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# **RE-BRANDING Nigeria**



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**HOW DO YOU RE-BRAND PRODUCT NIGERIA THAT IS MADE UP OF THE FOLLOWING INGREDIENTS?**

**AN EXECUTIVE** that is corrupt and unjust. **A LEGISLATURE** that is a mere stamp of the Executive. **A JUDICIARY** that twists justice in favour of the rich and the powerful. **A POLITICAL CLASS** that has no focus. **TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS** that are becoming politicised. **CLERGYMEN** who are preoccupied with making money from politicians and not preaching the words of God. **ORDINARY CITIZENS** who have forgotten the virtues of honesty and holding trust and engage in dishonesty, cheating and fronting for corrupt leaders. **YOUTHS** who are addicted to alcohol and drugs and serve as political thugs. **LABOURERS** who mangle at work and sometimes steal the working tools entrusted in their care. **CONTRACTORS** who inflate contract sums tenfold. **MERCHANTS** who profiteer instead of making lawful profits. **BLACK MARKETERS** who hoard essential commodities. **MASONS** who steal the cement given to them to work at construction sites. **FARM WORKERS** who steal the produce on their employers' fields. **DRIVERS** who siphon fuel from their masters' cars. **SHOP ATTENDANTS** who misappropriate the sales proceeds. **SECURITY MEN** who connive with thieves to steal from their masters' compounds. **POLICEMEN AND SOLDIERS** who have not been able to contain insecurity. **LECTURERS AND STUDENTS** who are cultists and engage in examination malpractices. **BANDITS, INSURGENTS AND MILITANTS** who do whatever they like without any hindrance.

# **REBRANDING NIGERIA: THE ISSUES AT STAKE**

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## **PREFACE**

### **THE LAUNCHING OF THE PROJECT: "REBRANDING NIGERIA"**

The launching by the Federal Government of a "**Rebranding Nigeria**" project was met with a barrage of uncomplimentary media comments. For example, as at 8.49 pm (local time), May 4, 2009, an advanced Yahoo Internet search revealed that 70,300 articles were posted on various Websites on the project. Over 90% of the articles dismissed it as another political gimmick to distract people's attention from the horrendous problems bedevilling the nation. Commentators seem to adjudge the project as a failure even before its take-off. The following quotations depict the high level of scepticism on it:-

THE ECONOMIST ([www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com)); April 30, 2009:-

"A new joke is doing the rounds in Nigeria. Got a problem with your car, or your generator has stopped working? Don't fix it! Rebrand it! The grim humour reflects scepticism about a national rebranding campaign launched by the government to bring tourists and foreign investment to Nigeria, and generally to buff up the country's image. The campaign's slogan is "Nigeria: Good People, Great Nation"."

DAILY TRUST EDITORIAL; February 19, 2009:-

"...Yes, today when you mention Nigeria to foreigners, the 419 image is the first that will come to their mind. This will be followed quickly by the image of corrupt leaders who have been looting an otherwise naturally endowed nation. Then the recurrent socio-economic or religious crises that have become unfortunately

regular and bloodier will follow. With all these negative images to conquer, where will the re-branding of Nigeria begin, and where will it end?"

UGOCHUKU EJINKEONYE in [www.gamji.com](http://www.gamji.com). April 7, 2009:-

"We always want to seek a shot-cut to glory by seeking to purchase a good image. How can any nation hope to re-brand itself in a vacuum, with practically nothing to showcase? Will the potential tourist or investor simply start rushing down to Nigeria because of one meaningless slogan when the verdict of Country Risk Analysts about this same country remains alarming?"

CAPTAIN DANIEL OMALE in Leadership Newspaper, March 27, 2009:-

"Most news items and advertisements on the radio and television these days are about the urgent quest to rebrand Nigeria. The question is: how do we rebrand this country in the face of our self-made adversities? Corruption is the root and stem of our existence; it is endemic and pandemic and we believe that through rhetoric we can rebrand Nigeria?"

