



JKS & Associates
Limited

NIGERIA **SITUATION** REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 29 May 2015, President Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC) was sworn in as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, taking over from an incumbent, President Goodluck Jonathan of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). This followed a presidential election that has set a standard for Africa because of its process, peaceful nature and outcome. Jonathan's acceptance of the results even before its official announcement has brought him deserved commendation and confounded the dire consequences of violence that had been widely predicted.

2. This Report examines why Jonathan lost the election and examines the APC as the party in power. It posits that many of the factors that contributed to Jonathan's defeat facilitated Buhari's victory. PDP was unable to deal with the cleavages within the Party, suffered from unhealthy campaign style and pronouncements and imposition of unpopular candidates, thus undermining its democratic credence. The Party ignored the clamour by Nigerians for change who perceived it as having outlived its usefulness.

3. On the other hand, APC was able to sustain a unified position in spite of its emergence from four "federating parties," organized credible primaries to select its candidates and was favoured by the demographics in having solid control in the two zones with the largest population – the North West and South West.

4. The Report indicates that Jonathan was considered a leader who did not quite understand Nigeria, its power structure and how the Federal system worked. He was described as clueless and incompetent which may be responsible for his rejection of the advice of some of the most influential segments of the power centres which had concluded about two years ago that he had to go on 29 May 2015 to save the country from collapsing.

5. His opponent was favoured by that power segment and was seen by many Nigerians as someone with the audacity of leadership and decision, an "apostle of the poor" and who was ready to fight corruption which Jonathan and his wife rather indulged in. The efforts by Jonathan to use the power of incumbency was incapable of stopping the move against him and the PDP, while Buhari was given the benefit of the doubt for his past errors as Military Head of State in 1984 to 1985.

6. The Report briefly describes the emergence of the APC from its four federating parties – the ACN, CPC, ANPP, APGA and the defectors from PDP. It indicates that the party has not had the best start considering the difficulties it has had in electing those that should lead the National Assembly. The attempt to impose party choices to lead the Assembly has led to humiliation since those party choices were defeated with the PDP sneaking in the Deputy Senate President. As the Report is being concluded, the matter remains unresolved and runs the risk of causing a serious rift within the party. The struggle has been seen as an attempt by some in the party, including by former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, Senate President Bukola Saraki and new Sokoto State Governor, Aminu Tambuwal, to curtail the influence and powers of Bola Tinubu, the former Governor of Lagos State and self-appointed National Leader of the APC. It is also linked to attempts to position for the office of the President in 2019 as it is speculated that Buhari will follow Mandela's example of being in office for only one term.

7. Buhari is biding his time in the selection of his cabinet and senior aides but it is believed that this is deliberate so that he can have a team that he is sure will faithfully work with him to implement his priorities which are security, corruption and the economy. The mooted appointment of a Presidential Policy Group and Presidential Policy Delivery Unit will ensure that he delivers on his Party's electoral promises. The NSR identifies what it considers Buhari's policy thrust to include: emphasis on good governance, economic growth, sustained security, tackling corruption, reduction in the high cost of governance and the reform of the oil and gas sector including removal of oil subsidy. The implementation of such policies will uplift the economy but his ability to fully accomplish these objectives will depend on how much cooperation he receives from his party.

8. The Report concludes by emphasizing that expectations are very high on the part of Nigerians who voted for change. It indicates that Nigerians have faith in President Buhari but notes that he needs the support of a united party and National Assembly, but how soon that can be achieved remains to be seen.

NIGERIA SITUATION REPORT: EDITION NO 2.

The 2015 Nigeria Presidential election has set a standard for Africa because of its process, peaceful nature and outcome. A lot of credit has been heaped on President Jonathan for conceding defeat early. The credit is certainly well deserved. All political combatants deserve commendation as well. The dire forecast of violence with many expatriates and some Nigerians fleeing the country before the elections, evaporated overnight. This Report examines why President Jonathan lost the elections and undertakes a preliminary examination of APC as a Party in power.

