

ADVANCE CONGRESS OF DEMOCRATS

Motto: Justice, Peace and Progress

MANIFESTO OF ADVANCE CONGRESS OF DEMOCRATS (ACD)

SECTION A: PREAMBLE

1. After over thirty years of military rule out of the Country's forty five years of independence, the among most people is that democratization of the polity will be difficult if not impossible to achieve. But the will of the people is always stronger than any form of military dictatorship, hence the return to democracy in 1999.
2. The exit of the military from prolonged governance in 1999 was not voluntary. The military was consumed by its own contradictions which also created popular resistance against its mis-rule, abuses and attempt at self perpetuation. It therefore evolved a transition programme in 1998-99 was essentially face-saving; but also accommodated its terms and expectations.
3. Prolonged military rule, in particular, from 1984 not only desecrated all that was holy in the country, it also set in motion a process of national retrogression and decay in the economic and socio-cultural spheres.
4. Military rule rather than enhance national prosperity, foster and cement national unity, promoted and perfected the phenomenon of wealth without enterprise via patronage, mismanagement and corruption. It also created the conditions for the prominence of ethnic consciousness as against nationalism; thus, it perpetuated and deepened the crisis of nation building.
5. The sustained over 30 years of military dictatorship in Nigeria, did not derive entirely from its internal and institutional capabilities. It was re-enforced by opportunism, inconsistencies and the weak commitment of Nigeria political class to the well-being of the people in favour of personal enrichment.
6. The characteristics of the authoritarian culture included arbitrariness, deep rooted disregard for accountability and transparency in: governance, corporate institutions and private life; disregard for

personal liberties and group, rights; and the absence of rule of law, amongst others.

7. The current post military regime, though a product of democratic election, is also a manifestation of neo-military attributes, culture and tendencies.
8. This could not have been otherwise. Political power did not fall into the hands of those who fought military dictatorship. Above all, the political process alienated a vast majority of the populace and divergent political views.
9. The three political parties which were foisted on the country by the military in 1998 essentially lacked the basis for decisively addressing and resolving the problems and ills which prolonged military dictatorship bestowed on the country. Instead, most of the sensitive problems created by the military and brutally suppressed by them, have emerged and are now apparently intractable.
10. The above situation has strengthened the notion that the present civilian dispensation is at best a transition and as such a watershed for the emergence of genuine and sustainable democracy. The myriad of failed expectations, general disillusionment, cynicism and fear of the future which pervade the populace, further strengthen the above notion.
11. The conservative and neo-military forces, who now dominate governance in Nigeria, essentially have no contract with the electorates and the mass of the people. They dread to be identified with any discernible ideology or set of ideals. This is deceitful; they should not be ashamed to identify with conservatism and commitment to sustaining the status quo bequeathed from military dictatorship. They therefore cannot justifiably explain their failures and inability to provide the promised dividends of democracy. Consequently, for the masses, hope in the future appears dimmed and illusory.
12. Six years of democratic governance and the way it has negatively impacted on the economy, social life and popular expectations tend to compel the average Nigerian to forget the atrocities of the military in the face of mounting hardship and despair. This frightening and regrettable

development creates the urgent need for a salvation and liberation mission in Nigeria.

13. Consequently, the imperatives of today demand that all genuine Democrats and Patriotic civil organizations and personages must at this crucial moment in the country's history come together to salvage and liberate the nation from the path of destructive drift. This should be the mission of our party.