AMINA IBRAHIM in Daily Trust Newspaper Letters, March 24, 2009:-

"In helping to enhance our national image and rekindle our patriotism, Nigeria's Minister of Information is trying to rebrand Nigeria. But then, will the rebranding succeed with the do or die attitude to politics by politicians? Will it stop electoral malpractices and thuggery? Will it enhance the rule of law and its application? Will it help the anti-graft agencies fight corruption at all levels? Will it change the perception, especially among the rich, that laws are supposed to be obeyed only by the poor and ordinary

Nigerians and not by members of the Executive, Legislature and the Judiciary?"

DR. PAMELA RUTLEDGE in the Media Psychology Blog, April 10, 2009:-

"Nigeria (and any nation) needs a new approach in the current environment. A new slogan, catchy song, and opulent video footage won't do the trick in an age where regular people can talk to regular people without official intervention or institutional intermediaries".

OPEYEMI AGBAJE in [www.businessdayonline.com](http://www.businessdayonline.com). April 29, 2009:-

"Professor Dora Akunyili will soon put to shame all the enemies of her revolutionary rebranding Nigeria campaign. That is one of the benefits of putting a scientist in charge of the information ministry. She has already carried out a simulation using both empirical data and logical analysis and has discovered a simple solution to Nigeria's problems. Simply rebrand the country. **Good People, Great Nation...**, and eureka all our problems disappear! While she's at it, I will like to suggest she also rebrands corruption which is one of the problems the world has with Nigeria. Let's stop wasting our time fighting corruption. Just rebrand the thing! We can call it "elite stimulus package..."

Worthy of note is that most critics see the rebranding project purely from a "technical point of view", that is, the use of media jingles and advertisements to launder Nigeria's negative image to a positive one.

Madame Minister is not helping matters either, as she seems to be giving critics the weapon to attack her pet project by laying more emphasis on the media aspects of the rebranding exercise. For

instance, the Online edition of the Triumph Newspaper of Friday, April 24, 2009, reports her comments on the "**Nigerian Rebranding Project**" as follows:-

"The Honourable Minister of Information and Communications, Professor Dora Akunyili, said in Abuja yesterday that the re-branding campaign project preferred sponsorship of its programmes, rather than cash donation. She said this at a Breakfast Meeting with Corporate Nigeria, a private sector group assembled to support the campaign. She said that corporate bodies had much role to play, as the project is a Private Public People's Partnership (PPPP). "We are not asking for cash donations. No. But we want your sponsorship of the following programmes: production and placement of billboards in strategic locations around the country and outside. The production of collateral package for the re-branding campaign such as T-shirts, face-caps, table clocks, mugs, crests, among others, and production of different literature on Nigeria that will impact on a positive image", she said. The minister also said the "wish list" includes production of audio-visuals such as jingles and TV commercials and their placement in the media, among others. She added that the private organisations should help and ensure that the slogan: **Good People, a Great Nation**, should appear in the various advertisements and placed on the international media like CNN and BBC. "We call on you to help sponsor radio and television programmes that will help project Nigeria positively", she said".

Despite the criticisms and the scepticisms, many Nigerians (including my humble self) believe that an "**all-encompassing rebranding**" of the Nigerian nation through massive infrastructural, behavioural, attitudinal and ethical changes and not

only through propaganda, media jingles and advertisements, is long overdue.

I and several others are confident that the success of such a comprehensive and all encompassing rebranding exercise will make the country a true "Giant of Africa" and eradicate the misery bedevilling the vast majority of its men and women in the midst of plenty. Rebranding Nigeria is a serious business, as it is the sum total of the present government's "seven-point-agenda" and beyond! Let us all pray and work for its success.

**Dr. Sani Abubakar Lugga**  
**The Waziri of Katsina**



## INTRODUCTION

In order to appreciate the importance of the Nigerian rebranding project, it is imperative to understand the basics of what a “brand” is, and what entails “branding” and “rebranding”. The American Marketing Association defines a **brand** as:

*“A name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers”.*

**Branding** is the act of giving goods or services these attributes in the best possible form, as to project their best image and make them the most attractive and preferable to the customers or clients.