2. In its maiden edition and update Nigeria Situation Report (NSR) posited that the odds of victory were in favour of Buhari. Muhammadu Buhari has been inaugurated as President of Nigeria and myriad of latent problems have emerged on its political and economic firmament. We first address why Jonathan was defeated before focusing on the other issue.

I. JONATHAN'S LOSS AND BUHARI'S VICTORY



3. Various reasons and factors have been adduced for the defeat of Jonathan and the victory of Buhari. In large measure, the factors that contributed to Jonathan's defeat facilitated Buhari's victory. We have touched on some of these in our maiden edition and its update. Firstly, there were cleavages within the People's Democratic Party (PDP), particularly between the Jonathan Campaign Organisation and the hierarchy of the party. Secondly, the party suffered from unhealthy campaign style and pronouncements. Thirdly, the imposition of unpopular candidates by the national leaders over popular local candidates undermined its democratic credence. Finally, PDP pointedly ignored the clamour by Nigerians for change. Added to this were the decadence, corruption and bad governance at all levels. What PDP basically ignored was the writing on the wall that the generality of Nigerians were anchored on change. Why? PDP was perceived by many to have outlived its usefulness, and some fresh air was therefore mandatory.

4. In favour of All Progressives Congress (APC) was its ability and capacity to maintain and sustain a unified and united position in spite of the fact that there were about four federating units in the party. As it happened, the fear by some that various tendencies would emerge and tear the party apart did not materialize. APC leaders were able to hold the string that tied them together solidly. The demographics were also in favour of the party since it was solidly in control of the geographic zones with the largest population in the country, namely the North West and South West geopolitical zones.

5. It can now be disclosed that the most influential segment of the power centres in the country concluded, about two years ago, that Jonathan's presidency should be terminated on 29 May 2015 because of his rudderless leadership. The country was teetering in his hands. He was therefore advised against running for a second term. He obviously chose to ignore the counsel. That was the beginning of the end of his administration. He proceeded to take countervailing measures to checkmate this counsel. He deployed State apparatus, in the strong belief that he could thwart the position of this group. One of such measures was to infiltrate the hierarchy of the military and security services. Evidently, the most palpable was the profound corrupting of the hierarchy of the military and security apparatus, which emboldened the use of the Department of State Service for political purposes, particularly to rig the election in some places. The assumption was that once the instruments of State coercive power were secured, the electoral victory would not pose a challenge. Instead, this effectively fractionalized the military and created the lack of cohesiveness within the military and disaffection between the rank and file, middle level officers and the military high command. In the past, this would have resulted into a military takeover. Rather, all involved resolved to exercise patience and allow the democratic process to play itself out. The unity of purpose among this particular segment of the power centres resulted in a force that the PDP machinery and State apparatus could not match or defeat. It is now known that a number of them put their resources into the mobilization for change. They were not really obscure about their activities.

6. Jonathan therefore lost the election because he was a leader who did not quite understand the country and its power structure, how the federal system worked, and without a team that was respected in the country. Furthermore, rather than manifest interest in curbing corruption, he and his wife were enmeshed in it. Compounding the situation was the fact that he was surrounded by rent seekers. While some have claimed that Jonathan's defeat was due mainly to the determination of the North to retrieve power at the centre, NSR posits that if his performance had been stellar, his victory would have been assured. Those who characterized his leadership as clueless and incompetent effectively captured what led to his defeat. In Nigeria, respect and esteem are not bestowed but earned.

