem must be addressed at all grade level. And as is so often the case in education, the solution is parent and child working together with teachers to help break a cycle of illiteracy that may have extended from generation to generation. PPP wants to replace that pattern with the rich legacy of reading.

We recognize that education is mostly a state, local, and family responsibility, not a federal obligation. Since the bulk of public school funding is from the state and local resources, not federal, it is obvious that state and local governments must assume most of the responsibility to improve the schools, and the role of the federal government must be progressively limited as we return control to parents teachers, and local school boards.

The education and achievement gap between disadvantaged children and their peers are ever so wide, since no previous government made any serious or credible attempt to integrate them into the mainstream education strata. The People Progressive Party hereby commits to programs and reforms, based on the timeless principles of local control, with accountability, parental choice, and meaningful student achievement, to rectify the tragic fiscal and human loss. To this end, the federal government shall assume a special financial responsibility to advance the education of the disadvantaged children. We cannot allow not afford another generation of kids to be written off.

Qualified teachers are the vanguard of education reform. With mastery of their subjects, a contagious enthusiasm for learning, and a heartfelt commitment to their students, they can make any school great. That is why we advocate merit pay for them and expand opportunities for professional development. Today, however, many teachers face poverty and disrespect in their profession. We advocate a zero-tolerance policy toward all students who disrupt the classroom and we reaffirm that school officials must have the right and responsibility to appropriately discipline all students, including students with disabilities, who are disruptive or violent. Toward the same end, we will encourage faith-based and community organizations to take leading roles in after-school programs that build character. We propose to improve teacher training and recruiting by introducing a Retiree-to-Teacher program, which places retired military and civil personnel of good standing in the classroom, and by rewarding states that enact a system for teacher accountability. We will introduce interest-free long-term teachers' student loan programs to encourage qualified candidates into the profession and home grants to encourage qualified teachers to serve in high-need schools. As a matter of fairness, we will look for ways to help defray out-of-pocket teaching expenses, which many good teachers in private and public schools make to the benefit of their students.

Local responsibility for neighbourhood schools has been the key to successful education since the day of the early schoolhouse. We commit to various initiatives that will shift decision-making away from the federal bureaucracy and back to localities. We strongly endorse the consolidation of the many confusing educational programs and bodies into flexible performance grants, targeting resources to the classroom and tying them directly to student achievement. That is real reform.

A PPP federal government will require that every state and community in the country provide free and appropriate education to all students with special needs (disabilities) and fund their schooling at higher levels. In return, the federal government will defray 40 percent of the average per

pupil expenditure to cover the excess costs. We will strive to promote the early diagnosis of learning deficiencies. Preventive efforts in early childhood should reduce the demand for special education and help many youngsters move beyond the need for special protections.

In the final analysis, education remains a parental right and responsibility. We advocate choice in education, not as an abstract theory, but as the surest way for families, especially low-income families, to free their youngsters from failing schools and put them onto the road to opportunity and success.

4.3 Higher Education: Increased Access for All

One of the most important education objectives of the Peoples Progressive Party is to make available the opportunity for post-secondary education to virtually everyone. Competition among institutions is the key to such universal access, as proven in the United States and Europe. Let the institutions make decisions regarding admission, curriculum, grading and graduation, with guidelines, checks and balance against abuse provided by the governments. The ultimate goal of the nation should be to have, at minimum, one postsecondary institution in each local government in the country supported by combination of local, state and federal resources through student loans and grants tied to specified achievements. No more confusing and unmerited bulk allocation of resources to the institutions. The institutions should derive their resources through student fees and levies. In turn, the students utilize private resources, government matched education savings account or achievement based student loans grants to fund their education. This is the recipe to join the best higher education systems in the world where achievement counts more than money or social status.

We have no choice. We must allow the higher institutions of learning to compete directly for the patronage of students and employers, if we are serious about breaking the curse of deadbeat institutions producing deadbeat students. Let the schools who cater for the needs of the society and make themselves relevant in the Nigerian market place survive. Let those who refuse to reform and compete die. Herein lies the solution to functional tertiary education. The challenges we face today, in the technological revolution and in the global economy, require us to continue to expand the extent and excellence of higher education. This is why we commit to programs that increase access to higher education for qualified students. The centerpiece of this effort is government matched education savings accounts - the ideal combination of minimal red tape and maximum consumer choice.

Government guaranteed education loans and grants should be used to:
Target students taking challenging course in mathematics, sciences and technology.

- Form partnerships with colleges and universities to improve science and math education.
- Attract science, math, and engineering graduates to low-income schools and areas with shortages of those teachers.

4.4 A New Prosperity :Seats for All at the Welcome Table

Nigeria can only be successful when it is able to offer a realistic shot at better life; when poverty becomes just a stage, not a fate; when anyone can ascend the ladder and transcend the shackles of billh; when it provides hope.

PPP wants to expand opportunity rather than expand government. We want to give hope and real upward mobility to those who have never known either. It is clear that the neo-conservative order of ultra centralization has collapsed in abject failure, riddled with corruption, gross inefficiency and class segregation, failing in its entirety to serve the people, the poor and the masses.

The time is here to act, to bring hope, to expand opportunity. Our vision is to actualize innovative reforms to successfully move families and governments from dependency to the independence of work and wealth creation. It won't be easy, but the results will surely worth the effort. Increase the supply of affordable housing for low-income working families and rehabilitate abandoned housing through a mix of local and federal partnership initiatives.

Establish corporate tax credits to create incentives for the private sector to provide affordable housing to qualified employees.

Build savings and personal wealth through Individual Development Accounts, in partnership with banks, to accurate the savings of low-income earners for home ownership and other 'targeted individual development goals.

For many individuals, poverty signals more than the lack of money. It often represents obstacles that cannot be overcome with just a paycheck. These are the challenging cases, where government aid is least effective. These, too, are the situations where neighborhood and faith-based intervention has its greatest power. For this reason, the PPP shall mandated charitable choice in all welfare laws, allowing states to contract with faith-based providers for welfare services on the san 1 e basis as any other private providers. This is necessary to help conquer abuse, addiction, and hopelessness.

PPP will encourage an outpouring of giving by extending federal charity tax credits to individual and corporate taxpayers and by allowing people

to make donations tax-free from their government guaranteed retirement or savings accounts.

The renewal of entire communities is an awesome task and involves one human face, one human hand 1 at a time. But the Nigerian people have the potential to work wonders. Government does have a role to play, but as a partner, not a rival. These forces have roots in the areas they serve, and their leaders are people to whom the disadvantaged are not statistics, but family, neighbors, friends, and moral individuals created in the image of God. With these approaches government becomes a partner with community and faith-based providers in supporting families and children and helping them improve their opportunities for a better life.

4.5 Children at Risk

PPP recognizes the importance of a functional home in the life of any child. The family still provides the best environment of stability, discipline, responsibility, and character. Documentation shows that where the father is delinquent, children are more likely to commit crime, drop out of school, become violent, become teen parents, take illegal drugs, become mired in poverty, or have emotional or behavioral problems.

The participation of faith-based and community groups will be especially important in dealing with the twin problems of non-marital pregnancy and substance abuse. Reducing those behaviors is the surest way to end the cycle of child poverty. After-school programs should be fully open to the community and faith-based groups that know best how to reach out to our children and help them reach their true potential.

We commit to abstinence education, which teaches, encourages and reward sexual abstinence until marriage as the responsible and expected standard of behavior. Abstinence from sexual activity is the only protection that is 100 percent effective against out-of-wedlock pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, when transmitted sexually. We oppose school-based referrals, counseling, and related services for contraception and abortion, as they have the unintended consequence of appearing to legitimize illicit sexual behavior amongst teens. We urge the states to enforce laws against statutory rape, which accounts for an enormous portion of teen pregnancy. We support the establishment of secondary Maternity Homes to give young unwed mothers the opportunity to develop parenting skills, finish school, and enter the workforce, if no such support exists in their primary homes. Because many youngsters fall into poverty as a result of divorce, we will encourage states to review their divorce laws and to support projects that strengthen marriage, promote successful parenting, bolster the stability of the home, and protect the

economic rights of the innocent spouse are children against the defaulting spouse.

PPP recognizes that children often pay the highest price in families where drug addiction and the daily reality of violence exist. We will support programs to remedy such problems through a mix of governmental and faith-based initiatives.

Still, there is no substitute for presidential leadership, whether internationally or here at home, where Nigeria's families cry out for safe, drug-free, and functional schools. A PPP president will hear those cries and work with parents to protect children. We will bring accountability to anti-drug programs, promote those that work, and cease funding for those that waste resources. Equally important, in a PPP administration, transporting or using illegal drugs will be made a federal offence, and the Ministry of Justice will require all federal prosecutors to aggressively pursue drug dealers, from the kingpins to the street dealers.

Illegal drugs and alcohol abuse are closely related to the incidence of child abuse. The PPP Government will initiate programs to help both children and adults in abusive or neglectful families, with priorities on preventive and family support services. We must introduce a functional child protection system, with accountability, to oversee willful or accidental neglect, ranging from physical and psychological abuse to commercial exploitation of the Nigerian child. PPP believes that any child ought to be in school rather than being used for commercial benefit or any other enterprise during normal school seasons.

We propose a child protection system of combined federal-state-local funding sources into a Child Protection Block Grant with guaranteed levels of funding. This will empower the states and local governments to respond more quickly, more flexibly, and with greater compassion to children in need. We call for the stringent and effective enforcement of laws against the abuse of children.

For many of those children, adoption may be the only route to a stable and loving home. Government at all levels should work with the charitable and faith-based groups that provide adoption services to remove the obstacles they sometimes encounter in their efforts to unite children in need with families who need them.

