

EDO NATIONAL ASSOCIATION IN THE AMERICAS, INC

16th Annual National Convention
Hilton Hotel and Conference Center
Seattle, Washington, USA

August 31 – September 2, 2007

COMMUNIQUE

The Edo National Association in the Americas, Inc. (ENA), the umbrella association for all Edo speaking people in North America, held its 16th annual convention in Seattle, Washington, from August 31 through September 2, 2007. This year's convention was hosted by Edo-Delta Union of the Pacific Northwest and chaired by Mr. Felix A. Idahosa, their current President.

In attendance were notable dignitaries including government representatives, intellectuals, business persons and many distinguished Edo sons and daughters from all over the World. The notable dignitaries included Mr. Lucky Imasuen, Deputy Governor of Edo State, Dr. (Mrs.) A. P. Osemwenkha, Honorable Commissioner of Commerce and Industry, Justice J. O. Olubor, President, Customary Court of Appeals, Benin City, and Barrister Jude E. Nosagie, Chairman/CEO, Precious Palm Royal Hotel, Benin City. Also present were members of the Council of Presidents (COP), made up of presidents of member organizations, many former Chairmen of COP, Officers of the ENA and members of various organizations.

The convention included such events as lectures, speeches and a town hall meeting, all focused on the convention theme; COP meeting to deliberate on internal matters affecting the ENA; and business activities that included information sessions and strategies. The convention also included many social events that presented opportunities for participants to mingle and socialize, like the customary cultural and gala dance, and of course, children's events, designed to prepare the next generation of ENA. The children's events were expanded this year to include a Children's Fashion Show which was very successful and very entertaining.

The theme of this year's convention was "Unity in Diversity." Two keynote speeches, "Unity in Diversity: What Edos can do to remain united and strong in the new political dispensation" and "Historical relationship between Bini and Esan people" were delivered by Dr. Steven Ogbonmwan and Dr. Jim Akhere, respectively. Dr. Moses Osaghae moderated the town hall meeting that explored "Critical Issues affecting Edo State." At the end of these events and attendant deliberations, the ENA acknowledged that while it is the legitimate role of government to provide security, public health and welfare, and institute enabling policies, ENA does, however, recognize the need for Edo people to help themselves. ENA further resolved that:

1. In keeping with the theme of the convention, ENA recognizes the need for the creation of one global umbrella organization for all Edo persons in the Diaspora, to be used as a platform from which to advocate programs of concern to Edo people in the Diaspora, and (programs) of importance to Edo people in Nigeria.
2. The Edo people need and welcome government involvement in their lives, to work in collaboration with the private sector to restart and drive the economy, ensure continuing growth and provide employment for our teeming youth. The ENA on its part promises to continue to complement the efforts of Government.

3. Appeals to citizens to support the government's quest for reparation, especially, its demand from the Federal Government for fair and adequate compensation for areas damaged by the activities of prospecting and drilling for crude oil. The effects of the damage are obvious.
4. Edo people should be educated and informed to recognize when government is failing, and to demand accountability and results from government so that future governments are aware of their obligations and are tuned to our expectations.
5. Proposes the creation of an Edo State Think Tank, to be administered by completely independent third party organizations, as a repository of successful ideas. Such group must include democratic and regional organizations like the ENA.
6. Institute panels to explore and determine the cause of repetitive ineffective governments and avoid the legacy of electing such governments.
7. Applauds the appointment of an ENA liaison officer to improve communication between the ENA, also the spokes-organization for all Edo people in the America, and the government. This should ensure the prompt delivery of democratic opinions, suggestions and vetted ideas of ENA members.
8. Advises leaders to be purposeful, fair and firm in the discharge of the duties of the office for which they are (or deemed to have been) elected. Such attitude should prevent the gross ineptitude and discourage the pervasive graft that permeated past governments.
9. Enjoins the government to re-socialize the Edo people by championing the gradual re-introduction of structured but not dictatorial discipline into the culture while emphasizing attitudes that encourage collective good rather than personal aggrandizement.
10. Appeals to the government and the Edo people to cooperate with Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in its investigation of unprecedented thievery of the immediate past government of Mr. Lucky Igbinedion. ENA regrets that Mr. Igbinedion's singular innovation, during his term in office, was doing absolutely nothing of public value while the state's treasury was aggressively looted.
11. Current government should investigate the privatization and sale of government companies under immediate past government especially the pharmaceutical and fertilizer companies. The ENA laments the lack of transparency in the process of the sales.
12. ENA is painfully aware of the deplorable states of security, infrastructure, and education due to unprecedented government neglect, fraudulent practices, and massive embezzlement, but she however appeals to citizens to give current government time to implement its programs.
13. Finally, ENA is gladdened by the awards given to deserving individuals in areas of health care, commerce, industry and education, for their foresight and selfless service.

May GOD Bless Edo State, Edo People and Nigeria. *Oba Khato Okpere, Ise!*