SECTION B: CHARACTER OF OUR PARTY

- a. The ideology plank of our party derives from its orientation and social base. Our party shall be mass based, people oriented and inclusive for the working people, farmers, peasants and artisans, academicians, politicians, professionals and business-men/women. Consequently our party shall be humanistic, people centered, nationalistic and patriotic. It shall have strong commitment to: upliftment of the conditions of life of all, the prosperity and stability of the nation and the reign of equity and justice in Nigeria.
- b. In furtherance of the above therefore, the logical and rational minimal ideological plank of the party and its members shall be social democracy. Consequently, our party would be inclusive of all tendencies of social democrats united on the basis of its programme and manifesto.
- c. Our party, given its social democratic character and ideals will ensure that there would be no owners and followers.
 - (i) To serve as an integrating political institution, capable of mobilizing the people to defend and sustain democracy, adequately educate and empower them to ensure that sovereignty actually belongs to the people (electorate).
 - (ii) To ensure that institutions of governance in the country and administration of the party, appropriately represent plurality of-social status, professions and gender in the party
 - (iii) To usher in a Nigerian renaissance that would create. a new orientation bequeathed from prolonged military rule.
- a. Consistent with the character and objectives of the Party, it shall not exist essentially to meet the personal electoral aspirations of any

member but that of the party collectively, in which case, it is the party that governs and it is the party's manifesto and programme that shall constitute the contract with electorates.

- b. Our party, given its social democratic character and ideals, will ensure that there would be no owners and followers.

SECTION C: OBJECTIVES OF THE PARTY

a. The objectives of the Party shall be:

- (i) To acquire political power through free and fair elections for the purpose of:
- Establishing a new type of Nigerian state (Government) that would be democratic, transparent, people oriented as basis for uplifting the country from backwardness to prosperity founded on egalitarian ideals and the rule of law.
 - Enthroning a new Nigerian state (Government) that would no longer be master of the people and basis for: private accumulation of wealth, distribution of patronage and plundering of the national wealth and assets.
 - Evolving a new Nigerian state (Government) that would not abdicate its social and economic responsibilities to the people while upholding equity and fairness.
 - Enacting a new Nigerian state (Government) that would decisively bail the country out of pervasive poverty and under development; and propel it into prosperity; and strong enough to defend its citizenry and territorial boundaries.
 - Enacting a new Nigerian state (Government) whose actors and personages shall be embodiments of transparency, and modesty and who shall practicalise the concepts of leadership by example.
- (ii) To serve as an integrating political institution, capable of mobilizing the people to defend and sustain democracy, adequately educate and empower them to ensure that sovereignty actually belongs to the people (electorate).
- (iii) To ensure that institutions of governance in the country and administration of the party, appropriately represent plurality of social status, professions and gender in the party.
- (iv) To usher in a Nigerian renaissance that would create a new orientation bequeathed from prolonged military rule.

- b. Consistent with the character and objectives of the Party, it shall not exist essentially to meet the personal electoral aspirations of any member but that of the party collectively, in which case, it is the party that governs and it is the party's manifesto and programme that shall constitute the contract with electorates.
- c. Our party would therefore be a disciplined, principled and democratic platform committed to translating its programmes and manifesto to reality. It shall be organizationally strong to defend democracy. In which case, the party like ANC of South Africa shall not be dissolved by any force outside it nor shall its independence and life be subverted in any way.
- d. In determining the Party's manifesto, on specific national subjects, our party recognizes that it must urgently transform the Nigerian state from its present self inflicted incapacities to a state that would be committed to: ensuring safety of lives and property, promoting commitment to rule of law and due process, promoting transparency, efficient and judicious management of national resources, state apparatus and agencies.
- e. In furtherance of above, our party would bring to an end "the self-defeating syndrome of Nigerian factor used to explain the failures of the state and build a new Nigerian state.
- f. Our party is fully convinced that given its democratic orientation, ideology plank, credibility and acceptability, it has organizational strength and moral commitment to translate its social democratic ideals (alternatives) on all facets of our national life as itemized below:

SECTIOND: THE NIGERIA NNATION

- a. The party will relentlessly strive to build a strong economy that would bail the country from its present stage of under development within the first term in office, based on the nation's strength of human, natural resources and prudent management.
- b. That all parts of the country must equitably develop (economic, social and political) as conditions for a prosperous Nigeria and balanced development.

- c. Exploiting optimally, the economic and social potential for their well being and that of the country.
- d. And therefore contributing appropriately to the center and other federating units that may be disadvantaged at any point in time.