We call for state and local efforts to help the many children of prisoners through pre-schools, mentoring, and family rebuilding programs. These children are often the ignored victims of crime. Early intervention in their plight is essential to reduce the cycle of violence and to save a child. We should be tough on criminals but compassionate toward our children.

5. Renewing Family and Community

Individual rights - and the responsibilities that go with them - are the foundation of a free society. In protecting those rights, and in asserting those responsibilities, we affirm the common good, and common goals that should unite all Nigerians.

We are the party of the open door, determined to strengthen the social, cultural, and political ties that bind us together and make our country a great force for good in Africa and beyond. Steadfast in our commitment to our ideals, we recognize that members of our party can have deeply held and sometimes differing views. This diversity is a source of strength, not a sign of weakness, and so we welcome into our ranks all who may hold differing positions. We commit to resolve our differences with civility, trust, and mutual respect.

5.1 Family Matters

The family is society's central core of energy. That is why efforts to strengthen and better family life are the surest way to improve life for everyone. We must rely on the home to instill the virtues that sustain democracy itself.

Just as environmental pollution affects our physical health, so too does the pollution of our culture affect the health of our communities. There is much to celebrate in contemporary culture, but also much to deplore. The glorification of violence, the glamorizing of drugs, the abuse of women and children, whether in music or videos, advertising, or tabloid journalism. PPP Government will support and encourage individuals and organizations using their power as citizens and consumers to advance cultural renewal in all aspects of the Nigerian life.

Their efforts will be critically important in this Information Age, which, with all its tremendous benefits, brings a major challenge to families. When there are reports that porn sites are the most frequently accessed on the Internet, it is time for parents at home - and communities through their public institutions to take action. We will endorse legislation to require schools and libraries to secure their computers against on-line porn and predators if they are connected to the Internet. This is not a question of free speech or freedom of association. Kids should not be victims of filth, and porn addicts should not use school library facilities for their addiction. Although Nigeria is yet to join the information revolution, now is the time to act not when it is too late.

5.2 Upholding the Rights of All:

Equality of individuals before the law has always been a cornerstone of our party. We therefore oppose discrimination based on sex, race, age, religion, creed, disability, ethnicity or national origin and will vigorously

enforce anti-discrimination statutes. As we strive to forge a national consensus on the crucial issues of our time, we call on all Nigerians to reject the forces of hatred and bigotry. Accordingly, we denounce all who practice or promote racism, ethnic prejudice, and religious intolerance.

We believe rights are inherent in individuals, not in groups. We will attain our nation's goal of equal opportunity without favoritism, quotas or other forms of preferential treatment. It is as simple as this: No one should be denied a job, promotion, contract, or chance at higher education because of their race, ethnic origin, gender, religion or disability. Equal access, energetically offered, should guarantee every person a fair shot based on their potential and merit.

An essential part of a culture that respects life is integration and inclusion of persons with disabilities. PPP will pursue initiatives in research and practical assistance that can help individuals with disabilities live independently, hold jobs, and take part in the daily life of their communities. We will establish and protect access to health care for individuals with disabilities, modeled after the successful Medicare and Medicaid programs of the United States of America.

We affirm the right of individuals to voluntarily participate in labor organizations and to bargain collectively. We therefore support the right of states to enact Right-to-Work laws. No one should be forced to contribute to a political campaign or a political candidate because the Union leaders so desire. Therefore, we will vigorously oppose involuntary use of union dues for political purposes or similar diversion of funds contributed for unemployment compensation, worker disabilities or death insurance.

5.3 Many Nations, One Country:

The Peoples Progressive Party recognizes that our country's ethnic diversity must share a common and unique national culture to transcend the differences that have held us hostage for the past four decades. To benefit from our diversity, we must strengthen the ties that bind us to one another.

Foremost among those is the flag and the national anthem. We must guard against willful desecration or disrespect to both symbols of national unity.

Another sign of our unity is the role of English as our official language. If we must relate to one another, we must have a common language to communicate, It is important that every Nigerian be able to communicate in that common language, while not forsaking our healthy and diverse lingual heritage. Common language is vital if groups of diverse

background have to come together to build a nation. While fluency in English should be made a necessary goal to every Nigerian, we also advocate mastery of other languages to enhance Nigeria's competitiveness in the world market. We advocate foreign language training in our schools and the fostering of respect for other languages and cultures throughout our society.

We believe that there is strength in our diversity. But to realize that strength, we must harness the good rather than the evil inherent in our differences. Diversity can be a good foundation for healthy competition, rather than the destructive and self-serving rivalry so commonly employed in our society today. To reap the benefits of our differences, we must federalize the country on that basis, preferably in line with the already six recognized geopolitical zones. By giving constitutional and structural substance to the six entities, and decentralizing infrastructure, wealth creation and law enforcement accordingly, we will unleash healthy geopolitical competition in the development of the federating units, no unit desiring to be left behind. As the unit develops, so develops the nation, the central government playing the role of an umpire to ensure that no unit is left too far behind.

5.4 Justice and Safety:

Most Nigerians over the age of fully remember a time when villages, towns, streets and highways were safe, doors maybe unlocked and windows maybe unbarred. A time when high-rise walls and security wires did not imprison us in our homes. The elderly did not live in fear and the young did not die in gunfire. Kidnapping was unheard of, occultism was not in vogue and corruption was a scorned, shameful and reprehensible act. That world is now gone, swept away in the social upheaval provoked by the welfare economy, which introduced the notion that wealth can be attained without enterprise and hard work.

We cannot go back to that time of innocence, but we can go forward, step by difficult step, to recreate respect for law - and law that is worthy of respect. Most of that effort must come on the state and local levels, where it is universally acknowledged that the primary responsibility for law enforcement resides. While we support community policing and other proven initiatives against crime, we strongly oppose the continued and dictatorial usurpation of that responsibility by the federal government, which has led to the current state of gross insecurity of life and property in the land. Our PPP governors, legislators, and local leaders will take a zero tolerance approach to crime, and will be empowered under the decentralized law enforcement structure to implement crime fighting initiatives, with local accountability, to drastically lower crime, assassination and murder rates in their sphere of influence.

At the same time, we recognize the crucial leadership role the president and the National Assembly should play in restoring public safety. The central leadership, in cooperation with governors and local officials who are the front line against crime, should work within proper federal jurisdiction, to enact legislation for an effective deterrent death penalty, restitution to victims of crime or the survivors thereof, removal of criminal aliens, cross-state and other federal crimes, vigilance against terrorism, all the coordination of services, personnel training, equipment and technology employed in crime fighting.

The reliance of the various Nigerian Governments on one central police command seated in Abuja can never guarantee law & order in Nigeria. In a population of 120 million people, the Nigerian society requires minimum combined police strength of 1 % in order to be effective. That is, 1.2 million people in the police force. This is a very huge number, which must not be placed under the command and control of a single individual for two reasons:

- i. It requires huge command and control logistics that gross inefficiency and abuse will become the norm.
- ii. With the control of such a large and only security outfit in the country, the seeds of dictatorship and total Italianism will forever abide and flourish.

This has been the bane of the seemingly insurmountable internal security problems in Nigeria. Because of its highly centralized structure, there is no police presence in majority of the villages in Nigeria. Law enforcement presence is often limited to cities and council headquarters. It is universally acknowledged that 75% of Nigerians live in rural communities. Well, get this: that 75% has no police presence, thereby creating a huge hiding place across the country for criminals. Due to the lack of local police presence, lots of villages are terrorized by criminals who are defacto law unto themselves. This is the root of the nation's internal security malaise.

PPP recognizes that Law & Order is the key to the infusion of foreign investment, without which industrialization and economic growth will forever elude Nigeria. In order to ensure sound and sustainable security in the polity, a PPP government will pursue fundamental restructuring of law enforcement in the federation, as follows:

- i. Federal Police & the Nigerian Intelligence Agency to oversee federal regulations and investigate federal crimes.
- ii. State Police to oversee state regulations and investigate state crimes.
- iii. Council Police to oversee regulations and investigate crimes in the Local Government Areas.

- iv. Ward Police to oversee regulations and investigate crimes in the ward or village.

Each police command shall have its own structure and clearly defined lines of control and authority, and funded at the ownership level via taxes.

The decentralization of law enforcement is key to quick apprehension of criminals and resolution of confounding mysteries behind crime and criminals. This is a necessary first step to confidence building in policing and law enforcement. A decentralized Law Enforcement will significantly restrain corruption. You can have local bodies tackling local corruption with provisions to monitor given to higher organs via petitions or by direct involvement, where necessary. A decentralized Law Enforcement should be put under the regulatory control of the legislative or governing assembly of the State, local councilor community for close monitoring and public scrutiny.

Complementary to the above restructuring, a PPP president will:

- i. Advance an agenda to restore the public's safety.
- i. Initiate productive work requirements in prison to make criminals pay for damages resulting from their criminal activities, while also serving as effective rehabilitation program for the convicts.
- ii. Increase penalties and resources to combat the production, trafficking and use of illegal drugs.
- iii. Encourage community-based diversion programs for first time, non-violent offenders. Such offenders can be easily rehabilitated. Hence, the need to avoid exposure to seasoned criminals in conventional jails and prisons.
- iv. Reform exclusionary practices, which allow countless criminals, particularly white collar, to get off on technicalities.
- v. Advance initiatives to protect victims' rights or the rights of survivors to victims of crime, at every stage of the criminal justice system.
- vi. Establish a National Sentencing Commission, with few seats mandated and reserved for victims of violent crimes.

Crimes against women and children demand an emphatic response. That is why we must have a Law requiring local notification when sex offenders are released from jail, and why we advocate special penalties against thugs who, in assaults against pregnant women, harm them or their unborn children. Federal obscenity and child pornography laws, especially crimes involving the Internet, must be reviewed, updated and vigorously enforced.

