



Political Empowerment of the Nigerian Muslim Ummah

A 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 [evildoing] from the society and establish the Ma'roof in its place [Ref: Al-Imran -110]. The Nigerian society is infested with hundreds of evildoing all around. And they are multiplying at an enormous speed raising fear of harder times ahead. Our sons and daughters are falling prey to these evildoing 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. But there are many more legitimate reasons to do so.

Nigeria is home to more than 75 million Muslims and this number is ever increasing due to new revert 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, involve in the humanitarian services and get each matured Muslim and Muslim registered as voter. At this moment we need high number of credible and resourceful Muslims with track record of service and commitment to the Ummah to seek elective political offices. Your political actions, including voting, may change the fate of our country, and keep the criminals out of elective offices. 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. Your vote should not be cast on the basis of money, community, ethnicity, family and tribe but as an asset to be given to pious people. 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. When we vote we can make the government better or worse, and by extension make people's condition better or worse. It is a political muscle and

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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 for all Nigerians. 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 unfortunately, Muslims are active players in defending selfish, tribal, ethnic or family interests- any interest except the public interests. It is not desirable at this time that we bog ourselves down with these complexities until the Muslim leadership commit itself 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 all elections. At present, the Muslims have no strong voice politically. 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 fulfil the mission of politically motivating and organizing ourselves to become Islamically more exemplary,

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politically empowered and economically vibrant community. If we work together intelligently with wisdom, the scenario of our elections will be quite different than what it looks today. May Allah bless all of us and give us the grace 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".

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