**In business terms** therefore, branding is not only about getting a brand's target market to choose that brand over its competitors. But it is also about projecting the brand's best image with a view to getting its prospects to being seen as the only one that provides solutions to the target market's problems. This will make the brand the "market leader".

To succeed in branding, the company must understand the needs and wants of its customers, clients and prospects. It does this by integrating its brand strategies at every point of public contact. A brand resides within the hearts and minds of customers, clients, and prospects. It is the sum total of their experiences and perceptions, some of which the company can influence, and some that it cannot. A strong brand is invaluable as the battle for customers and clients intensifies by the day. It is important to spend money and time investing in researching, defining, and building a brand. After all, a company's brand is the source of a promise to its consumers or clients. It is a foundational piece in its marketing communication and one it does not want to be without.

**Rebranding a product or service** is the process by which a product or service developed with one brand, company or product line affiliation is marketed or distributed with a different identity. This may involve radical changes to the brand logo, brand name, image, marketing strategy and advertising themes. These changes are typically aimed at the repositioning of the brand/company, usually in an attempt to distance it from certain negative connotations of the previous branding, or to move it up-market. However, it must be emphasised that the brand's contents must be of good quality before any rebranding can be a success.

**Nation Branding** is a phrase coined by Mr. Simon Anholt in 1996. His first paper on Nation Branding in 1998, "*Nation Brands of the Twenty-First Century*", pointed out that just like products, services and corporations, countries depend on their good name, reputation or "brand image". Therefore countries can be branded like corporations, products or services.

**Nation Rebranding** is the process by which a nation is given a different identity aimed at repositioning it, usually in an attempt to distance it from certain previous negative connotations. "Nation Rebranding" therefore, simply means "changing the negative image of a nation to a positive one". Nations acquire their images as a result of the things their governments, businesses and people do, the things they make, and the way they do and make those things. If a country wants to change its image therefore, it must change what it does and what it makes, and change the way it does and makes things. There is no magical shortcut to this through marketing or advertising, logos or slogans.

The overall reputation of a country has to be measured, managed and influenced by a partnership between government, business,

tourism, culture, civil society, etc. For example, simply doing better tourism promotion might attract more tourists, but it will not do nearly as much to affect the “nation’s brand” as when all the stakeholders work together around a single visionary national strategy.

**Nation Rebranding** therefore entails a clear understanding that it is the citizens (leaders and followers) who rebrand their country, who benefit from an improved national reputation, and who truly “own” that national brand.

## PART ONE

### PRODUCT NIGERIA

Indeed, nations can be branded and/or rebranded like goods and services. After all, goods and services and the people and companies that produce or make them are integral parts of a nation. However, important note must be made of the fact that the "ingredients" that go into making a product or the provision of a service must be good before any branding or rebranding can be a success. Branding or rebranding a product or service that is made up of bad ingredients can never achieve the desired objectives. Likewise, rebranding a nation can only be a success if the integral parts of the nation (i.e. its ingredients) embrace behavioural, attitudinal, ethical, infrastructural and other changes for the better. Therefore, the architects of "rebranding Nigeria" must take cognisance of these facts, as political gimmick, marketing or advertising, logos or slogans alone cannot change the image of **"Product Nigeria"** that is made up of the following "ingredients":-

1. A POLITICAL CLASS that is self centred and unprincipled; has no focus and takes politics as a "do or die affair".
2. AN EXECUTIVE that is corrupt and unjust as exemplified by the findings of tribunals and commissions of enquiry.
3. A LEGISLATURE that preoccupies itself with fraudulent house renovation and car purchase contracts. Madame Speaker confirms!
4. A JUDICIARY that misinterprets justice in favour of the rich and the powerful. Judicial technicalities and high legal fees certainly favour only the rich and the powerful.