APPP government will revisit the whole area of juvenile justice system with the intent to review it, update and ensure that juveniles are not

bonded with seasoned criminals in common detention facilities. This is rooted in our belief that every child of bad or criminal behavior can be salvaged. On both the federal and state levels, juvenile crime demands special attention. A functional juvenile justice system must incorporate punishment for the crime committed, open the criminal proceedings to victims and the public, make conviction records readily available, enforce accountability for offenders, parents, and judges, and temper mercy with justice where appropriate.

Any juvenile who commits any crime while carrying a gun should automatically be detained, not released to someone's custody. We urge localities to consider zero-tolerance for juvenile drinking and driving and early intervention to keep delinquency from escalating to crime. While recognizing the important role of both parents to the well-being of their children, we must acknowledge the critical need for positive role models for our children.

With regard to school safety, we will encourage local school systems to develop and publicize a single system of discipline for all students who commit offenses involving drugs or violence in school.

Finally, assistance to state and local law enforcement it is critical. Through research, grants, and joint task forces, the federal government should encourage smarter, more effective anti-crime efforts. In particular, we advocate assistance to police for their personal protection, continuing education and training, and family care of security personnel who dies on duty.

5.5 What is at Stake?

The rule of law, the very foundation for a free society, has been under assault, not only by criminals from the ground up, but also from the top down. A government that lives by evasion, cover-ups, stonewalling, corruption and duplicity has given us a totally discredited law enforcement system. The credibility of those who now manage the nation's law enforcement agencies is tragically eroded. The same goes for the credibility of the career workforce - the criminal prosecutors and their foot soldiers, the rank and file of the Nigeria Police. The politicization of decisions regarding both personnel and investigations has not helped matters either.

6. Retirement Security and Quality Health Care

6.1 Our Pledge to Nigeria

There are those who say Nigerians must choose between security and freedom; They are wrong Security and liberty are not enemies. When properly balanced, they are kindred means for advancing individual achievement. Till date this balance has not being practiced in Nigeria, which is why so many have believed the disinformation of those who will

want us to sell our liberty on the illusion of security, in order to perpetuate the rule or shall we say misrule of the corrupt elite over the majority. This is an age-old deception, and Benjamin Franklin (1759), one of the early presidents of United States of America, replied the same forces in his time with this eternal truth: “Those who would give up essential liberty for temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety”

The Peoples Progressive Party endorses the insight of the late Benjamin Franklin without reservation, noting that in place of security, Nigerians reaped fear in the decades of dictatorship that we mortgage our freedoms. Never again must we as a people, individually or collectively, accept independence with insecurity or security without independence. Never again must we as a people, individually or collectively, accept governmental imposition of security that smothers the liberties and freedoms that should be at the center of the Nigerian life.

Our vision for a good society restores the balance most Nigerians seek, by maintaining the structures that guard against unforeseen misfortune and, at the same time, encouraging individual decision-making and personal control.

6.2 Social Security: Helping Individuals Build Wealth

Social Security should be made a defining Nigerian promise. This should be the test of a government's capacity to serve the people, keep the faith, and pursue the common good. A National Social Security program is the touchstone by which the Nigerian people should gauge the reliability, competence, and integrity of any government. The program works as a national insurance program against old age and retirement. Government will require mandatory employer-matched contributions to the fund from public and private sector employees and voluntary participation by the self-employed. Every citizen or legal resident of Nigeria must register with the program and obtain a Social Security Number. Children are automatically registered and assigned a number at birth. The governments of the country use the database: for development planning, to provide service to their communities, to receive and process individual taxes, to provide unemployment, death and retirement benefits, etc. The greatest side benefit is that a common national databank is established for every conceivable government and civil use.

A PPP Government will make the Social Security program a national priority. Personal savings accounts must be the cornerstone of the program. Each of today's workers should be free to direct a portion of their payroll taxes to personal investments for their retirement future. It is crucial that individuals be offered a variety of investment alternatives and that detailed information be provided to each participant to help them

judge the risks and benefits of each plan. This is a challenge that demands thinking of presidential leadership the country has not seen before.

6.3 Security for Older Nigerians

For most Nigerians, retirement means problems, not promises. PPP wants to change that. In today's economy, there are far more opportunities for the elderly to have better economic security and avenues for learning, teaching, and leading are greater than ever. Public policy must encourage, not inhibit, this trend. We will simplify pension laws and make it easier for more businesses, especially small ones, to offer pension plans.

The growing need for long-term care calls for long-term planning both by individuals and by government. We encourage, at all levels of government, regulatory flexibility and sensitivity to human needs in nursing homes and related facilities. In this area, as in so many other unheralded corners of the Nigerian life, heroic sacrifices are being made by millions of families to care for their mothers and fathers as their parents cared for them. This is good and very African. In the new Nigerian economy, our party will encourage a 100 percent tax credit on premiums for long-term care insurance, recognizing and rewarding individual responsibility. We will encourage tax credits for each elderly spouse, parent, or relative a family tends to keep in their own residence.

6.4 Initiating Medicare

Our nation must initiate Medicare - and in doing so, ensure that prescription drugs are affordable and available for every senior citizen and individual with disabilities who needs them. Seniors and the disabled deserve a wider scope of coverage, and they deserve to have a comprehensive health plan targeted to their need. The program should be designed to match modern medical science, achieve financial stability, and avoid the bureaucratic pitfall that so often smothers well-intentioned initiatives. It is time to give older Nigerians, who have borne the brunt of the survival of this nation, access to the sound health insurance and health care. The Nigerian Medicare Program must incorporate the establishment of medical saving accounts to be matched by government fund. To do that, we need for build on the strengths of the free market system, offer seniors real choices in coverage, give participants flexibility, and make sure there are incentives for the private sector to develop new and inexpensive drugs.

Over the long term, the Medicare envisioned by the PPP, should have a choice of health care options. Recipients should have access to the health plan that best fits their medical needs. We must avoid the pitfall of government prescribed one-size-fits-all solutions.

We need to articulate comprehensive measures of solvency that look at total program expenses and provide an honest reading of how we can guarantee benefits for decades to come. At the same time, we must be mindful of undue regulatory and administrative complexities, fraud, waste and abuse, which can suffocate the program in its weaning stage, This is necessary to avoid frustrating health care providers, hospitals, and patients alike.

For a national Medicare program to succeed, it must become a common enterprise of government, health professionals, and hospitals alike, It must empower health care providers, particularly those helping rural and under-served populations, to adapt to changing conditions in health care by providing reimbursement at levels that will permit health care providers to continue to care for these patients. We must place the program on the pedestal of medical research and innovation, offering choice and consumer rights protection, and modernizing antiquated systems to deliver affordable care to all its beneficiaries. Rather than fund hospitals directly, Medicare puts the money in the hands of the recipients to shop for hospitals of their choice. The hospitals operate more or less, as private enterprises.

6.5 Quality Health Care: A Commitment to All

Nigerians suffer one of the worst health care deliveries in the world today. Health care is virtually nonexistent for the poor, the disabled and the elderly. While health care systems in the western hemisphere are incorporating the mapping of the human genome and the identification of every gene in the human body with the intent to translate into new treatments and cures for scourges like cancer, heart disease, HIV / AIDS, muscular dystrophy, diabetes, etc., other health care systems remain centuries behind, unable to cater for the very basics of health care concerns of our citizens. The rich and those who have destroyed the system jump off to another continent at the slightest excuse of illness, our Presidents, Governors and leaders always ahead of the pack. The average Nigerian life span today has shrunk significantly from what it used to be barely two decades ago. This is completely opposite to the global trend. We know the a simple blood test can now screen for prostate cancer at its earliest appearance; that biochemistry is revolutionizing the field of mental health; that millions of operations have been replaced with CAT scans; etc., yet we give up on cancer patients, check in with the spirits for mental cases, and cut the stomach of patients for any conceivable internal symptom.

We must re-engineer our health system. This is a national urgency. A nation of the sick and unhealthy cannot enjoy economic growth, or any other positive growth for that matter. We must acquire and translate the promise of medical research into readily available treatments, and this

requires more than just money; it needs a whole new prescription for health care. That prescription is what the Peoples Progressive Party offers in the elections of 2003.

Let's stall with the diagnosis. After four decades of neglect by virtually all the governments of this country, the foundations of our health care system have collapsed. Over 90% of people living in Nigeria are uninsured. That is over 100 million. Most of the institutions and the people who provide health care have ceased to care. Credible health delivery systems hardly exist in our poorest urban and rural areas, having been replaced by quacks and charlatans.

As a nation, we have no credible statistics on deaths and fatalities, even though our hospitals and medical centers now serve essentially as gateways to the other side. Countless Nigerians die of auto accidents, AIDS and diseases, which are preventable or curable.

There is no doctor-patient relationship, which is the universal basis for a functional and effective health care delivery.

PPP intends to initiate comprehensive solutions to our beleaguered health care system, with a vision of health care adapted to the changing demands of a new century. It is as simple, and yet as profound, as this: All Nigerians should have access to high-quality and affordable health care. They should have a range of options and be able to select what is the best care for their individual and family needs. The integration of access, affordability, quality, and choice into the nation's health care system is the goal that brings together all of the following proposals. In achieving that goal, we will promote a health care system that supports, not supplants, the private sector; that promotes personal responsibility in health care decision-making; and that ensures the least intrusive role for the federal government.

6.6 Affordable, Quality Health Insurance

The Peoples Progressive Party does not believe in a nationalized health care monopoly. We recognize that this is at the heart of the failed system. We will promote individual choice. We will rely on simple enforceable laws, local health cooperatives, private employer insurance pools, and public insurance initiatives to guarantee access to high-quality health care for the poor, the disabled, the work class and the elderly. PPP believes that the tie between good jobs and good insurance coverage is the single most important factor in advancing health care for those who need it and improving the lot of the common man in our society. This ought to be the priority of a responsive government.