SECTION: THE ECONOMY

The party will relentlessly strive to build a strong economy that would bail the country from its present stage of under development within the first term in office, based on the nation's strength of human, nature resources and prudent management.

The Principal Policy Thrust of The Nigerian Economy shall be to:

- a. Empower, economically most Nigerians.
- b. Create expanding employment opportunities; and services;
- c. Encourage domestic competition and investment;
- d. Ensuring continual improvement in quality of life of every citizen; f
Discourage the extremes of poverty and affluence.

In order to achieve the above, the Nigerian State, while being the facilitator, shall also be a major player in the strategic sectors of the petroleum industry, energy, communication, rail and ports, health-care, education and research.

In pursuant of these, the state:

- i. Shall create within the first tenure in office, the critical success imperatives necessary for socioeconomic developments.
- ii. Shall achieve, far reaching diversification of the Nigerian economy by reducing substantially reliance, on petroleum export.
- iii. Shall within eight years give to Nigerians low priced Nigerian made automobiles.
- iv. Shall, as a matter of conscious policy, develop and empower indigenous entrepreneurs to be major players and compete in all aspects of the Nigeria economy.

- v. Shall motivate and encourage indigenous scientist and technologists, within and outside the country, and also assist and encourage them to acquire and adapt foreign technologies for the needs of the country.
- vi. Shall strive to put a Nigerian in the moon within 8 years.
- vii. Shall recognize the role of the market in all economic activities, but would strive to avoid the tyranny of free market and the excesses of market fundamentalism.
- viii. Shall appreciate the strength of globalization and liberalization but would adopt caution and step by step approach, given our country's weaknesses and disequilibrium.
- ix. Shall promote foreign investment and provide ample incentives.

SECTION F: AGRICULTURE

1. Objective

The Party shall acknowledge the strategic importance of agriculture and accord it top most priority in order to:

- a. Achieve national food self-sufficiency and food security within five years.
- b. Increase the production of raw materials for local industries thereby lessening their dependence on imported raw materials within our first term in office.
- c. Diversify production based on agriculture by expanding fishing forest preservation and expansion, expanding poultry and animal husbandry and promoting fruits and vegetable production, processing preservation.
- d. Rejuvenating and expanding agricultural commodity exports like coca, cotton, groundnut, palm produce, rice, rubber and timber and ensure the maximization of value added to these export products, through domestic fabrication and processing.
- e. Reactivate and expand effective agricultural establishments into production and experimental oriented agencies.
- f. Provide farmers in rural areas easy access to credits and other agricultural inputs like fertilizer.
- g. Provide adequate irrigation and all season rural roads in agricultural areas.
- h. Promote the development of medium and large. Scale farms including the revamping of farm settlement schemes.

- i. Stimulate agricultural research and relate it to production.
- j. Embark on the local manufacture of food preservation equipment and machinery.

In order to achieve the above, the State would:

- i. Change the status of farmers from that of peasants who primarily engage in subsistence farming by encouraging at least 50% of all graduates of all agricultural institutions and retired agriculturists to return to farming.
- ii. Strengthening of public agencies for agricultural development and financing.
- iii. Introduction of cheap labour augmenting technology that would meet the varieties in agricultural landscape in the country.
- iv. Removal of taxes and levies which constrain capital formation and production by peasants, medium and large scale farmers.
- v. Complementing subsidy on agricultural inputs with price support for outputs.
- vi. Intensification of research into organic fertilizers.
- vii. Establish rural development agencies in all L.G.As to provide easy access to credit for farmers.
- viii. Promotion of local fabrication of agricultural implements and equipment to enable the average farmer produce over 5 times his normal output.

SECTION G: RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Nigeria is essentially a rural community with over 60% of the country's population living in rural areas. But the quality of life amongst rural dwellers is very poor due to extremely inadequate infrastructure and dwindling economic fortunes. Increasingly, the gap between the rural and urban centres in virtually all respects is widening.

