



8th International Conference of the Igbo Studies Association

**Howard University, Washington, DC
April 09-10, 2010**

COMMUNIQUE

The 2010 ISA conference, with the theme: “Nigeria at 50 – The Igbo experience,” was held in Washington DC between the 9th and 10th April at Howard University. Conference participants included scholars from universities and tertiary institutions and leaders from community organizations, media personnel, clergy/religious, and professionals from the United States, Nigeria, and Europe. The Conference addressed various aspects of Igbo studies within the context of the conference theme including religion, political power, migration, leadership, economic development and female/gender empowerment.

From the outset the conference addressed issues of peace and security in Ala Igbo and how the current reality of insecurity impacts Igbo social and economic development. The conference generally agreed that Ndi Igbo are still at the margins of social and political life in Nigeria. The appraisal of the Igbo condition in the last 50 years surely raised other issues such as: the identity crisis, community supremacy, health, environment, and Igbo social control.

Conferees agreed on the urgent need to address these conditions in order to re-position the Igbo in Nigerian national politics. The Conference condemned the recent unjustifiable killings and loss of property in Jos, Nigeria, along with the rampant kidnappings for ransom in Southeastern Nigeria, and calls on all stakeholders to take immediate proper steps to safeguard life and property as well as ensure peace and security in the country.

The conference RECOGNIZED:

- That a major challenge for this generation of Ndi Igbo is the absence of a development agenda at home for the Igbo, and that this should be identified and publicized urgently to ensure that all Igbo leaders are constantly informed.
- That the greatness of the Igbo is anchored on the verifiable achievement of the people. Issues of culture, religion and civilization rekindled the questions of progress, continuity and change in Ala Igbo.

- That the Igbo language is a major tool for inter-personal communication and Igbo culture as the vehicle for Igbo renewal, and called for the adoption of Igbo language as the working language of the organization.
- That the Igbo in the Diaspora should ensure that their children become immersed in Igbo language and culture.
- That the Igbo Farm Village under construction in Virginia, USA, is a noble venture for which all Igbo should enthusiastically and generously support.
- That proper education of our children – the future generation – should be a priority to ensure the survival/revival of Igbo history, tradition, language, and core values.
- That ISA acknowledges the goodwill message from the President-General of Oha-na-eze in support of ISA, and we pledge to work collaboratively with the body for the cause.
- That the Igbo need transformational leaders, skillful and resourceful entrepreneurs and a vibrant, participatory political culture to drive the Igbo agenda.

The conference also RESOLVED:

- That an Igbo Language Academy should be established as a matter of urgency with functions analogous to what Professor Ihechukwu Madubuike spelt out in his paper.
- That close attention should be paid to Igbo migration, specifically, the implication of brain-drain, and the animosities associated with Igbo cohabitation with host communities in other climes.
- That Ndigbo should eschew self denigrating behavior and work to project the best of Igbo culture and values as suggested by the keynote speaker, Senator Uche Chukwumerije.
- That a volunteer committee of about five people be set up to work on evidence available on the recent killings in the North for prosecution at the state or country level at The Hague, if need be.
- That the theme of the 2011 ISA conference in Washington DC should be “NKIRUKA” to consider the future of Igbo within the Nigerian state.
- That the 2010 Conference Planning Committee did a fantastic job and was, therefore, unanimously asked to organize the 2011 conference with Professor

Apollos Nwauwa as conference chair. Mrs Lucy Apakama and Dr Victor Ukaogo were elected as additional Nigeria-based committee members.

Signed,

2010 Conference Planning Committee

- Professor Apollos Nwauwa, Chair
- Professor Michael Mbanaso, Member
- Professor Chima Korieh, Member
- Professor Douglas Chambers, Member
- Professor Emeka Obiozor, Member
- Dr. Kanayo Odeluga, Member
- Dr Paul Onovoh, Member
- Professor Ernest Uwazie, *ex-officio*