5. A PRESS that is seemingly gagged, as there is no freedom of information and the press reputation affected by the "brown envelope" syndrome.
6. TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS that are very much becoming politicised at the expense of upholding culture, tradition and moral values. And where traditional titles are for the highest bidder!
7. CLERGYMEN who are preoccupied with making money from politicians and not preaching the words of God. Take note of the government sponsored "prayer warriors"!
8. ORDINARY CITIZENS who have forgotten the virtues of honesty and holding trust and engage in dishonesty, cheating and fronting for corrupt leaders.
9. YOUTHS who are addicted to alcohol and drugs and are used as political thugs.
10. LABOURERS who malingering at work and sometimes steal the working equipment entrusted in their care.
11. CONTRACTORS who inflate contract sums tenfold and execute shoddy jobs.
12. MERCHANTS who manipulate weights and measures and profiteer instead of making lawful profits.
13. BLACK MARKETERS who hoard essential commodities and inflate prices.
14. MASONS who steal the cement given to them to work at construction sites.
15. FARM WORKERS who steal the produce on their employers' fields.
16. DRIVERS who siphon fuel from their masters' cars.
17. SHOP ATTENDANTS who misappropriate the sales proceeds.

18. SECURITY MEN who connive with thieves to steal from their masters' compounds.
19. POLICEMEN AND SOLDIERS who use the guns given to them to defend the nation and its citizens in armed robbery.
20. PRESIDENTS, GOVERNORS, MINISTERS, CHAIRMEN OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, ETC, who have stolen billions of Naira from public funds and go scot free.
21. AN INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE convicted by a court of law for embezzling 17 billion Naira.
22. BANK EXECUTIVES who grant themselves, their associates and girlfriends unsecured loans. Collapsed banks are testimonies.
23. MONEY LAUNDERERS who have scared away foreign investors.
24. DRUG TRAFFICKERS who have put the country into disrepute.
25. LECTURERS AND STUDENTS who engage in cultism and examination malpractices.
26. HOSPITALS that are mere consulting clinics.
27. SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES that lack basic infrastructure and teaching aids.
28. THE BEST ARABLE LAND IN THE WORLD that is left uncultivated.
29. ROADS that are impassable.
30. BRIDGES that are death traps.
31. AEROPLANES that are flying coffins.
32. WATER BOARDS that manage dry taps.
33. A NATIONAL ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY that manages darkness and power failures.

34. BANDITS AND INSURGENTS that control the forests and the highways and operate at their chosen times, whims and caprices.
35. ARMED ROBBERY GANGS that have superior weapons to those of the police force.
36. NIGER DELTA MILITANTS who have taken over the nation's oil wells.
37. INSECURITIES OF DIVERSE NATURES that have made the country so unsafe.

These “**ingredients**” (and several others not listed here) that make up “**product Nigeria**” must be changed for the better if the rebranding exercise is to succeed. Let it be re-emphasised that no political gimmick, propaganda, marketing or advertising, logos or slogans can do the magic as long as those “bad ingredients” remain the integral parts of “product Nigeria”! The leader of the Nigerian rebranding team, the Honourable Minister for Information and Communications knows better. As a respected personality in the field of Pharmacy, she knows that the brand of a medicine does not matter as much as the efficacy of its pharmaceutical composition! No amount of rebranding can sell a medicine that is manufactured from bad ingredients. Indeed, Madame Minister had ordered for the confiscation and destruction of several medicines with “bad contents” (irrespective of their brands) and the arrest and prosecution of the manufacturers, when she meritoriously served as the indefatigable head of the National Foods and Drugs Administration and Control Agency (NAFDAC).

## PART TWO

### REBRANDING NIGERIA

In this period of globalisation, every country has to compete with every other country for customers, visitors, business, talents, investment, attention and respect. In order to compete effectively, every place needs to be known for something; its values, people, ambitions, products, landscapes or perhaps a combination of these.

Having a "**nation brand strategy**" means knowing exactly what those talents, qualities or assets are, how to use them, how to show the world that a nation have them and how they add up to a whole that is unique, truthful, distinctive and attractive. None of these happen by accident. Successful nations have always been aware of the importance of reputation, and have deliberately set out to build and nurture their good images and names. It is not just about making money alone, as many countries base their "brand strategy" on cultural (e.g. Egypt), social (e.g. France) or even spiritual (e.g. Saudi Arabia) qualities which help them stand apart from everywhere else.