PPP remains determined to pass federal legislation, which will give small employers the liberty to band together to purchase group insurance for

their employees at reduced rates, thus providing them that important security.

Uninsured Nigerians do not have a single face. Their situations vary tremendously, with changes in family status, age, income, and domicile. It makes sense to let them decide what kind of coverage best suits their needs. A PPP led government will give them that power of choice through various health based tax initiatives, which will empower millions of individuals and families to purchase the private health insurance that's right for them. We also support full deductibility of health insurance premiums for the self-employed via tax credits.

Truly positive market forces occur when individuals have the ability to make individual marketplace decisions. We therefore encourage and support the concepts of defined contribution plans and medical savings accounts. Individuals should be free to manage their own health care needs through Flexible Savings Accounts (FSAs) and Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs), some of which may be matched by government funds. These initiatives make a government takeover of health care as anachronistic as surgery without anesthesia. We will make these accounts the vanguard of a new consumer rights movement in health care. Individuals should be able to roll over excess FSA monies from one year to the next, instead of losing their unspent money at the end of each year. MSAs should be a permanent part of the reformed tax law proposed in other parts of this document, offered to all workers without restriction, with both employers, employees and the government allowed to contribute. A major reason why health insurance initiatives are so expensive, and subsequently fail in their mandate, is that the laws require all insurance policies to provide benefits and treatments, which many families do not want and do not need. Yet you have to pay the premium for all that. It is similar to requiring automakers by law to sell only fully loaded cars, even to buyers who does not want or need all the extras. These kinds of mandate, extending far beyond the minimum standards, increase costs for everyone, price low-income families out of the insurance market, and advance the interests of specific providers. They have no place in a health care system based on consumer rights and patient choice.

One area of health care that is sadly ignored is the role of primary and preventive care. This is particularly important in our cities and some rural communities, where the emergency room may be the only avenue for assistance. People in rural and under-served areas need access to critical primary care. A government led by the Peoples Progressive Party will boost funding for community health centers and establish stronger public private partnerships for safety net providers and hospitals in rural

and under-served communities. Every community must have a credible health delivery facility.

We commit to State - Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP) to enable us to secure health insurance coverage for millions of youngsters. We want to ensure that children have access to quality health care, and that states have the flexibility to innovate, expand family coverage without interference from the federal health care authorities, and reach out to eligible households that could be left out other health delivery initiatives. *REALL, ALL IT TAKES IS CARING!*

6.7 Improving the Quality of Health Care

To improve quality of healthcare, we must focus on protecting the Patients' Rights. Rather than focusing on the health system where the patient is just a statistic and a number, we will focus on the patient. If a patient can fully exercise his or her right to receive due treatment, and given the tools to enforce such rights if denied, then the foundations for improving health care delivery would have been laid. Growth in managed health care should be driven by a market response to competitive systems. One potential benefit of such flexibility will be the control of runaway cost, without which all well-intentioned programs will ultimately collapse. However, care must be taken to ensure that such benefit does not come at the cost of patient dissatisfaction due to impersonal or insufficient health care delivery mechanism. Simply put, patients deserve more protections if we are to achieve a patient-centered system that offers high-quality, affordable care. The parents of a sick child should have access to the nearest emergency care. A patient in need of a hemi specialist's expertise should be allowed to seek that opinion. A woman with breast cancer should be able to participate in a potentially life-saving clinical trial, and patients should have prompt access to independent physicians, or when appropriate, other health care professionals, to override any wrongful denial of treatment.

The prevailing practice of demanding financial deposit or guarantee as a requirement for administering life saving emergency care should be criminalized, while government should provide minimum cost guarantees to health care deliverers in the event of default by emergency patients.

The universal patient-doctor relationship must be encouraged. Medical decision-making should be in the hands of physicians and their patients. In cases when a health plan denies treatment, a rapid appeals process geared toward ensuring that patients receive the right treatment without delays that might threaten a patient's health - as opposed to a lengthy trial - must be readily accessible to everyone in all health plans. We believe a quick and fair resolution to treatment disputes without going to court is the best result. However, as a last resort, we also support a patient's right to adjudicate claims in court to receive necessary medical

care. In the interest of fairness to the thousands of businesses that will purchase health benefits for their employees and for physicians who care for patients, employers and physicians should not be liable for the actions of the health plan and should be shielded from frivolous and unnecessary lawsuits.

Our overall philosophy is to trust state and local government to know what best suits the needs of their people. We believe the federal government should respect the states' universally acknowledged authority to regulate health insurance, health care professionals, and health practice guidelines through their medical boards.

We will vigorously pursue initiatives to identify and rectify medical errors and punish medical malpractice in order to safe guard confidence in our nation's health care system. Our goal is to reduce the rate of medical errors, especially those that result in a patient's death. We will support scientific research to provide the public and health care provokers with information about why these errors occur and what can be done to prevent them. We will introduce very effective hospital peer review system, where medical facilities across the country are used to review their peers anonymously.

Another key step will be reform of malpractice law. You will be hard pressed to determine if one exist at the moment. PPP commits to malpractice reforms that will discourage health care providers from concealing mistakes for fear of being vilified by the trial lawyers' system of jack pot justice. We must open up the free flow of information concerning medical errors, both to protect patients and to reduce the cost of modern medicine. Patients who are genuinely injured should be rightly compensated, but the punitive and random aspects of litigation will be restrained. Just as we hold all health care personnel to the highest standards, so too must public policy respect their ethical conscience. No individual or institution should be compelled to assist in providing any medical service that violates their moral or religious convictions.

Women's Health. In PPP, we hold dear the health and vitality of our families. Our efforts to build healthier families must begin with women - our mothers, daughters, grandmothers and grand-daughters. This nation needs far greater focus on the needs of women who have historically been underrepresented in medical research and access to the proper level of medical attention. We will reverse this trend.

Across this country, and at all levels of government, we will be at the forefront in aggressively developing health care initiatives targeted specifically at all needs of women. We will pursue aggressive new

research and clinical trials into diseases and health issues that disproportionately affect women as well as into conditions that affect the elderly, the majority of whom are women. And we will lead efforts to reach out to under-served and rural female populations, where disparities persist in life expectancy, infant mortality and death rates from cancer and other illnesses.

We are dedicated to pursuing comprehensive women's health care initiatives that include access to state-of-the-art medical advances and technology; equality for women in the delivery of health care services; medical research that focuses specifically on women; appropriate representation of women in clinical trials; and direct access to women's health providers.

We will increasingly focus upon health problems of the very elderly, the great majority of whom are women. Such initiatives hold the promise of advances concerning the many ailments, which should no longer be considered the inevitable price of old age. Because nutrition is intimately related to health, we advocate vigorous local-state-federal involvement in flexible nutrition programs for low-income families - the poor, the disabled, children and the elderly, most of whom are females. The united efforts of PPP leaders at all levels of government and within our communities will make sure that women gain greater access to relevant care, research, and education on health care issues important to them.

Children's Health. This is another failed sector of the dysfunctional Nigerian health system. The sobering statistics is that millions of our children have died in the past decade over preventable or curable diseases. Youth drug abuse has increased exponentially. Smoking rates for youth have risen alarmingly, even among young girls, which used to be unthinkable and a taboo just about a decade ago. Billions of fatalities are the rise. So much of the suffering and deaths caused by childhood diseases can be prevented - by increasing immunization rates; by increasing resources for biomedical research; by encouraging low priced local alternatives to expensive drugs; by encouraging pharmaceutical progress; by sensible strategies against teen smoking not merely prohibition; by a real battle against illegal drugs in place; etc. Our commitment is to address the emotional, behavioral, and mental illnesses affecting children. With parental involvement as the critical component, we can help our youth make the healthy and the right choice in avoiding risky behaviors involving alcohol, drugs, premarital sex, tobacco, and violence.

Our party will pursue Biomedical Research. Recognizing the critical importance of research, the PPP will review existing national health research facilities with the aim to reform it and aggressively pursue

biomedical research. This is one of the few areas, where government investment yields tangible results; and those benefits can be greatest for the under-served and rural populations where disparities persist in life expectancy, infant mortality, as well as death rates from heart failures, diabetes, cancer and other diseases. With our all time high death rates, we need to increase not only research but also early detection and prevention efforts. Our priority will lead in setting sound HIV/AIDS policy, including increased research funding and access to health services. We remain committed to, and place a high priority on, finding a cure for HIV/AIDS. With the enormous increase in resources for biomedical research comes accountability for its use, as well as responsibility to maintain the highest ethical standards. We will balance the medical needs of embryonic research with: the moral and humane questions against human cloning, the trafficking in fetal tissue organs, and related abuses.

We commit to functional Academic Medical Centers. We recognize that adequate government reimbursement for medical services is critical to our nation's comprehensive academic medical centers. We affirm that, under the leadership of the Peoples Progressive Party, the academic medical centers (Teaching Hospitals) shall serve as the primary health care resource for our poorest citizens, provide cutting-edge medical discovery, and teach and train our next generation of physicians.

Medical Privacy: The revolution in information and medical technology has created concerns about who has access to personal data - and how it might be used. Patients and their families should feel free to share all medical information with their doctor, but they will feel safe in doing so only if that information is protected. A related concern is genetic discrimination, now that genetic testing has become a routine part of medical health care. Well-conceived, thoughtful action is clearly needed, action that will protect and not harm patients. A PPP led government will work with patients, health care providers, researchers, and insurers to establish new rules for dealing with these new challenges.

Safe Clinical Trials: Ensuring the safety of patients who participate in investigational clinical trials is fundamental to the future of medical innovation. Lack of government oversight in clinical trials put patients at risk and undermine critical research. Patient protection must be made a priority in clinical trial research.