7. Buhari won the election due largely to his person. In spite of several attempts to paint him as a "tormentor" in the realm of human rights, given the "notoriety" of his regime from 1984 to 1985, Nigerians simply gave him the benefit of the doubt as they perceive him as an honest and upright person. They see in him someone who has audacity of leadership and decision. Besides, his puritanical life style has transformed him to "an apostle of the poor". Thus, he is attributed with all the qualities that Jonathan lacked and could not muster. After four attempts, Buhari has emerged as Nigeria's leader. Given his tortuous journey to the Presidency of the land and the challenges that have emerged in the country, particularly in the last nine months, he has his agenda cut out for him. He is undoubtedly aware that the power centre that played a significant role in propelling him to victory is watching closely.

II. A GLIMPSE INTO APC AS THE PARTY IN POWER

(a) Emergence of APC

8. The APC emerged on 6 February 2013 as an amalgamation of three opposition political parties – Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) – and a faction of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA). Its objective was to wrest power from PDP. Critics faulted the viability of

such a union of "strange bed fellows". Some, they argued, still nourished presidential ambition, a potential fault-line, or were seeking political relevance, popularity and spoils of office rather than service to the people. The skeptics were almost proved right when Tom Ikimi, Annie Okonkwo and Ibrahim Shekarau, signatories for ACN, APGA and CPC, respectively in the merger, left the Party for PDP, barely two years later.



9. However, APC flourished and consolidated itself. Defection to it by five PDP governors was a great impetus. As the new PDP, they provided core grassroots support for the APC in many States. At a successful party primary, Muhammadu Buhari emerged as the flag bearer for 2015 presidential election. The widely acclaimed democratic process was an incentive to the "change" mantra which Nigerians embraced.

10. Prior to 2015, APC governed 14 States. PDP ruled 21 States and enjoyed the sympathy of APGA-controlled Anambra. Jonathan was confident of smoothly winning with incumbency power and enormous state resources. Buhari however won convincingly in the North, including States hitherto under PDP, made an impressive inroad into the South-West geopolitical zone, and has controlling majority in the National Assembly. Jonathan conceded defeat.

(b) Worrisome Signals: APC Legislators and 8th National Assembly

11. Early disturbing signals beamed from the APC as its legislators, in an open split within the ranks of the party in the National Assembly with the emergence of two tendencies: "The Like Minds" and "Unity Forum", clamouring for leadership positions of the 8th National Assembly. Undoubtedly, this is a tottering take-off by the party on a salvage mission of 'Change'. In a mock election on the eve of the 8th National Assembly, the party endorsed and agreed on Ahmad Lawan instead of Bukola Saraki as its candidate for Senate President. However, Bukola Saraki, who was adamant about his quest for the position, vowed to contest on the floor of the Senate! President Buhari maintained neutrality. Due to poor strategy, most APC Senators, including Ahmad Lawan, were absent when the Senate convened as scheduled for inauguration and election of its leaders. Bukola Saraki, having "secured" prior clandestine nod of PDP Senators the previous evening, emerged "unopposed", as Senate President. More worrisome for APC and intriguing to Nigerians was the emergence of Ike Ekweremandu of PDP as Deputy Senate President, a position he held in the 7th National Assembly. APC has obviously committed a faux-pas.



12. Similarly Yakubu Dogara, who was not endorsed by the Party as its candidate, emerged Speaker of the House of Representatives. Senator Ahmad Lawan and Hon Femi Gbajabiamila, endorsed party candidates who lost, have rallied behind the winners, a ray of hope for fence-mending. However, the division and controversy undermined people's confidence in APC regarding "change", democracy and good governance.

13. Reaffirming adherence to constitutional provision, Buhari asserted willingness to work with the leadership of the National Assembly. This positive stance will hopefully compel the APC leadership to rethink the issue of permutation and imposition of candidates.

14. Zoning is another disturbing signal which is a potential danger to implosion of APC and failure of its administration. The idea of reward, muted and pursued by some APC chieftains based on weighted votes for Buhari by geo-political zones, is counter-productive. Such a strategy may be divisive for a president of all Nigerians. The in-fighting by APC signifies weakness which has definite implications. It may impair its delivery and be seen by the people as betrayal of their confidence and mandate. Cohesiveness is required to strengthen and deepen democracy in Nigeria.