NIGERIA, like many developing countries, is battling against a bad reputation - **a negative brand image** - which prevents real economic development from getting started. After all, if a country is perceived as lacking in infrastructure, unsafe or corrupt, nobody is likely to think of investing or going to work there. In this case, whenever the country's economy gets started, its "negative brand" gets in the way. In such a situation, "brand strategy" is not about pretending everything is fine when it is not. But it is about changing governmental and citizen's attitudes for the better and telling the story of the talent and the opportunity that the country



has got, and giving it a chance to prosper in the global marketplace.

Many developing countries (like India, Korea and Taiwan) are progressing faster than the eye can see. There have been big improvements in the skills, the infrastructure, the government and the business environment in many of those “transition economies”. That was the result of concerted efforts in making changes to attitudes and behaviours of both the leadership and the citizenry.

Countries that have embraced infrastructural, attitudinal, ethical and behavioural changes should make “nation branding” take centre stages by ensuring that reputation keeps pace with progress, and that the massive investments of time, effort, skill and money made by the people, companies, governments and non-governmental organisations achieve their aims, and are so loudly professed to the whole world. This is what Nigeria should do. Embrace attitudinal, ethical and behavioural changes, invest heavily in infrastructural development and profess so to the whole world! This is the key to the success of the Nigerian rebranding project.

## PART THREE

### THE MAJOR IMPEDIMENTS TO REBRANDING NIGERIA

No rebranding can succeed in Nigeria as long as the nation's major sicknesses of **bribery, corruption, embezzlement, cheating and injustice** are not properly "quarantined" and "treated". They must be brought down to a tolerable from the present intolerable level. In this case, Nigerian leaders have the onerous task of ensuring that the nation thrives in progress and prosperity and not in degradation and poverty. Leaders should ensure that all citizens are given equal opportunities and the right atmosphere to live useful and reasonable lives. The continued decay in Nigerian leadership has led to the consensus belief that ONLY the leaders are to blame for the ills of the nation. However, a close analysis of a few of the “sicknesses” of the country (as listed below) tends to apportion blame to ALL categories of its citizens and not only to the leadership.

1. Various commissions and committees of enquiries have been set up by successive governments to investigate their predecessors. For example, the government of General Murtala Ramat Mohammed investigated that of General Yakubu Gowon, the government of General Muhammadu Buhari investigated that of Alhaji Shehu Shagari, the government of General Abdulsalami Abubakar investigated that of General Sani Abacha and the government of Chief Obasanjo set up the EFCC (the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission) in order to hunt for embezzlers, corrupt officials and all those involved in financial crimes. Currently, the National Assembly is investigating a number of fraud and embezzlement cases where Chief Obasanjo (the

immediate past President of Nigeria) is a prime suspect! Let one take cognisance of the various reports of the commissions and committees of enquiry where top government officials, from former Presidents to ministers, governors, commissioners, executives of government parastatals and agencies, etc., were indicted for corrupt practices. In addition, several billions of Naira in cash and in properties have been seized and given back to the rightful owner, the government! Television stations beamed and pages of newspapers and magazines carried stories of former governors, ministers, etc., in chains facing the judges of the courts of law for unlawful enrichment. Several Nigerian government top shots have been sentenced to fines and prison terms in other countries of the world for money laundering offences and several more are on the run and being hunted by the International Police (Interpol). To cap it all, a former Inspector General of the Nigerian Police was taken to court in chains, found guilty of the embezzlement of N17 billion and sentenced to a term in prison with orders to confiscate his ill-gotten wealth. It has been therefore, glaringly established that a large chunk of Nigerian leaders are embezzlers and corrupt.