Emerging Threats and Bioterrorism: Our public health system has not even begun to address the issue of adequacy to respond to the threats of emerging infectious diseases and the possibility of bio-terrorism. We pledge to ensure the ability of the public health service to detect, track, and prevent infectious outbreaks, whether natural or deliberate.

Wellness: We recognize that an individual's health is often a reflection of the everyday choices made. While government's role is to help ensure a quality health care system, only individuals can make healthy choices.

7. Conservation, Preservation and the Exploitation of Natural Resources
The Peoples Progressive Party is committed to responsible and accountable stewardship of the nation's natural resources. In the words of Teddy Roosevelt, one of the early Presidents of the United States of America; "The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value".

Our way is to trust the innate good sense and decency of the Nigerian people. We will make them partners with government, rather than adversaries of it, rather than a people to be exploited. We need to get back on a common track, so that both the people and their government C-111 jointly focus on harnessing and utilizing our natural resources in the most efficient manner. We affirm that economic prosperity and environmental protection can and must advance together. Prosperity should give our society the wherewithal to advance environmental protection, and a thriving natural environment enhances the quality of life that makes prosperity worthwhile.

We support joint federal, state, and local responsibilities for natural resources and environmental protection. We believe the government's main role should be to provide market-based incentives to innovate and develop the new technologies for Nigerians to engage in regulated exploitation of our natural resources and ensure that environmental standards are met in that pursuit"

We condemn the current federal government 'policy of appropriating all natural resources to itself and resorting to confrontation and violence against Nigerians at any sign of dissent within the polity. PPP believes that the Government derives its legitimacy from the people, and as such should seek the people's cooperation in reaching consensus on matters vital to the security and well being of the people. We should work cooperatively to ensure that our natural resources and environmental policies reflect the particular needs of geographic regions, localities and the residents thereof.

Natural resource and environmental policies should focus on achieving results - cleaner air, water, and land management - not crafting bureaucratic processes and forcefully appropriating what belongs to the states and the localities. 'Where resource and environmental standards are violated, the government should apply consistent enforcement. We recognize that the very nature of resource and environmental concerns at times require federal intervention. However, we affirm that a culture of

sustained economic growth and progress can be cultivated when the states and localities are freed to demonstrate their unique abilities to manage local resources and solve the associated environmental problems at the local level, the center applying necessary oversight via taxes, levies, royalties, legislations and regulations. As laboratories of innovation, the states and localities should be given flexibility, authority, and finality by the federal government. States should be encouraged to enact environmental education and self-audit laws to encourage people to find and correct pollution. Strong leadership by governors, state legislators, and local officials is the key to solving the vexing question of effective exploitation and use of natural resources and the associated environmental problems. This is the only way to break the culture of dependency and chronic poverty in the midst of plenty. For example, the federal government can pass legislation on safe drinking water and provide the enabling environment for states and communities to take stronger action to ensure reliable and safe water supplies in their areas. There is no economic benefit in having the federal government take on the logistic nightmare of providing the bulk of good drinking water to the countless villages and communities in the country. Not only is such undertaking as practiced now, inefficient, it is also impossible. This is the reason for the continuing lack of good drinking water in a vast majority of the villages and even cities today. It is safe to estimate that over 75% of Nigerians do not have access to drinking water. This is not simply a failure in governance, it is criminal negligence of the worst kind.

PPP will always default to market-based programs that are voluntary, flexible, comprehensive, and cost effective to pursue the national objective of efficient and distributed exploitation and use of natural resources. This is the only formula that is known to withstand the test of time. There is no point in reinventing the wheel. In order to work, federal legislation on resource and environment needs incentive-based cooperation among federal, state, local, and community governments, and private citizens. From purely socialist states to communist states, the reverse has always ended in complete economic collapse, most of the times followed by the collapse and disintegration of the diverse polity. There is no reason to have our beloved Nigeria go down the same road. The time to decentralize, integrate and distribute effectively, in a competitive and efficient environment, is now. Let us not miss the opportunity.

7.1 Protecting Property Rights:

We link the security of private or communal (local) property to our resource and environmental agenda for the best of reasons: It is universally known that resource and environmental stewardship is best advanced where property is privately held. After all, people who live on the land, work the land, and own the land also love the land and will

protect it better. Conversely, the world's worst cases of resource abuse and environmental degradation occur in countries where the government appropriates and controls such resources and the host properties. For reasons both constitutional, resource-wise and environmental, we will safeguard private property rights, requiring legislative action, consensual compelling national interest, and just compensation whenever the government wants to appropriate private property to achieve a public purpose.

7.2 Public Lands for the Public Good:

PPP believes that collaborative conservation is the future for the so called "Public Lands." Working from the grass roots up, we believe that local groups can find solutions to the problems of the public lands in their areas. PPP wants to encourage that approach, for it holds the greatest promise of sound environmental stewardship and productive use of the nation's natural resources. We will change the operating culture of the federal agencies that manage public lands, giving a greater role to states and to their political subdivisions in order to foster a creative partnership with the Nigerian people.

If anyone doubts that major reform is needed in the ownership and management of designated public lands, consider the massacre and destruction of the village of Odi in Bayelsa State by a combined contingent of the Nigeria Police Force and the Nigerian Army, the "legal murders" of the Ogoni Nine, and the non-restive Niger Delta question, to which the federal government has now added the dimension of foreign security personnel hired to keep Nigerians out of their traditional, ancestral, cultural, and historical lands. These avoidable devastations and loss of lives is the price innocent people and helpless communities are paying for the extreme policies - resource and environmental arrogance - of the federal government. Greater tragedies await us, as a people and a nation, if these policies are not changed. By doing nothing, each and everyone of us in this country share in the crime against humanity being perpetuated in the name of providing us with the welfare we so willingly accept. PPP will employ the best techniques of forestry and resource science to implement a national management strategy for public lands that minimizes the risk to local communities while preserving our natural heritage. Yes, it has been done in the developed economies. It can be done here.

Our national parks ought to be the crown jewels of the country's environmental heritage, but like all other public endeavors, seized by the center; it is now a story of abject failure, usually non-existent and nonviable. National parks belong to all Nigerians and should be accessible to all. PPP will promote initiatives to reverse the yeast of neglect and abuse of these treasures to keep the park system healthy

and accessible to all. We should make it a priority to alleviate the maintenance and operations backlog at our national parks. Rather than applying material federal executive branch action, we will seek to actively involve the national assembly, as well as affected states and local communities, in land acquisition decisions and management of the national parks.

We support multiple use of public lands conducted; in an environmentally and economically sustainable manner. We are committed to preserving wilderness and wetlands, and the active prevention of deforestation, We call for a complete review of the land use act, to re-evaluate land ownership by the national government, and to develop a comprehensive plan to return the bulk of the land back to the people, and better manage public holdings. In some cases, that may mean transferring or sharing responsibility for managing these lands with state or local governments, while all levels of government should recognize common rights to water, minerals, and grazing. We affirm state and local primacy over water allocations and our commitment to preserve access to public lands for multiple uses.

Because so many people in rural Nigeria rely on land for their livelihood, a PPP administration will promote sustainable land and forest management, using the best science available today, and applying consistent policies across the country. No part of the country will be treated unduly in the issue of ownership and use of personal or comillunalland.

7.3 Agriculture and Rural Nigeria in the Global Economy:

It is universally known that agriculture is at the heart of sustainable economic growth. One area that clearly exemplifies the corruption and non-seriousness of previous governments in the past three decades is the criminal neglect of the agricultural sector, and the deliberate disinterest in agrarian solutions that work. We know what works. The question then is, why have that government of the corrupt elite refused to implement the solutions in the past thirty years or so? The answer's, of course, lies in their' deliberate scheme to keep the people of Nigeria perpetually in want, as a tool of maintaining power and siphoning the public wealth. The fact is that, a poor and hungry society spends more time fretting about what to eat, and little or no time worrying over government actions and conduct. Keep the people occupied with searching for daily bread, while we steal. This is the plan so effectively implemented by successive dictatorships, civilian and military, till date. Now there is a new dawn in Nigeria. The people have been pushed to the wall. They are now awake and together, we will change Olir lot and the course of the Nation.

In developed and vibrant economies, the food and fiber sector accounts for 13% to 20% of the economic output and employs, directly or indirectly, more than 10% of the population. When agriculture is hurting, the entire country aches. When it dies, as is the case in Nigeria, the entire country dies with it. This is a universal truth, and the federal government's refusal to heed this truth is self-destructive and suicidal.

In all our agrarian policies and programs, the PPP is guided by two principles. First, to farmers and animal rearers, nothing belts production and sales at a good price. As long as they have truly fair and open domestic and foreign markets, they can do for themselves far better than anything government can do for them. Second, they want to produce what makes sense on their own private property, not what official Abuja thinks should be grown there. Under PPP leadership, government will once again patient' with corporate and family farms to restarted the legendary husbandry and grain pyramids of the North, the food bastion of the middle belt, the cocoa and palms of the south, etc.

Rather than focus on meaningless bureaucratic and corrupt programs like "Operation Feed the Nation", "Poverty Alleviation Program", and other similar avenues of embezzlement and corruption, which creates an illusion and make the people worse off, the PPP led government will address the root cause, while allowing the ingenuity of the Nigerian people to take advantage of the enabling environment. PPP will legislate "Freedom to Farm Act", to replace decades of controls by various federal bureaucracies. We will go back to the blue print of the sixties as a foundation to the ultimate objective, developing creative initiatives to empower farmers will partnerships with all levels of government, to make mechanization a reality. Rather than expect farmers to invest in capital intensive mechanized equipment and vehicles, cooperatives will be encouraged to partner with governments at all levels, to provide low cost leased mechanized equipment, vehicles and the human capacity necessary to jump start the agr8rian revolution. This program will also bring mechanization to the low-income farmer who can now lease such services through a variety of grants, deferred loan programs, or government subsidies.