15. Although the APC leadership at all levels seems conscious of the implications of the divergent views and pursuit of individual agenda rather than corporate party interest, the non-resolution of the crisis caused by the election of Saraki and Dogara, against party wishes forebodes danger for the cohesion of the party going forward. It also portends danger for Buhari's ability to fully carry out his change agenda as continuing intra-APC conflict could impede the effective functioning of the National Assembly. If the crisis is also linked to positioning for the 2019 presidential elections, as some believe is the case, it might be more difficult to resolve the crisis expeditiously.

16. In this respect, the fracas that occurred in the House of Representatives on 25 June 2015, and the election of three of the four remaining principal officers in the Senate from outside the endorsed party candidates shows clearly that the rift within the party is deepening and is likely to take considerable efforts to mend. It also shows that the fight for influence and power by the different cleavages or tendencies within the party is intensifying and could lead to dangerous consequences for the party and the Nation.

17. There is apparent conflict between some APC leaders and Bola Tinubu, erstwhile leader of the ACN, whose personal ambition to exert and extend his control, which prevailed in some parts of the South West, particularly in Lagos, to the national level is being

checkmated. This is evidenced in the fact that, working through the Party Chairman, John Odigie-Oyegun, Tinubu prevented the Party from adopting a zoning system and has, in the name of party discipline and supremacy, imposed on the National Assembly, a list of his surrogates for all the principal offices of the Legislature. His failure to secure the post of the Senate President and Speaker of the House for his trusted lieutenants and surrogates, as well as, the resistance he and his group have met in the election of the remaining principal officers of the National Assembly, are clearly manifest signals and attempts by others in the party to checkmate him.

18. Among those who are speculated to be determined to whittle the larger than life image of Tinubu as the so-called APC National Leader include former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, Bukola Saraki and former Speaker of the House of Representatives, now Governor of Sokoto, Aminu Tambuwal. These three are late defectors to APC from PDP. They are apparently now pulling their forces together but with divergent objectives and reasons. It should be recalled that Tinubu played a prominent role during the party primaries in preventing Atiku Abubakar from clinching the APC Presidential ticket, and has also been against the ambition of Saraki for higher offices. Apparently, it is payback time for Tinubu for such acts and for leading the charge that saw Tambuwal and Emeka Ihedioha elected Speaker and Deputy Speaker in 2011, against the decision of the PDP to zone the Speaker to the South West. This, it is now known, had tragic consequences for Jonathan's re-election bid, as the Zone, which more or less ensured his victory in 2011, did not have anyone in a senior position at the national level.



19. There are also clear signs that the in-fighting is linked to positioning for succession to Buhari who may not seek a second term in 2019. Apparently, Atiku, Saraki and Tambuwal can work together at this stage, since it is expected that the North will insist on completing a second term but their individual ambitions are likely to clash later on. Thus, Saraki, Dogara and their supporters are fully supported by this group, but in the name of “democracy and the doctrine of separation of power”!

20. In all of this, it is not yet clear where President Buhari stands. He has indicated that he would have preferred that the Party choice for the offices be respected but was prepared to work with the team that was elected following “some process”. He seems pained that the squabble has gone on for too long but has now clearly indicated that the Party directive should prevail. However, some are of the opinion that it is to the advantage of President Buhari if Tinubu’s wings and influence are clipped as it will allow him a freer hand to govern the country.

21. The implications of the struggle between Tinubu and his opponents, if not contained early, will have serious repercussions for the party, Buhari’s presidency and the Nation, by making legislative work difficult, and resulting in some re-alignments within the party. A sustained marginalization of Tinubu can also adversely affect those with Presidential ambition. Perhaps, the realization that they need Tinubu to succeed as he needs them to thrive may lead to a closing of ranks. The one month recess for the National Assembly will provide the time for discussion, reflection, introspection and perhaps reconciliation. In the meantime, the PDP is the main beneficiary of the squabble within the APC, securing a major post of Deputy Senate President and waiting for other benefits to follow.