In order to urgently address the ravaging state of pervasive poverty which has become the lot of the rural communities, the Party would be committed to the underlisted objectives:

- a. Narrowing the gap between the rural and urban centres; be Reduction of the levels of rural poverty and neglect;
- b. Reduction of the levels of rural poverty and neglect;
- c. Reversal of rural-urban migration
- d. General improvement of the quality of life of the rural population.

In order to achieve the above objectives, the party shall:

- i. Emphasize community organizations for self development/enhancement;
- ii. Provide incentives like matching grants necessary for promoting the execution of community projects;

- iii. Ensure the total electrification of the entire country within five years;
- iv. Ensure the sustenance of rural roads, water supply and create enabling environment for rural industrialization;
- v. Encourage skilled personnel to relocate to the rural areas of the country.

SECTION H: ENERGY

1. Objectives

The party's policy objectives shall be:

- a. To ensure a steady and increasing supply of energy for both industrial and social uses.
- b. To formulate and implement a comprehensive energy policy ensuring that reasonable tariffs are charged.
- c. Encourage private ownership of commercial power generation and distribution.
- d. Encourage the utilization of Solar as a source of energy for both domestic and industrial use.
- e. Encourage and fund research into alternative sources of energy
- f. Assist Nigerian researchers defend their patent rights internationally.

2. Strategy

Hydro-electric thermal and solar-energy shall be further developed and strengthened. The National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) shall be reorganized and adequately funded to ensure uninterrupted supply of power. Ageing turbines and other machines shall be replaced. The Hydro Electric Projects shall be given greater impetus and support.

Thermal power stations shall be established at strategic locations in addition to the one at Egbin.

The current policy of linking all the local government headquarters in the country with the

National Grid shall be pursued with greater vigour.

SECTION I: MINING AND PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

1. Objective

The party policy objectives in this sector shall be:

- a. To ensure responsible and controlled exploitation of our mineral resources;
- b. To ensure that government shall maintain exclusive rights over all mining activities in the country
- c. To undertake comprehensive surveys to determine the quantities and locations of all the country's mineral resources.

2. Strategy

The NNPC and the Nigerian Mining Corporation shall be properly re-organized and adequately funded to enable them play the very active role envisaged for them in our administration. The party shall establish and further expand Petro-Chemical plants as vehicles for industrial development. Other LNG projects shall be initiated, bearing in mind the great potential of these projects to generate foreign exchange for the country.

SECTION J: IRON AND STEEL DEVELOPMENT

1. Objective

The party's major policy goal shall be to ensure that a viable iron and steel industry is established and maintained as a pre-requisite for industrial and technological take-off.

2. Strategy

The completing and continuous operation of the Ajaokuta Steel Complex, other rolling mills, and the iron-ore mining projects shall be given top priority. Quality control shall be enforced to ensure products acceptability internationally and to build confidence in the goods produced in the country both for home consumption and for export.

SECTION K: LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

1. Objective

In keeping with the Social Democratic ideals of the party, the working man and woman shall be recognized as the motive force for the transformation of the country in which ease, wage earners of all categories including intellectuals and professionals shall be appropriately rewarded, motivated and assured of full employment.

2. Strategy

To achieve the above objectives the party shall ensure that:

- a. Employment creation and sustenance in both public and private sectors are made the cornerstone of government and private sectors activities.
- b. Conditions of employment in both public and private sectors including remunerations are constantly reviewed by way of collective bargaining.
- c. The national minimum wage at any time is not below subsistence income and takes into cognizance the prevailing rate of inflation and the purchasing power of our currency.
- d. Pension rates for retired workers are constantly reviewed and minimum pension shall not be less than the prevailing national minimum wage.
- e. Trade unions are encouraged and strengthened and independent of employers and government and are not demarcated by the status of workers.

- f. All Nigerian Trade Unions shall have the rights to affiliate to the Nigerian Labour Congress in recognition of the Party's belief in workers solidarity.
- g. The Trade Unions shall administer their affairs without interference by state agencies in keeping with ILO convention on freedom of association.
- h. Workers are adequately represented in all organs of government when dealing with the welfare of workers.