For Nigerian agriculture, prosperity depends not only en domestic consumption, but, in a large measure, on expansion to the global markets. 'Ivory Coast can earn the distinction of being the world's largest exporter of cocoa, Nigeria can earn similar distinctions in many farm produce sectors. We are certainly more gifted in the span of fertile land and distributed production of exportable farm produce than Ivory Coast. Within a decade, the PPP led government is determined to turn Nigeria

into an agrarian powerhouse for Africa in particular, and the world at large. Our party will engage in bilateral and global negotiations to open key trade markets in consumer nations. We will focus on production for domestic consumption, while tying export produce to target markets, not as an afterthought, but from the drawing board. APPP led government will particularly focus on opening the largely populated Asian markets like China and India, while not neglecting key produce for the European and American continents.

Results will take time, and so, looking toward our Farm Bill of the year 2003, we call for intermediary action, awareness, education and the formation of local cooperatives to take advantage of the enabling environment on agriculture.

7.4 Assistance to facilitate the transition to a market-driven Farm Regime:

- A farm income savings plan; tax-deferred accounts to soften fluctuations in farm earnings.
- Freedom from farm inheritance taxes.
- 100% deductibility for health insurance costs for farmers.
- Tax exemption for mechanized farm equipment and vehicles
- One-time exemption from capital gains tax on the sale of farms.
- Regulatory relief.

We reaffirm our strong support for agricultural research, including biotech and biomass research, and for a permanent research and development tax credit. We reaffirm our support for cooperative partnerships between federal, state, and local governments and private landowners for the conservation of our soil, water and biological resources on private land. The federal government should work with the states to adopt water quality standards that rely on the best science and implementation of best management practices, including addressing hypoxia and runoff issues.

We call for the review or elimination of outdated laws that hamper the adaptation of agriculture to the demands and opportunities of a new century. Regional restraints on farm, livestock and dairy products capable of driving up consumer prices and penalizing productive farmers will be discouraged. In order to ensure a competitive market, accurate and open reporting of farm, livestock and dairy products will be required bylaw.

There is much more to rural Nigeria than farming, animal husbandry, and forestry. The kind of economic development that generates family-sustaining jobs is' critical to small towns and rural communities. We

recognize the special challenges they face in working for good schools, accessible health care, decent housing, safe drinking water and waste disposal, and serviceable transportation. The federal government should be an active partner with state and local entities in that process, especially in advancing the availability of the Internet and modern telecommunications technology in rural Nigeria. This is an enabler to the agrarian revolution.

7.5 Energy and Infrastructure:

Decayed infrastructure is one of the three major stumbling blocks to a sustainable economic growth and economic freedom, the other two being overly centralized political structure, and the absence of law and order. The later two are addressed in other portions of this document.

Minimum infrastructure requirement for economic development are as follows:

- Regular Electric Power
- Good Telephone and Telecommunication Network
- Good Roads
- Good Water supply

All these are gross failures in Nigeria. They are all in short supply.

What happened? In the seventies and early eighties, the nation was confident in its energy and other infrastructure. Fuel was being refined domestically, and energy prices were low and affordable. Today, fuel prices have skyrocketed, and importation of refined petroleum is at all-time highs. Foreign fuel now accounts for a significant portion of our total trade deficit. This, in a country, which ranks as one of the world's foremost producer and exporter of crude oil.

By any reasonable standard, the federal agencies in charge of energy and infrastructure have utterly failed in their mission to safeguard Nigeria's energy and infrastructure security. This is a man-made nightmare, but at last the public is waking up and demanding change. What is at stake, after all, is not just the price we pay to light, heat or cool our homes. What is at stake is the nation's economy, which relies on electricity for its infrastructure and on petroleum for its trade. Regular and affordable energy is the key to creating the New Economy. If we do not carefully plan for our energy and infrastructure needs, the economy will remain comatose and not resources. The PPP will move to deregulate and decentralize the electricity and infrastructure industry, thereby empowering consumers through a competitive market.

The problem with energy and infrastructure delivery in Nigeria is the over centralization of such services by the central government. This structure alone breeds the following:

- Gross Inefficiency

- Lack of Proper Accountability to Government & Consumers
- Disregard of Consumer Concerns in infrastructure Planning
- Lack of Customer Focus
- Wasteful Spending

Any of these drawbacks, on its own, is a recipe for failure, Combined, as in the case of Nigeria, it is a calamity.

Nigeria needs a national energy and infrastructure strategy - and a PPP president will work with the national assembly to enact our 'National Energy & Infrastructure Security Act (NEISA)'. That strategy will:

- i. Increase the supplies and refining of coal, oil, and natural gas for domestic consumption using the novel partnerships of the federal, state and local governments, and the private sector. Our country does have ample energy resources waiting to be developed, and there is simply no substitute for an increase in their domestic production and use.
- ii. Introduce first line small-scale energy lease permits to encourage regulated small business investment in the exploitation, refining and marketing of small quantities of the energy products to communities, governments, and the private sector, such products not limited to the conventional oil, coal, and gas, but extended to novel and innovative energy sources, such as methane, solar and other renewable sources, etc.
- iii. Provide tax incentives for production.
- iv. Promote environmentally responsible exploration and development of oil and gas reserves on high-risk lands.
- v. Offer a degree of price certainty to keep small domestic stripper producers in operation.
- vi. Advance clean coal technology.
- vii. Expand the tax credit for renewable energy sources to include wind and open-loop biomass facilities, and electricity produced from steel cogeneration.
- viii. Provide tax incentive and government partnership for residential use of solar power.

We affirm that a decentralization of the nation's energy and infrastructure industry is the key to efficient and competitive delivery of such services to the people. The current geopolitical entities, having been given substance, shall be the basis of the decentralization envisioned by the "National Energy & Infrastructure Security Act (NEISA).

The following benefits can be realized:

- 6-7 independent delivery agencies across the country for each infrastructure.
- Expands the space for competition of ideas and the exchange thereof.
- No one agency has a veto (stranglehold) on the nation's economy.

- Smaller sized agencies will foster effective regional private competition. Long term potential for cross regional competition.

The major benefit in the decentralization of infrastructure is to infuse practical, sustainable and credible direct private competition to address the inherent problems of centralization, bureaucracy and inefficiency, while allowing the regions to cater for and address their peculiar infrastructure needs. Simply privatizing a failed giant monopoly still leaves intact the inherent forces of corruption, mismanagement and failure. It is deficient also in creating a level playing field for gainful direct private competition. Simply changing ownership from the Government to a few individuals is a wrong-headed solution to a dysfunctional infrastructure monopoly. It does not even begin to address the root causes. Such are the solutions applied by subsequent Nigerian governments in the past three decades.

Commerce is the lifeblood of our economy, and the transportation infrastructure is its circulatory system. Without safe and efficient transport, the economy withers away. Maintaining that vital infrastructure has always been, in party, a federal responsibility, and the PPP is the party of builders. From Trans-Regional Railroad to Inland Waterways and Canals, Aviation, and Interstate Highway System, we will champion investment in transposition assets as a cornerstone of the economy and, indeed, as a national way of life.

The PPP led government will enact and implement legislation; The Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty First Century transportation industry and the Aviation Investment and Reform Act. With both legislations, PPP will usher landmark laws, to initiate and finish and precedented federal investment in roads, bridges, transit systems, airports and air traffic control systems. This is not just an executive program or a mere appropriation, both of which can terminate when the party or individuals in governance leave or loses interest.

No, this is a law requiring that the grand plan of a nationwide transposition infrastructure development over” ten years be implemented by all governments during that period. The legislation will be such that it will take a super majority and the expressed will of the citizenry to deviate from, add to the cost, reevaluate component cost or terminate. Our national railroad network, which should be a crucial component of our public transportation system, is comatose, and has been so for nearly two decades. Railroads helped build our country during the pro-independence clays and shortly thereafter. Our national passenger railroad network should be a precious resource that can play a key role in transportation and economic growth. PPP supports a healthy intercity passenger rail system, and where economically viable, the development

of a national high-speed passenger railroad system as an instrument of economic development, and enhanced mobility. We also support a multimodal approach to our transportation needs.

By reducing mandates, cutting red tape, promoting regulatory common sense, and decentralizing infrastructure, PPP aims to give state and local officials unprecedented flexibility to set their own transportation priorities, from highways to camel ways. This will improve communities throughout the nation, and will also strengthen travel and tourism, a vital force for job creation with a positive annual trade balance to boot. But transportation policy remains inseparable from energy policy. The trucking industry, for example, is hard hit by current gas prices and would be crippled if left unchecked. PPP will get transportation policy back on track. We will keep Nigerians moving safely to keep the economy growing.

8. Government for the People

Trust, pride, and respect: we pledge to restore these qualities to the way Nigerians view their government. It is the most important of tasks and reflects the overwhelming desire of our citizens for fundamental change in official Abuja.

The templates to make this happen are readily available, in the visionary leadership to open a new era of creative federalism, making government citizen-centered, results-oriented, and, where possible, market based. This will usher sound management of public resources leading to unprecedented surpluses. Services will be improved. Waste will be reduced. Taxes will be minimized.

We shall encourage federal, state and local partnerships to create e-governance: providing information and services to the public via the Internet. Citizens can conduct business with government by going online instead of wasting hours in-line. We will e-power citizens at all levels of government. And we will require federal agencies to use savvy, on-line practices to buy smart - and save enormous amounts of money in procurement.

The PPP leadership recognizes that the Nigerian citizenry has suffered abuse, intrusion and bullying at the hands of the government or its organs, which continue unabated to this day. We, therefore, commit to provide structural and constitutional protection for the Nigerian people against government abuse, intrusion and bullying. We will limit the ability of the federal government to impose unfunded mandates on states, local and communal governments.

