

A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE WORLD OWERRI PEOPLES CONGRESS AT THE END OF ITS 8TH ANNUAL CONVENTION HELD AT MARRIOT HOTEL (ROUNDROCK) AUSTIN TEXAS JULY 18TH TO JULY 20TH IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 2008

“TIME TO UPLIFT & TO STRENGTHEN THE UNITY OF THE CONGRESS”

The World Owerri Peoples Congress, a core Owerri organization that comprises of indigenes of the three local government areas of Owerri in Diaspora held its 8th Annual Convention in Austin Texas from July 18th to July 20th, 2008. Many dignitaries from Nigeria and all over different parts of the nation were present at the convention. The Chairman of the convention Mr. Jude Chika Ejiogu who also graced the occasion from Nigeria made a brief but yet an empirical speech. In his speech, Mr. Ejiogu appealed for peace, unity and progress among all Owerri people in Diaspora. He commended on the theme of the convention ”Time to Uplift and to Strengthen the Unity of the Congress” which he said behooves all members to adopt positive behavioral pattern and actions which will make a positive impact on our collective interests and aspiration as a people. Mr. Ejiogu further advised all present to promote and project those positive values for which an Owerri man is proudly known for. In a nutshell he emphasized we all embrace truthfulness and honesty to ourselves as a way forward.

The Keynote Speaker, Pastor Eric Abakporo Esq. In his opening statement re-iterated Detoro of the (Christian Holy Book called Bible) chapter 19: 14 “Remove not the landmark of your people”. The ancient and current delusion of an Owerri man Pastor Abakporo said are the following.

- A. Ama wu eze (Everybody is a leader and none is a follower or a supporter of a leader)
- B. Igbo amaa eze (An Owerri man doesn't recognize and respect the royalty and the symbol of a leader and a ruler)
- C. Itee ahu iji eshirim rii kuuwaa ya (This also signified lack of respect and loyalty of our people to their leaders)

According to the keynote speaker, these are some of proud ancient and present belief that had repeatedly defiled our collective success. Pastor Abakporo re-emphasized our current chance to do the right thing among us and for our people. He further appealed to all to consider and to implement the following

- A. Recognition, emulation and encouragement of the achievement of our people
- B. Strategize and mobilize ample campaign time for elective offices of our State and our Nation
- C. Purposeful planning and mobilization of our youths back home for gainful employment with maximum utilization of right investment and project by the congress that will ensure such activities
- D. Respect for our leaders and respect for each other

Pastor Abakporo ended his speech with Detoro chapter 20:10 “Even in the midst of war you must proclaim peace”

His Royal Highness, Eze Sonde Okoro, Eze Omenyi II of Emii autonomous community also graced his presence from Nigeria. His Highness commented on **OBIAWUTOISM**, a hindering tool to the progress of the Owerri man. A sore result of OBIAWUTOISM, his highness said is the inability of an Owerri man to secure the governor's seat of Imo State since its creation in 1976. Despite the fact that Owerri is strategically located at the centre of Igbo nation with abundant wisdom, intellectual power and God's immerse love, the lack of unity among Nde Owerri had repeatedly denied us political, social and economic relevance in the Imo State governance. Eze Omenyi advised all to join

forces to enable harness our manpower, our resources and our intellectual power to develop our area. He also commended and congratulated RT. Hon. Ernest Ibejiako (Nwa Ndaa) who he described as the only nwaafor Owerri that's truly representing our people in the federal constituency. His highness reported that Hon. Ibejiakor had the following achievement worth emulating and worth commending:

1. Empowered the widows and the jobless youths across the three local government areas of Owerri Municipal, Owerri North and Owerri West
2. Sponsored a bill in Nigeria Federal House of Representative to increase the numbers of seats in both state and national assemblies to enhance effective representation of our people

Eze Omenyi advised that the congress should prepare and have a good plan in place for the 2011, Imo State governorship position which had been agreed for an Owerri native to occupy. He further thanked and acknowledged the receipt of **\$4000.00** that was contributed by the congress to assist the Emii community in their efforts to renovate their health centre.

In a Keynote address of His Excellency, Chief Ikedi Ohakim, the Governor of Imo State of Nigeria which he presented through Hon. Dr. Aguwa. The commissioner of Petroleum & Gas in a message titled "Living Abroad, thinking home, optimizing the Diaspora Experience" Governor Ohakim described Owerri indigenes as engine room to the economy of Imo State and asked all to show support in the determination to transform Imo State to a model modern state. Governor Ohakim encouraged the Diasporas to visit home more often and to sensitize our cultural heritage to our children which he said will enable future generation to reside in Nigeria, citing an example with the livelihood of the Jews living in foreign lands. His Excellency encouraged all to be part of the rapid good changes which could only be achieved by our direct active input, efforts and participation.

The Nigeria Stock Exchange Director Mr. Henry Uzoma Onyekuru made a detailed presentation on the stock and investment opportunities in Nigeria capital market. Mr. Onyekuru stressed on the following

1. Stock investment options and portfolios
2. The overview of the Nigeria capital market
3. The role of the capital market as a vehicle for capital mobilization and allocation
4. The need to invest in Nigeria capital market
(Refer to wopc.org for detail)

The congress agreed and achieved the following:

1. The WOPC rectified Constitution/Bylaws was adopted by simple majority vote of the congress members
2. The adopted constitution was signed by members of constitution review committee
3. The Mid Atlantic Chapter was agreed to host the WOPC 9th Annual Convention

Mr. Kester Chiekezinwa Atumonyogo
(General Secretary - WOPC)