

**WELCOME SPEECH DELIVERED BY PROTEM NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, MR. TOPE FASUA, AT THE 1ST POST-REGISTRATION NATIONAL CONGRESS, HELD AT EAGLE SQUARE, ABUJA, ON THE 17TH OF FEBRUARY, 2018**

ANRP – ABUNDANT NIGERIA! ABUNDANT NIGERIA – THIS IS OUR OWN

ANRP – RENEWAL, RENAISSANCE, RESPECT

Members of the Protem National Executive Committee, Distinguished contestants for our national EXCO positions Members of our great party worldwide here present, Distinguished guests, Observers and invitees, Ladies and gentlemen.

I welcome you in my capacity as Protem National Chairman and Chief Servant of our great party, Nigeria's game-changer and the FIRST FORCE, the Abundant Nigeria Renewal Party (ANRP); a party of destiny and divine existence, a party established on honesty, transparency, accountability, equality, equity, justice, egalitarianism, respect, diligence, service, global best practices, and by all means, the urgency of now.

My role here today is to update you with our stewardship so far, as we transit into another epoch in our journey.

Our party was first conceived on the 16th of December, 2016. We did some things differently from any other party in Nigeria. And in many respects we were the first in Nigeria.

We threw membership open. We documented our membership and made our numbers open to the world. We refused to cave in to the usual ways of doing things which sees nothing wrong with lying to the world. We recognized the power of transparency and integrity and entrenched them in our culture. We involved everyone who chose to join us. We interacted, creating more than 250 WhatsApp and Telegrams groups and counting. We listened to and replied hundreds of thousands of enquiries. We coopted everyone's assistance and input in forming and building up the essential documentations, ideology, ethos and culture that formed the superstructure of the institution. We are becoming Nigeria's model party; setting records while our peers are still trying to mimic the old ways of doing things. We have followed global best standards and are doing very well at it.

As we gather today, we urge us all to conduct ourselves with the highest levels of decorum and to remember our respect ethos. Our conduct towards each other and the outside world is what tells us

apart from those who have not joined the party. We shall be electing national officers today, and setting the standards for all our states, local governments and wards to follow. In a few weeks time we shall be commencing state congresses and the process will be repeated. We seek everyone's cooperation. As you can see, we are not like other parties. It is also important to note that our National Exco members are not paid. Not even sitting allowances. All roles are performed on a pro bono basis. The same situation is maintained at other levels till further notice.

We have put everything you see here together on a shoestring budget, and have had to negotiate every expense item down to the bone in order to make this happen. We are making a statement even with the choice of this location; Eagle Square, but we are not arrogant about it. We have done our best within our limits to assist most of our members to come from the states and from Abuja and its environ, but we have had to appeal to our sense of responsibility, patriotism and sacrifice. We do not have access to state funds or taxpayers' money like some other parties, and if we do, we do not believe in spending such monies cavalierly on party affairs as has been the practice. To bring each person from outside Abuja to this venue and back has cost the party an average of N20,000 – including cost of lodgment and some feeding. It has been an arduous task for the organizing committee and our treasury to handle.

#### A PARTY'S CULTURE AND THE GENERAL SOCIETY.

One of the core lessons we have learnt in this journey so far is that a political party would usually export its culture to the larger society if it is given a chance to form government at any level or if it wins any position. This underlines the importance of political parties. The several travails, challenges and trials of Nigeria under its staggered democracies since independence can be directly linked to the cultures of its ruling parties. We must guard our party's culture of honesty, transparency, simplicity, frugality, friendship, cooperation, very jealously, because we are the custodians of this culture. This party must never become another rancorous, ego-driven, party where members spend most of their time plotting against each other rather than planning on how the nation can forge ahead through the ability of the party to generate implementable ideas and follow through. The political space in Nigeria is therefore in a total state of chaos as we speak.

We need to note another of our firsts; we are the first party – aside from the large duo – to hold our National Congress in this location. We have not hired any crowd but are working with members from all over Nigeria. You will not find anyone after this event, complaining that they were picked from the roadsides and promised a certain amount for attending this event. We don't even have any money to give anyone. It will take some time for a new political culture to sink in in Nigeria, and the poverty level is shocking as our people have been dehumanized, but we have started the journey. More so, we are the first party in Nigeria, to conduct elections of national officers immediately after being certified. Some people take delight in nitpicking and hairsplitting, and asking for the impossible. We are not interested in

kowtowing to every demand by our traducers, but we have embarked on a journey here.