Therefore, in our effort to shift power from Abuja back to the states, we must acknowledge as a general matter of course that the federal governments role should be to set high standards and expectations in policies, then get out of the way and let the states implement and operate those policies as they best know how. Washington must respect that one size does not fit all states and must not overburden states with unnecessary strings and red tape attached to its policies.

In the National Assembly, we will push for modernized legislature, using term limits for committee chairs and other leadership positions as tools to bring about sanity in the legislative body. We will push for a law that will require our National Assembly to live by the same laws and the same rules it imposes on the citizenry.

There is much to be done, but it can be done only when a PPP president works in Office. We will work to pass legislation to make it clear that public officials who commit crimes will subsequently forfeit their pension rights. We will ensure that tax audits are never used as a political weapon, so innocent Nigerians will never again fear the snooping, harassment, and intimidation that exist now. And because an accurate census is essential for representative government, we will work to realize an actual headcount of persons in the country. This is the key variable for proper social, political, infrastructure, security, and economic planning. It is the only proper way to determine the apportionment of legislative districts.

A PPP president will take the lead in proposing, and fighting for structural changes in budgeting that are long overdue in the federal government. Our goal is to replace the status quo with clarity, simplicity, and accountability. We will have a biennia/budget that has the force of law. And to end pork barrel abuses in the National Assembly, we will:

- Create a constitutionally sound line item veto for the president, and direct the savings from items vetoed to funding targeted sectors of the economy.
- Prevent possible government shutdowns by enacting a “Permanent Continuing Resolution” so interest groups can never again extort billions from the taxpayers by blocking the regular order of appropriation bills.
- Define legislatively the conditions for “emergency” spending.

Under the PPP, the federal government must adapt to the challenges of the new century. There are too many departments and agencies with competing programs that waste resources and fail to deliver the goods: numerous economic development programs, countless education programs in many different agencies at exorbitant cost the nation,

numerous job training programs in many different agencies, etc. Enough said.

We intend to downsize this mess and make government actually do what it is supposed to, simply by ensuring that all agencies adhere to the Government Performance and Results Act, a legislation that PPP will vigorously pursue and pass to bring labour accountability in all government organs. By applying the procedures of the Performance and Results Act to all federal programs, we can stop the loss of billions of Naira that are embezzled, siphoned and wasted in the various services delivered by the government.

Lets take an example: the United States of American has about 250 million people, spans an entire continent, and commands about a quarter of the world economy, yet it is governed by about 15 cabinet ministers or secretaries, as they are called, Nigeria, on the other hand, has about 120 million people, spans about the size of the state of Texas, and has much less than 10% of global economy, yet governed by 44 cabinet ministers, plus a charade of aides and logistics that will make an American Minister envious. This is a colossal waste and needs urgent surgery, if the country is to be placed on a sound track once again. The Performance and Results Act will put a stop to this madness.

A PPP president will run the federal government much like a responsive and efficient organization. Bureaucracy will be reduced and trimmed in size, beginning at its upper echelons, and downwards throughout its strata. If public services can be delivered more efficiently and less expensively through the private sector, they will be privatized. If the public service is a national monopoly, they will first be decentralized into regional units before privatization. In so doing, their size and stranglehold on the nation is minimized, allowing for credible regional competition by the private sector. A PPP president will establish accountability, reward performance, put civility and customer focus back into the civil and public services, and restore dignity and ethics to the Presidency.

8.1 Political Reform

The Nigerian Constitution, in spite of all its many shortfalls, does guarantee indispensable democratic freedoms of speech, press, and association, and, the right to petition our government. The PPP affirms that any regulation of the political process must not infringe upon the rights of the people to full participation in the political process. The principal cure for the ills of democracy is greater participation in the political process by more citizens. To that end, we have one guiding principle in the development of laws to regulate campaigns: Will any

particular proposal encourage or restrict the energetic engagement of Nigerians in elections?

The PPP will push for more honest and more open politics to:

- Stop the abuses of money contributions and corruption to political process.
- Enact "Paycheck Protection," to stop political contributions using union dues and levies not specifically taxed for such purpose, thereby ensuring that no union member is forced to contribute to anybody's campaign or to any political party.
- Preserve the right of every individual and all groups - whether for us or against us - to express their opinions and advocate their issues. We will not allow any of government to restrict this constitutionally guaranteed right.
- Level the playing field by forbidding incumbents to roll over their leftover campaign funds into a campaign for a different office.
- Require full and timely disclosure on the Internet and other public information media of all campaign contributions - so the news media and the public can immediately know who is giving how much to whom.
- Encourage all citizens to donate their time and resources to the campaigns of their choice by limited individual contributions.
- Preserve access to the Internet for political speech and debate.
- Discourage any attempt to rig the electoral process before, during or after the election, through legislative or non-legislative process, and through the undemocratic act of politically engineered legislative districting.

8.2 Common Sense in Regulation

Effective government requires regulation for health, safety, and other concerns. By the same token, regulation requires regular review - for efficiency, economy, and plain common sense. Our model of regulatory reform is a good fit for an Information Age economy. It will replace bureaucratic mentality clicking along at a Morse Code pace. We will use the advance of science and information technology to:

- Target the most serious risks to health, safety, and the environment then put regulatory resources where they best serve the public, not politics.
- Make sound science, not ideological whim, the basis for regulation, with peer-reviewed risk assessments and full disclosure.
- Require periodic review of existing regulations, to strengthen where necessary and change where obsolete.
- Require agencies to disclose the cost to consumers and small businesses of any proposed regulations.
- Let the Nigerian people know the full price they pay for government regulations, through a new regulatory budget that explains the likely cost for meeting regulatory requirements.

- Use cost-benefit analyses of regulations to develop alternatives to the outdated command and control attitude recent years.
- Refrain civil servants to work with those affected by regulation rather than dictating to them.

Past Governments have repeatedly evaded the normal regulatory process through executive orders and presidential directives, some of dubious legality. Withdrawing these orders and directives will be a priority of the new PPP government dedicated to the rule of law.”

We will end government funded religious or sect activities and oppose taxpayer supplied grants for projects and programs that promote religious, sex, and ethnic bigotry in Nigeria.

8.3 Judicial Reform: Courts That Work, Laws That Make Sense

Nigerians have the right to judicial system they can trust. This is not the case at the moment. The Nigerian court system is in the market for the highest bidder. The rich can have their rights protected by the courts, but the poor is left at the mercy of the abuse of the Nigeria Police, without a hope in the world. The courts conveniently turn their backs on that group of Nigerians. They look away while the fundamental human rights of over 90% of the population are trampled upon with impunity by the very organs that are supposed to enforce it. This is very sad.

There is no question that the need for reform extends to the judicial branch of government. Many judges disregard the safety, values, and freedom of law-abiding citizens. At the expense of our children and families, they make up laws, invent new rights, free vicious criminals, and pamper felons in prison. They have arbitrarily overturned properly enacted laws, utterly disregarding the right of the people and the democratic process. In their quest to satisfy the powerful elites, the courts, continually issue injunctions and delays in matters where their jurisdiction is hardly identifiable, almost in total disregard of the well being of the polity. In the process, they have rendered the system ineffective, even to the point that the powerful, who they so often clamor serve, now hold the court system itself in complete contempt. It is common these days to read that the powerful in the country disobey one court order or the other without consequences. This is how low the court system has descended.

The sound principle of judicial review has turned into an intolerable presumption of judicial supremacy. A PPP led government will restore judicial sanity in the polity, ensure credible and real separation of powers and reestablish a government of law. There are different ways to achieve that goal - setting terms for federal judges, for example, or using appropriate legislation to limit their appellate jurisdiction - but the most important factor is the appointing power of the presidency. We pledge to

name only judges who have demonstrated that they share conservative legal beliefs and respect of the Constitution.

Reform of the legal profession is an essential part of court reform. Today's litigation practices make a mockery of justice, hinder our country's ability to fight corruption and, far worse, erode the public's trust in the entire judicial process. Avarice among many plaintiffs' lawyers has helped in no small measure to clog our civil courts, drastically changed the practice of law to that of greed.

Even federal agencies have gotten into the act. Recently the Independent National Electoral Committee has one to the courts to sidetrack legitimate legislations by the National Assembly simply because the executive branch of the federal government has indicated unwillingness to abide by the duly passed laws. The same can be said of other agencies. We all know the lack of confidence that buffets the, so-called Anti-Corruption Commission and how deeply politicized it has become. We recall the simmering onshore/offshore dichotomy. The story goes on! In all these cases, the federal organs collude with the trial lawyers to advance through the courts what they could not accomplish through the political process. We fully support the role of the court in vindicating the rights of individuals and organizations, but we want to require higher standards for trial lawyers within federal jurisdiction - and encourage states to do the same within their own legal codes. To achieve that goal, we will strengthen the federal rules of civil procedure to impose or increase penalties for frivolous suits and impose a 'Three Strikes, You're Out' rule on attorneys who repeatedly file such suits. We will limit "fishing expeditions" by amending federal discovery rules, and curb the use of junk science in testimony. We will encourage all states to consider placing caps on non economic and punitive damages in civil cases. We will also support such caps in federal causes of action. We will encourage states to examine the effects on the democratic process of advancing policies through litigation that could not be accomplished through the political process.

We will enact a Teacher Protection Act to protect educators from merit less federal lawsuits against their efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom or further educational excellence, if at par with the constitutional requirements of human rights. We will extend similar protections to non-profit organizations-churches, mosques, civic and community groups, and the volunteers who sustain them.

To reduce health care costs and keep doctors practicing in critical areas like obstetrics, we will reform medical malpractice law on the federal level and urge decisive action on the state level as well.