2. Another leadership sickness is that of their inability to keep to their promises. The first public broadcast by any Nigerian military regime tries to justify the military takeover “*due to the corrupt practices of the overthrown regime*” and the promise to run an honest and progressive government. Equally, civilian governments have been “elected” based on their promises for a better life for all. Alas, so far no government in Nigeria, military or civilian (from 1966 to date), was able to fulfil half of its promises to the people.

3. The misdemeanour of the legislature is another source for concern. Instead of making responsible laws and ensuring that they

are implemented, the Nigerian legislature preoccupies itself with making money through unreasonably high allowances and fraudulent contracts. The former Madame Speaker's case of a fraudulent house renovation contract is a pointer. Instead of checking the excesses of the executive and other arms of government, the legislature partakes in instituting those excesses.

4. Nigerian politicians are unprincipled and have no focus. They are more concerned with reaping the "bad fruits of their bad labour" than making politics what it should be, that is, a means of providing good leadership. Nigerians say that "politics is a dirty game" simply because of the dirty way it is played in the country.

5. The much cherished electoral system that is supposed to produce just leaders is now in shambles. Foreign and domestic election observers have amply professed this. In addition, and despite their own weaknesses, electoral tribunals have demonstrated that election rigging is now the order of the day in the Nigerian electoral process. How can someone attain power through unjust means (rigging) and be expected to be a just leader? The most pathetic thing is that the electoral officials are not alone in the rigging process. The police, other security agencies, government officials and, most unfortunately, the ordinary voters themselves all contribute to election rigging. Unjust and corrupt leaders are always seen carried shoulder-high at campaign grounds and massively assisted at polling stations to rig on the payment of paltry sums to the electorate and electoral officials. What a pity!

6. The ordinary citizens of the country (who are seen as victims of leadership atrocities) seem to be part and parcel of the problems. Many ordinary citizens of Nigeria today have forgotten the virtues of honesty and holding trust. An ordinary hawker of basic food

items institutes cheating in his dealings with his customers. Masons and labourers have to be watched at construction sites or else a lot of the cement entrusted to them will be stolen. An average driver would drain the fuel from the tank of the car he is employed to drive and sell it off. Labourers on the farm will have to be supervised or else some of the farm produce will be stolen by them despite their being paid for their labour. Some security guards connive with thieves to attack the residences of those who employ them. Indeed, some policemen and soldiers have been arrested using the official guns supplied to them for armed robbery. Some tailors have been known to have stolen parts of the cloths given to them for sewing. Young men employed to serve as shopkeepers have time without number disappeared after they have stolen the proceeds of the sales. There seems to be no group of ordinary citizens today that could be said to be above board. In a nutshell, a large chunk of Nigerian leaders could be adjudged as “corrupt” and another large chunk of the followers classified as “cheats”.

7. The traditional institutions that are supposed to be the custodians of culture, tradition, religion and the good virtues and values of the society are now drifting towards disintegration. The Nigerian people are fed up with military dictatorships and tired of civilian thievery. They tend to turn their hopes and aspirations towards traditional institutions. Alas, many traditional rulers have now abandoned the values that made their rulership unique and strong. Those values were developed over generations upon generations, but they are now being thrown to the dogs by many traditional rulers who play by the gallery of whoever is in power. They connive with the leaders of the day to defraud the Nation, thereby eroding the respect they enjoy from the people. Traditional

institutions remain the last hope of the ordinary man, but if care is not taken some traditional rulers will soon bastardise that hope.

8. The other hope for the common man lies with the judiciary. However, recent “political” judgments seem to have eroded the common man’s hope in the judiciary. This is in addition to the extremely high cost of justice. Ordinary people cannot afford expensive lawyers and long court adjournments. Neither do they have the money to “grease the palms” of the *Alkali* or the Judge. An ordinary man who steals a N2,000 goat will receive an instant jail term of six months but a Governor who steals N2 billion from public funds will at worst spend a few days in the EFCC cell and get an indefinite bail term from the court. His special team of lawyers (led by SANs) will ensure that judgment is delivered in his favour, based on technicalities. The famous legal adage that, “justice should not only be done but must be seen to have been done” does not seem to apply in Nigeria, as justice is certainly hardly seen to have been done. This is justice, Nigerian style!

