

Election 2007: Let Us Vote Smart

MPAC 3-POINT WINNING STRATEGY FOR POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF THE NIGERIAN MUSLIM UMMAH



The Muslim Ummah has been raised as the best of the nations to eradicate the Munkar [evildoings] from the society and establish the Ma'roof in its place [Ref: Al-Imran -110]. The Nigerian society is infested with hundreds of evildoings all around. And they are multiplying at an enormous speed raising fear of harder times ahead. Our own sons and daughters are falling prey to these evildoings in schools, colleges and everywhere. Our homes are under its direct attack through the modern multimedia. This fact alone creates the greater need for us to engage in the political process and vote smartly to elect God fearing people to represent us and collaborate with us in enjoining what is right and establish justice for all. For instance, in the recent time the campaign to legalise same-sex marriage in Nigeria has become louder and clearer, and with its recent legalisation in South Africa, the days may be numbered in Nigeria when the perverts will themselves be the lawmakers. Also, the Federal Ministry of Justice's Nigerian Law Reform Commission recently sent a bill to the National Assembly to abolish bigamy (more appropriately polygyny). This bill specifically targets the Islamic law, if not the Muslims, because while speaking at the public presentation of the bill on 14th November, the Chairman of the Nigerian Law Reform Commission, Justice Olukayode Somolu (rtd), said that there was a need to unify customary marriage law with Islamic law on marriage. If passed into law contracting a polygynous marriage, which is allowed in Islam and even encouraged for Muslims in certain circumstances, will attract five years prison term. Thus making the crime of same-sex marriage, which now carries a 5-year jail term for offenders, and the 'crime' of polygyny equal in the eyes of the law! We can hardly count on many of the current Muslim lawmakers who directly supervised the award of huge contracts to Zionist Israel to perform any better and quash this bill. It is the religious obligation of the Muslims of Nigeria to mobilize people's opinion against different kinds of evildoings, educate them with its dire consequences on self, family and the society and build a tempo for a common fight against each

The Muslim Public Affairs Centre, MPAC, Nigeria.

email: administration@mpacng.org; media@mpacng.org

website: www.mpac-ng.org



evildoing. It is a gigantic task and needs a lot of planning, programming and resources. These are challenges that we should face in close cooperation with the non antagonistic Christian communities and (if and when we have a free, unfettered and transparent election) we should do it on greater scale both at local and national levels.

Nigeria is home to more than 75 million Muslims and this number is ever increasing due to new reverts to Islam and higher birth rate. Adult members of this huge community must enter into the mainstream of national politics by participating in the ward/local politics, involving in the humanitarian services and getting each matured Muslim and Muslimah registered as voter. At this moment we need high number of credible and balanced Muslims with track record of service and commitment to the Ummah to seek elective political offices, and not just people who will get elected on the ticket of being Muslims and then turn against Muslims and the society at large. The drive to get as many committed Muslims involved in mainstream politics should be given the shape of a well organised campaign both at local and national levels. Each member of the community is to be exhorted to the effect that his voting right is an Amanah (trust) and he or she is to use it very judiciously only for those who are worthy of it. The Muslims are to be made self-conscious of this predominant fact that their voting right is a very powerful and effective weapon to effect a change and have a say on how governance is carried out on his/her behalf which in turns ensures the provision of welfare and safety and preservation of security. It is a political muscle and they have to use it as a bargaining chip to get political strength in this country. At some time, they will have to vote in block and at some other times form political alliance with the party or group that supports views and concept that promotes Islamic interests, accountable governance for all and about fair dealings with Muslims. If Muslims are able to organise their vote and create an effective lobby, contesting parties will come to Muslims respectfully begging for their votes on promises that we can hold them accountable on. This is not a dream. We can attain it, provided we, the Muslims and especially our leadership has a will to do it.

Along with the consolidation of political power under the guidance of an enlightened God-fearing Muslim leadership, Muslims and their leadership have to do two more things to be really effective in this country. They have to build up gradually a clean funding system for our select candidates- both at local and national levels and a culture of "Muslim Volunteers" for rendering socio-political-humanitarian services. If the Nigerian Muslim leadership can prepare the community for these three functions, along with Dawah at community level by individual Muslim organisations, Muslims will, Insha Allah, enjoy a formidable future in this country.

MPAC does not take simplistic view of the Nigerian political system and we acknowledge there are many more complexities of this process in which,

The Muslim Public Affairs Centre, MPAC, Nigeria.

email: administration@mpacng.org; media@mpacng.org

website: www.mpac-ng.org



unfortunately, Muslims are active players defending only tribal, ethnic or family interests. It is not desirable at this time that we bog ourselves down with these complexities until the Muslim leadership commit themselves to some groundwork and there are vivid signs of the emergence of Muslims as a united and politically conscious community.

This is the program and the process that we advocate for Election 2007 through the Muslims for the whole people of Nigeria. If the Muslims of Nigeria do not act accordingly, they are going to get nothing out of their present state of affairs, nor will the society benefit from the values demanded of us by our faith. At present, the Muslims have no voice and no effective central leadership. But tomorrow, if the Nigerian Muslim Ummah is rejuvenated, becomes conscious of its position and stands united behind a central God-fearing command, Muslims will be the most respected people in this society as it ought to be. They will muster and use their political strength to the benefit of the society and the Ummah at large. MPAC calls on Imams, Muslim leadership, Muslim Organisations, Muslim Students, Muslim communities and Muslim masses to work together and fulfill the mission of politically motivating and organizing ourselves to become Islamically more exemplary, politically empowered and economically vibrant community. If we work together intelligently with wisdom, the scenario of Election 2007 and beyond will be quite different than what it looks today. May Allah bless all of us and give us Tawfeeq to work together as envisaged.

Allah (SWT) ordains:

"And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah [the Qur'an] and do not be divided".

The Muslim Public Affairs Centre, MPAC, Nigeria.

email: administration@mpacng.org; media@mpacng.org

website: www.mpac-ng.org