(c) Buhari Cabinet and Key Appointments

22. Besides obtaining clearance for the appointment of 15 Special Assistants, Buhari is biding his time to constitute his cabinet, appoint the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, (SGF) and his Chief of Staff. He would shortly seek Senate confirmation for his ministerial nominees. It is expected that he would recognize the implied strength in Nigeria’s diversity and accommodate most interests. His adherence to this pledge and respect for constitutional provision of federal character would be met by his acceptance of his Transition Committee’s recommendation of a cabinet of 19 Ministers and 17 Ministers of State. Buhari is determined to restructure and reduce the number of ministries, ensure a thorough background check of prospective ministers and select people in whom he has confidence and can work with. Buhari has resisted the imposition of candidates by APC governors and other party leaders. Recalling that he allowed the party to select his running mate, it is reasonable to expect Buhari to rally the support of his party to constitute a coherent team.



(d) Expectations of Nigerians from APC Government

23. Democratic governance is being consolidated in Nigeria. Jonathan conceded defeat and Buhari has assumed office. The strategy for "change" is being activated. Impoverished Nigerians quietly endured their dwindling fortune in a nation endowed with varied but poorly managed natural resources. Expectations are high, and rightly so.

24. Buhari, conscious of the prevailing atmosphere, has wisely underscored three priorities; insecurity, corruption and economy. No miracle is expected overnight. However, the APC initially tasked members of its Transition Committee to suggest how to quickly respond to people's yearnings. Buhari wants "quick fixes" for perceptible results in short, medium and long term. The countdown has commenced.

25. Buhari's undertaking to update Nigerians regularly on progress in governance and development of infrastructure is commendable. It will engender understanding, sustained support and trust if his government adopts a well structured and informative briefing of Nigerians on the activities of his Government and team

26. Conscious of people's expectations, Buhari has acknowledged the herculean task of persuading Nigerians that change overnight is impossible. Indeed, the parlous state of the economy, despite enormous revenues earned since 1999, unemployment, dwindling resources and collapsed infrastructure, militate against such expectations.

(e) Security of Life and Property: Boko Haram Insurgency

27. Boko Haram insurgency in North-East Nigeria, which Jonathan admittedly underestimated, is on Buhari's front burner. The insurgents have committed indescribable atrocities, and kidnapped over 200 Chibok school girls in April 2014, stirring national and international opprobrium. Buhari is pained, and considers it a disgrace, that the Nigerian military that earned respect for their international performances, failed to secure the affected local governments.



28. However, peace-keeping abroad and fighting terrorism at home are different things. The latter requires requisite training and appropriate equipment for the military. Buhari has enlisted external support and synchronized operations with neighbouring countries to deny safe haven for fleeing insurgents. Nevertheless Buhari recently said that the answer to defeating Boko Haram begins and ends with Nigeria.

29. Buhari admits that fundamentalism is alluring to starving youth; offer of food and promise of money twist their minds with fanaticism. He therefore considers boosting education as counterbalance to Boko Haram appeal and a powerful weapon to change the prevailing poverty in north-eastern Nigeria. Education, infrastructure and employment are therefore his focus in the affected areas.

30. On 29 May 2015, Buhari ordered the military to relocate its operational command to the theatre of action. He also underscored determination to rescue the Chibok girls. Furthermore Buhari's diplomatic outing to Niger and Chad, with focus on joint multi-national response against insurgency is reassuring. His participation at the G7 (Germany) and the African Union (South Africa) Summits in June 2015 and imminent visit to Cameroun, are strategic. The release of US\$21million out of the US\$100m pledge to the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) demonstrates his commitment to the multilateral approach to fighting terrorism.

