



## **The communiqué issued at the end of a social discourse themed “The Change Yoruba Will Vote For” organised by the Afenifere Renewal Group at Trenchard Hall, University of Ibadan on February 10, 2015.**

### **Preamble**

The Southwest part of Nigeria, ancestral home to the Yoruba nation, has been the bride being courted by leading partisan voices with respect to the 2015 General Elections. In fact, many political watchers have declared the Southwest as the “battle ground” where the winner of the presidential election will be decided.

The throat of age long political aspiration of Yoruba people is now being held tightly by the ensuing partisan “battle”, with a high probability of asphyxiation. It is therefore imperative to carefully examine the current political dynamics, in the light of what is in it for the Yoruba nation.

The event, which was also used to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of former Ekiti State Governor, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, drew participants from all Southwest states and across social divides, including the Orangun of Oke-Ila, Oba Adedokun Abolarin, representatives of Yoruba monarchs in Kwara State, Hon Olawale Oshun, Dr Femi Orebe, Mrs. Bisi Fayemi; soccer legend Chief Segun Odegbami (MON) ; Asiwaju Bisi Adegbuyi; Prince Oye Oyewumi; Mr. Ayo Afolabi; the Director General, Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission, Dipo Famakinwa, Alh. Lai Oyeduntan, Mr Kunle Famoriyo, ARG’s publicity secretary, etc.

After a poignant lecture titled “Towards a renascent Yoruba nation” by the Guest Speaker, Mr. Rotimi Akeredolu (SAN) and passionate discussions by attendees, the following resolutions were made:

### **Resolutions**

1. The unitary system of government imposed on the nation at the inception of military rule in 1966 is responsible for the loss of identity of the regions and the depreciating culture of good governance in Southwest.
2. Yoruba politics has degraded to a level where a region once reputed for its political sagacity and principled resistance to bad governance now parades people claiming to be the conscience of the region, without regards to profligacy and ineptitude in government.
3. Our people are known to espouse all faiths, received and indigenus. Anyone using religion as basis of representation in the polity is an enemy of Yoruba people and their most-accommodating culture.

4. As we march into another round of political experiment, the region must be ready to assert itself through its insistence on constructive engagement with all stakeholders on what we want as a people. We must insist on those values that distinguish us as "Omoluabi." This includes strict adherence to and agitation for principles of federalism, a renewed commitment by the political class in the Southwest to education, health, agriculture, and road construction.
5. The Yoruba people must no longer subscribe to inexplicable tardiness in realising our dreams for development. We must join others to discourage those who have turned politics into a full time job and only our best should be encouraged to come forward to represent our people.
6. Any serious governmental action at the inception of a government of the All Progressives Congress (APC) at the federal level must address the issue of restructuring without delay. This is what the Yoruba people want and the APC now has the opportunity to publicly announce its stance on this crucial issue. It is not going to be sufficient to have a new government, which will be prepared to continue with the old ways of doing things.
7. The Yoruba people contend that the recent election shift is certainly not just about elections. We suspect that the postponement is about something more sinister, the first being that it might be grounds to prepare a soft surface for a sympathetic group within the Armed Forces to take over the reins of power, since in character and content there is little to distinguish the present rudderless government from the one that ruled in the Second Republic between 1979 and 1983.
8. Yoruba people would not be part of any country that is forcibly taken over by any military insurrection, no matter the direction or purpose of any such self-styled messiahs. We as a people know what we want, and military rule is clearly not part of it.
9. Also, anyone who is thinking that the balkanization of the country on the premises of North and South could be a way out should better think deeply. The Yoruba people would not be part of any such balkanized unit; it is definitely not one we would demand as a change.
10. We would wish, as we are now, to be part of a democratic, well-governed and truly federal Nigeria, in all intents and purposes; a Nigeria where the rights and desires of the component nationalities are guaranteed.
11. However, we warn that if for any reason, Nigeria were schemed to become a banana and undemocratic republic, with the muzzling of its democratic institutions as demonstrated by this Poll Shift, and/or if Nigeria were to be divided in any manner, we would as a people opt out to become a democratic nation as would be acceptable by our people.
12. The change Yoruba people want and will vote for is good governance that guarantees freedom for all and life more abundant, one that secures our desire to develop our God-given potentials at our own pace as a people.

**Signed:**

**Hon. Olawale Oshun**

**National Chairman, Afenifere Renewal Group**