SECTION L: TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Objectives

The objectives of the party shall be

- a. Efficient transportation network throughout the country.
- b. Modernization of all existing modes of transportation in the country (road, rail, air, water/maritime) and
- c. Commensurate expansion and modernization of our communications system.

2. Strategy

Our strategy in each sector shall be as outlined below.

a. Road Transportation:

- i. Improvement of all major roads linking our state capitals with major cities and towns within the states of the federation as well as development of new ones.
- ii. Revamping and acceleration of the Mass Transit Programme.

b. Railways:

The party shall ensure that the railways are urgently modernized by way of establishing expansive rail network in the country that would serve both economic and social needs including national integration

The party shall ensure that within ten years the network would be fully operational thereby integrating the whole country by reducing the cost of road maintenance while creating large job opportunities.

c. Air Transport:

The standard strategy shall be the development and sustenance of a viable air transport system for the country. Nigeria Airways shall continue to operate as the national carrier, but effort shall be made to ensure its survival and operational efficiency. Operation of private airlines in the domestic and international routes shall be encouraged, but will be regulated to ensure reliability and safety

d. Water Transport

The party shall develop the inland waterways, the emphasis on

- i. Dredging the beds of all major rivers so that they can be navigated throughout the year
- ii. Providing financial allocation for the manufacturer of necessary vehicles required for water transportation.

e. Communication

The party shall ensure

- i. Total reorganization of the country's postal system with a view to guaranteeing its efficiency;
- ii. The party shall ensure that the NITEL continues to play a leading role in the country's telecom industry while also encouraging strong private sector participation.
- iii. Modernization of communications equipment belonging to NITEL, NIPOST, and Nigerian Television Authority

SECTION M: EDUCATION

1. Objective

In keeping with the social democratic ideals of the party, education in the country shall be free up to secondary school level. Every Nigerian child of school age shall undergo compulsory primary and secondary school education.

The party however, shall recognize the right of private individuals, corporate bodies and religious organizations etc to establish educational institutions subject to regulation by appropriate arms of the government.

In furtherance of the above, the party in government would ensure that the quality of education in

- i. Decongest the prisons further by building new ones and pay periodic judicial visits to prisons;
- ii. Construct special prisons for different categories of pensioners;
- iii. Rehabilitate prisoners by providing adequate facilities and equipment for their acquisition of knowledge and skills while in the prison, enable them lead useful life and to obtain gainful employment upon discharge.
- iv. Provide facilities for faster dispensation of justice by our law courts.
- v. Educate Nigerians to disabuse their minds on the stigma associated with Ex-convicts.

SECTION W: TRADITIONAL RULERS

1. Objectives

The Party sees traditional rulers as custodians of our rich cultural heritage. Because of the historic and integrative role traditional rulers play at the grassroots level as community mobilizers and formidable bridges between the government and the governed, the party in government will consolidate this important socio-cultural institution.

Our ultimate aim is to assist the traditional institution, so that as the Nigerian society and economy are undergoing basic structural changes, they are able to perform their roles.

2. Strategy

The party in government shall:

- a. Maintain the existing Traditional Council of Chiefs in the States;
- b. Assign new roles to the Council in such spheres as socio-cultural mobilization, as well as use of age groups and similar associations for commitment and national development.
- c. Ensure that they are properly remunerated to enable them maintain the dignity of the position.

SECTION X: WOMEN

1. Objectives

- a. To encourage the full emancipation, participation and involvement of women in all political, social, economic and other aspects of our national life, particularly as they affect elections.
- b. To recognize the special responsibilities of women and to promote their involvement/participation as veritable agents of political socialization.

2. Strategy

The party in government shall encourage the mass education and mobilization of our women (as vanguards of peace and harmony) for:

- i. Production purposes;
- ii. Uniting the kinship groups together;
- iii. Nurturing a healthy family system
- iv. Ensuring that they play positive roles in development; and
- v. Political socialization.