31. Buhari, one-time governor of old North-Eastern State, has a track record. He once firmly dealt with Maitatsine Islamic extremists in Kano. Similarly, he restored order in the currently embattled North-East Nigeria when, as GOC (General Officer Commanding) 3rd Army Division, he decisively repelled marauding Chadian rebels in 1982/83. Expectations are therefore high that he should re-enact his historic exploits. While his predecessor failed, Nigerians expect him actually to find the culprits and sponsors of Boko Haram and bring them to justice. Hopes are high that the Police and Security Services would enhance proactive intelligence to stem further threat to the citizens and foreign residents.

(f) Corruption

32. Buhari's second priority campaign promise is anti-corruption fight, with his acclaimed zero-tolerance to the menace. Corruption, rampant in Nigeria, is a threat to democracy, weakening legitimacy and credibility, and threatens political authority. Consequently, national institutions should be strengthened. Civil society and human rights organizations have an important role in the anti-corruption fight. Buhari is certain to prosecute and punish corrupt high-ranking government officials. However, the challenge is how he will handle some of his party leaders and influential members generally perceived to be corrupt or have corruption cases outstanding against them. Nigerians are watching.



(g) Economy: Unemployment

33. The third APC priority is the economy which is bedevilled by huge unemployment, declining revenue and epileptic electricity. APC postulates that sixty percent (60%) of Nigerians are youth; most of them unemployed, which is dangerous. Buhari intends to attack the problem frontally through the revival of agriculture, focus on the exploitation of solid minerals and premium attention to small and medium size businesses. APC has promised to quickly examine the best way to revive major industries and accelerate the development of railways, roads and general infrastructure and the most cost-effective way to increase power generation. All these measures will certainly boost the economy.

(h) Policy Thrust

34. Buhari seems determined to take far reaching measures to ensure a smooth take-off. He is also resolved to meet his campaign promises. NSR has learned that he plans to set up a Presidential Policy Group and Presidential Policy Delivery Unit. The Policy Dialogue held by APC late May and the Transition Committee have made some policy recommendations which may constitute Buhari's action plan. The following may form the major policy thrusts of Buhari administration:

- Emphasis on good governance and achieving prosperity, economic growth and sustained security;
- Focus on agriculture, oil and gas, solid minerals and the creative industry as the main sectors to create employment and wealth for all as well as drivers of economic growth;
- Promotion of and development of human capital and sound economic policies as enablers of economic development;
- Combating corruption, enhancing national security, reforms in foreign policy;
- Reforms in the administration of justice, protection of human rights and enhanced reform of the Public Service;
- Introduction of pro-poor and generally pro-people policies to tackle high level of poverty;
- Introduction of comprehensive electoral reforms to ensure free, fair and credible elections;
- Reduction and combating high cost of governance;
- Reform of the oil and gas sector, including the removal of oil subsidy, restructuring of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) and revival of all the refineries;



35. The foregoing policy objectives are obviously laudable. The test of Buhari's leadership will come to the fore in dealing with vested interests of party leaders and other rent seekers who have over the last sixteen years constituted themselves into powerful forces in the country. The degree of success in the implementation of these programmes would also depend on the level of cooperation from his party leadership and the cohesiveness of its members. Obviously, Buhari will be assisted in ensuring implementation of his agenda through effective monitoring by the policy delivery unit he will set up.

III. CONCLUSION

36. The successful handing over by former President Jonathan to President Buhari has brought Nigeria to a new dawn. Expectations are very high on the part of Nigerians who voted for change. There seems no doubt that the new President is considered trustworthy and would do his utmost to bring change about. However, he cannot be a one-man government as he has to work with his party, the National Assembly and a cabinet. He is taking his time to appoint the latter but needs all the help he can muster to restore unity and cohesiveness within his party and the National Assembly which are critical to the success of his administration. Nigerians are waiting patiently to see how soon the "Change" they voted for will commence.

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