10 encourage settlements and to discourage prolonged litigation, a Fair Settlements Rule should be enacted requiring either party in federal courts, who rejects a timely, reasonable, and timely faith pre-trial settlement offer, and who ultimately loses their case, to pay the other party's costs, including legal fees. We also encourage states to consider enacting such rules. To improve access to justice, we will make it easier for cases of national import to be heard in federal courts.

To protect clients against unscrupulous lawyers, we will enact a Clients' Bill of Rights for all federal courts, enquiring attorneys to disclose both the range of their fees and their ethical obligation to charge reasonable fees and allowing those fees to be challenged in federal courts. Because private lawyers should not reasonably profit at public expense, we will prohibit federal agencies from paying contingency fees and encourage states to follow suit. Even more important, we will require attorneys to return to the people any excessive fees they gain under contract to states, municipalities, or communities. An integral part of legal reform is a federal product liability law. Without it, consumers face higher costs, needed products don't make it to the market, and Nigerian jobs are lost. That, too, will change.

8.4 Rural Nigerians

The federal government has a special responsibility, ethical and legal, to make the New Nigerian dream accessible to rural Nigeria. Unfortunately, their resources, forcefully appropriated by the federal government have been misused and abused. In general, villages and communities across this country are worse hit by the economic collapse and decades of gross mismanagement from Abuja, We, therefore offer these guiding principles:

- Village or community governments are best situated to gauge the needs of their communities and members.
- Political empowerment and economic self-sufficiency are twin pillars of an effective rural policy.
- Private sector initiatives, rather than public assistance, can best improve material conditions in the rural communities.
- Appropriation of local resources, high taxes and unreasonable regulations stifle new and expanded businesses and thwart the creation of job opportunities and prosperity.

8.5 The Nation's Capital

The Federal Capital Territory is a special responsibility of the federal government and should be a model for urban areas throughout the country. Rather than be a good model, the FCT is now on a downhill slide towards the fate of all Nigerian cities before it. Our government will take steps to help the city recover.

Now, to enhance the city's economic security, reverse the movement out of the city, and ensure a safe and healthy environment for families, we advocate a reversal of the artificially high cost of living in the city, which begs the issue of the falling standard of living. PPP believes that the FCT is artificially made to be expensive by government policy, which:

- Appropriates the land free of charge, mostly without proper compensation to the original owners.
- It develops the property through its housing development agencies.
- Then sells to the private sector at about 300% to 500% the cost of developing the property, thereby setting the pricing benchmark for the private sector.

This is a deliberate action to separate the working class from the elite in a pattern very similar to apartheid Johannesburg and Soweto. This is the only way to explain why we have built a society in the FCT where the working class is bused in from the satellite towns to work and bused back at the end of the day. This also explains why the FCT is given all the attention while the satellite towns remain in squalor. A PPP led government will address all that putting the working people first. We will pursue user-friendly development policies and encourage the states and local councils to do the same.

We will reform the city's schools in line with our policies stated in other sections of this document, so that none of its children will be left behind. We strongly support opportunity scholarships for qualified poor city kids. We respect the design of the current Constitution that our nation's capital has a unique status and should remain independent of any individual state. However, we call for an elected leadership in the city to reflect the will and aspirations of the people, and oppose the continued direct governance of the city by the federal government via the Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory. This is a hangover of military dictatorship and should no longer continue. The constitutional rights of the citizens of Nigeria in Abuja to elect their own leaders, and have a government of their elected representatives ought to be respected.

9. Strategic Military Leadership

9.1 A Military for the Twenty-First Century

PPP is the party of peace through strength. A strong and well-trained Nigerian military is the best guarantee of peace with our neighbors. It is the shield of liberty, security, and prosperity. Only a President, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, can ensure that our military stands ready to defend Nigeria and triumph against new challenges.

PPP condemns in all entirety, the peacetime use of the Nigerian Armed Forces to make war against Nigerians over domestic civil and political matters, as typified in the destruction and massacres of the village of Odi in Bayelsa State and the town of Zaki-Biam in Benue State by the

current federal government. We view such actions as crimes against humanity perpetrated by the government against the very people it swore to protect. We will pursue legislative initiatives to make such conducts, especially without legislated authorization by the National Assembly, a crime under the laws of the federation, for which all parties authorizing and obeying such commands must be held criminally liable, in keeping with the United Nations declaration on human rights abuses and acts of genocide. In general, we will pursue legislation that will bar the use of the Nigerian Armed Forces in domestic civil or political matters, whether violent or not, and in the use of an offensive war without prior authorization from the National Assembly.

We commit ourselves to rebuilding the Nigerian military and returning to a non-political, professional military under complete civil authority. A military committed to strength and purpose, not overly dependent on foreign technology, but used to propel technology transfer and advances in the country. A military with identifiable imprints on the national economy and a key player in the nation's technology objectives. We will turn the military into a real fighting force with highly active professional component. The professional component will be used as an organized and coordinated resource to leap frog Nigeria into key technologies of interest to the military and relevant to its objectives. It is well known that the Internet was founded and used by the United States Military before segments of it were detached and made available for civilian use. Today there are essentially two internets, one for the use military, the other for the rest of the world. In similar manner, the PPP will encourage military-private sector research ventures to develop and adapt new technologies, some of which will be spun off for civilian use. This way, the military will become an organ of relevance in the technological development of the nation, rather than the liability and tool of oppression it has been from inception. We will keep them busy thinking positively and working, rather than idle and planning coups.

PPP president will pursue initiatives to transform Nigeria's defense capabilities for the information age, ensuring that Nigerian armed forces remain paramount against emerging dangers. We will initiate a planned and coordinated defense industry, which is non-existent till date. This will do two things - the first being to put an end to the overly dependence on foreign imports for military hardware and technology, even for the most basic things as military boots, and the second being that it will help in the recovery and sustenance of the nation's economy by providing the much needed domestic employment. PPP believes that in order to succeed as a nation, we must align our military power with the strengths of the Nigerian society and vice versa, developing and sharing skills, technology, and the integration of fast-paced systems into our mutual networks. Both civil and military resources must have a shared and

coordinated goal. We can no longer afford” military which is entirely parasitic to the society. While we dare not forget that the strength of the military lies with the combat soldier, sailor, and airman, we must not also forget that technology is now the decisive are in modern warfare. This is our vision of the New Military in the New Nigeria.

In general, Nigerians and not proud of their current armed forces. The military faces growing problems in readiness and morale, and it is not clear that they are prepared for the threats of the future. Equipment is mostly obsolete, and the functional ones are without spare parts and proper maintenance, largely due to mismanagement and corruption from the civil leadership to the military rank and file.

Even the highest morale is eventually undermined by poor pay, poor welfare standards, shortage of spare parts and equipment, inadequate training, and rapidly declining readiness. A lot of barracks in Nigeria today are glorified small it is common to see retired soldiers on the streets demonstrating for lack of pension payments. Some of them even take to begging. There are published cases where Nigerian servicemen wounded in regional peacekeeping conflicts are stranded in foreign airports, sometimes demonstrating publicly in foreign soil. A case in point is the Cairo airport sit-down of wounded Nigerian soldiers in 2002, which led to court martial. This is a shame and points to the malaise in the armed forces. As with all other sectors of the society, the nation has failed to fulfill its ethic?, and legal health care obligations to those that arc serving or have honorably served in the Armed Forces of the Nigeria, both to them and their dependents.

A PPP led government will change all that with credible all encompassing initiatives.

Today, wearing military uniforms is no longer a thing of pride. The military is no longer the societal role model it used to be. We will change all that. We will put the military back on the track to glory. This is our mission.

The Nigerian military under the leadership of a PPP President will focus on its most demanding task fighting and winning in combat. Readiness prevents wars. Also, by being prepared for this most exacting mission with an uncommon sense of urgency, our military will know, unlike today, that its loyalty and selfsai2rifice have meaning and purpose. We will challenge Nigeria’s military leaders to envision a new architecture of Nigerian defense for decades to come. One that will balance the need to prepare for information age battles while keeping our conventional fighting skills second to one in the continent.

In the twenty-first century Nigerian forces must be agile, lethal, readily deployable, and require a minimum of logistical support. They must also be fully prepared for possible enemy use of weapons of mass destruction. To build such a military forces will require foresight and steadfast commitment. We must be willing to act now to give the next generation of Nigerians what they will need to protect our country. This will also require a new spirit of innovation. PPP believes that our military leaders will welcome and meet these challenges. Moments of national opportunity are either seized or lost. Nigeria's opportunity beckons: to demonstrate that a new approach to the nation's defense can shape the future with new concepts, new strategies, and new resolve.

PPP will pursue an integrated local based National Guard and Reserve Unit as an important component of the nation's military readiness, and we will maintain their strength in the States. Their role as citizen soldiers is to link every community in the country with the cause of national security. The PPP will continue to respect that all-volunteer force. We support the advancement of women in the military and their exemption from ground combat units. By the policies we have enumerated so far, we will put renewed emphasis on encouraging the best and brightest of our young people to our armed forces.

9.2 Principled Leadership

In a PPP led government, Nigerians have good cause to be optimistic. This generation can adapt Nigeria to thrive amid great change - change in the economy, infrastructure delivery, ditheistic law enforcement, the political structure, technology, and the Military.

PPP has a strategy. It is a strategy that is traditional truths about power aid ideals and applies them to networked marketplaces, modern diploma and ,he high-tech battlefield. A PPP administration will use power wisely, set priorities, cart needed institutions of openness and freedom, and invest in the future. A PPP president can achieve the unity of national governance that has so long been absent. We see a confident Nigeria united in the fellowship of freedom within and without regions. We envision the restoration of a respected Nigerian leadership firmly grounded in a distinctly Nigerian nationalism.