SUMMARY OF ACD AGENDA

- i. Free Primary Health-Care with particular emphasis on Maternal and Child Health Care.
- ii. Free Qualitative and Functional Education up to secondary school level for all citizens
- iii. Full employment for all and provision of social security for those who cannot support themselves.
- iv. Adequate affordable Housing for all Nigerians.

- v. Full gainful Employment.
- vi. Commitment to Democracy and the Rule of Law.
- vii. Justice and Fairness to all.
- viii. Freedom of Speech and Expression.
- ix. Freedom of Conscience, Thought and Religion.
- x. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly, and Association.
- xi. Freedom to Hold and Propagate Political Beliefs including Freedom to Form Political Parties without undue constraint.
- xii. Freedom from Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Torture.
- xiii. Freedom from Discrimination, whether based on gender, religion, age or ethnic origin.
- xiv. Freedom from invasion of Privacy and Violation of the human person.
- xv. The return to a true Federal Constitutional Arrangement with emphasis on Decentralized Governance.
- xvi. Revenue Allocation based on equity and justice.
- xvii. Ethical Re-orientation and Eradication of Corrupt Practices in all facets of our national life.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ADVANCE CONGRESS OF DEMOCRATS (ACD)

PREAMBLE:

We, the advanced democrats of Nigeria, having resolved to form a political party in pursuit of our ideological agenda for the good of all Nigerians, do hereby make, enact and give to ourselves the following Constitution whose provisions shall be binding on ourselves. In doing so, we pledge our abiding loyalty to the federal Republic of Nigeria whose Constitution shall at all times supersede this party Constitution.

ARTICLE 2: NAME

The name of the party shall be ADVANCED CONGRESS OF DEMOCRATS (ACD), hereinafter referred as “the Party” in this document.

ARTICLE 2: MOTTO

The Motto of the party shall be “Justice, Peace and Progress”.

ARTICLE 3: SLOGAN

The Slogan of the party shall be: “Democracy for Ever”.

ARTICLE 4: EMBLEM

To emblem of the party shall be a crown symbolizing real transfer of power to the people and our sincere commitment to true democracy in Nigeria. The green colour signifies wealth and the party’s commitment to an agriculture-based economy; white signifies our commitment to peace, transparency, and accountability to the people of Nigeria; black signifies our

acknowledgment of the black race all over the world and our commitment to emancipating them; while red represents our heroic struggles to uphold democratic ideals.

ARTICLES 5: LEGAL STATUS

The party shall register its name, emblem, constitution, manifesto and Head Office address with the Independent National Electoral Commission and meet such other conditions as may be required under the provisions of the Constitution and other prevailing laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

ARTICLE 6: SUPREMACY

Subject to the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and or any other prevailing laws for the time being in force, the provisions of this Constitution shall take precedence over and above any other rules and regulations of the Party.

ARTICLE 7 REGISTERED OFFICE

The registered office of the Party shall be in the federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The party shall also operate branches in all state capitals and local government area headquarters, including those of Abuja area councils, and ward headquarters. Permission may also be granted Nigerians in Diaspora to open and operate coordination branch offices in their respective host communities.

ARTICLES PRINCIPLES, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. The Principles, Aims and Objectives of the Party shall at all times and in all spheres, conform with the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy as enshrined in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and, accordingly, the Party shall pursue the political, economic, social, educational and other objectives which shall conform with the aforesaid fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy.
2. The goal of the party is Growth and Development for General welfare
3. The objectives of the Party shall be
 - a. To participate effectively in installing selfless, credible and competent political leadership through democratic and constitutional means for achievement of socio-economic conditions in which the productive energies of individuals and corporate groups will be enhanced and utilized for national development

- b. To promote peace, order and good governance whose primary responsibility shall be the welfare and security of all citizens based on the principles of freedom, equality and justice.
- c. To co-sponsor and present candidates for elections into local government councils in all states of