They say the best time to plant a tree is ten years ago, but the next best time, is today. Today, we have commenced a journey of building the foundations of the party by establishing our national exco on a sound footing. Part of our regulator's concern about existing parties, is that most of them are still running with interim national exco members years after they were certified. The officers of most parties are just sitting tight. Their parties have refused to grow.

Some people are talking about mergers and coalitions. Our belief in ANRP is that a party, just like any institution, is judged by the size and quality of its balance sheet and cash flow, whenever coalitions and mergers are being discussed. The asset side of a political party balance sheet consists of its membership base, its structures – especially properly elected officers as well as branches, its goodwill, and its culture. The cash flow status of a party is its ability to generate funds based on its balance sheet structure. A party that does not establish among its members the need to chip in and ensure the party is afloat has missed the road. Many of such parties are still begging government for funding, on one hand, while on the other, they resist any attempt to rate them for viability. At ANRP we have seen far ahead, and will be standardizing and intensifying our cash flow drive through our crowdfunding initiative so as to continue our trajectory of growth.

We urge members of the public who are watching from afar, to come closer and be part of this great movement. Nigeria has absolutely no time again to waste.

## **THE SOCIETY AND ECONOMY**

ANRP is a national party. We believe in the unity – not the disintegration of Nigeria. We believe that we can still make Nigeria work and take its pride of place in the committee of nations. We believe that insincerity and selfishness is at the bottom of many of the existential crisis that Nigeria faces today, and that good governance is a sure panacea.

We believe that Nigeria can be a much better country to live in our lifetime, and that like India and China, the world's most populous countries, Nigeria too can begin to take millions out of poverty. We believe that taking millions of Nigerians out of extreme poverty can only make our nation a lot more prosperous. We believe that Nigerians could be a lot more productive than we are presently and are prepared to work towards that. We believe that it is unacceptable for 83million out of 180million Nigerians to live in extreme poverty, or for 15million children to be out of school. We believe that Nigeria can take 50million of its citizens out of crass poverty in four years of committed, selfless, visionary, and truthful leadership at all levels. We believe that Nigeria can drastically cut the waste of public funds for

which it is globally famous, and that our citizens can be shown the beauty of fulfilling their obligations to the society in which they live, by being good citizens, by refraining from vandalization of public property, by paying taxes, rates, fees, fines and all that is due to society, and by being their brothers' keeper. We believe that the same blood flows in our veins irrespective of our ancestry; that we are one before God, and that we are united by our humanity. We believe that Nigerians need to elevate their humanity. We believe that leaders MUST lead by example; because anything else aside from that is self-deceit. We believe!!

And so as we deliberate, conduct our elections, entertain and get entertained, interact and meet with friends from all over Nigeria, and also ruminates and meditates about the state of our nation, I welcome us once again and invite us to consider the enormity of the tasks on our shoulders, not only as ANRP members – members of Nigeria's first force political party and new beginning – but as mere citizens of a country flailing in crisis, reduced in the eyes of the world, infamous for its under achievements, compromises and letdowns. I urge us all to have in our minds, the URGENCY OF NOW, the IMMEDIACY OF PERSONAL SACRIFICE and the AUDACITY of our legitimate aspiration for a Nigeria that simply works.

We are ABUNDANT NIGERIA RENEWAL PARTY for a reason. We know that Nigeria is abundant, in material, natural, and most importantly human resources. We believe that everything Nigeria needs in order to be great and for its people to command respect in the comity of nations is in this square today.

We believe our best products are here, our best ideas, our best innovation, our best thinkers, our best artists, scientists, world-changers and world-beaters. I urge us all, to always think of being part of the solution, to be ready to make the necessary personal sacrifices for our nation, for humanity and for God. I urge us all to do this, for we are the ones we, and our nation, have been waiting for.

Go forth, go forthwith, and RENEW NIGERIA into its default state of ABUNDANCE!

I thank you all for listening.

TOPE FASUA is the National Chairman of the Abundant Nigeria Renewal Party