9. The next hope for the common man lies with the religious leaders. They are supposed to be the vanguards who tell the rulers (military, civilian or traditional) the truth and nothing but the truth. In Islam, the *Ulama* (scholars) are regarded as the successors of the Prophets of Allah who should be guiding people to what is right and taking them away from what is wrong. In Christianity, a similar regard is accorded the clergy. Unfortunately today, many religious scholars have turned into blind supporters of the powerful; they hide the truth and misinterpret religious injunctions to suit those in power. They are in the forefront in prayers for the success of the unjust rulers simply because they are paid stipends “for their connections with God.” When the ordinary people are treated unjustly by the leaders, the clergymen will say, “take heart,

everything is from God". Indeed, everything is from God, but God is just and clean and hates injustice and uncleanness! When ballot boxes are stolen and their contents manipulated to produce a rigged election winner, the clergymen will say, "no problem, this is an act of God, as He gives power to whom He wills". Well, when a thief steals the limousine of a clergyman, would he say, "no problem, this is an act of God, as He gives limousines to whom He wills"? Perhaps the comment this time around would be, "this is the act of the Devil"! The Nigerian clergy pray for the success of armed robbers and for the good luck of money launderers. What a pity!

10. An important vanguard for the common man is the Press. However, the absence of a law enabling the freedom of information flow has gagged the Nigerian Press. In addition, the "brown envelope" syndrome, where "kola" is given to the pressmen and women to influence their performance, has greatly dented their image! About 98% of the TV and radio stations in Nigeria are owned by the government; therefore they do not serve the interest of the people but that of the government.

11. The rich in the community do not care about the plight of the poor. Their riches are squandered on unnecessary luxuries and wasteful ceremonies to the detriment of the suffering poor living amongst them. They are the conduit pipes through which the National wealth is stolen via inflated and/or fraudulent contracts and outright theft from public treasuries. Those handling the financial institutions indulge in giving out unsecured loans to themselves, their friends and associates thereby causing the collapse of many financial institutions. Those engaged in commercial operations indulge in all forms of cheating in their trades. Those selling foodstuff hoard or tip the measuring balances in their favour. Those selling other essential commodities engage

in the hoarding, adulteration or faking of their wares. The atrocities of Nigerian market men and women are too numerous to mention here.

12. Teachers, lecturers, pupils and students are not left behind in destroying the Nigerian society. Examination malpractices, admission rackets, poor educational standards, etc., are the hallmarks of today's primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. What hope has a nation for development when many of its educational institutions are the bedrocks of cultism, immorality, drug addiction and other vices?

13. The family institution that breeds good communities when properly guided is now at the brink of total collapse. Husbands and wives do not take the institution of marriage as sacred anymore. They do not adhere to good moral family values and do not care about the proper welfare and upbringing of their children. This of course leads to a lawless family and by extension a lawless society.

14. The youth are considered as the pillars for a progressive society. Yet the Nigerian youths are today masters of theft, armed robbery, cheating, drug addiction and all sorts of other vices. The high rate of unemployment in the country and the get-rich-quick syndrome in political life have turned Nigerian youths into political thugs ready to maim and kill at the beckon of their god-fathers.

15. Youths in the Niger Delta (called "militants") have taken control of the oil wells in the area. They have instituted kidnapping as a means of making money thereby scaring away investors in the oil and gas sectors. The activities of the militants coupled with those of armed robbery gangs, thieves, money launderers and drug traffickers, have led to high insecurity in the country. No part of



the nation is considered as safe anymore. People travel, work and sleep in fear.

16. Agriculture, which was the mainstay of the nation's economy and which funded the development of the oil sector, now suffers absolute neglect. Nigeria has the best agricultural land in the world. All fields in the country, from the rainforests in the south to the savannah region in the north, are rich and can support the growing of all types of crops found on this earth! It is a pity that agriculture is neglected and over 100 million citizens, who otherwise would be gainfully employed on the farms through rain-fed or irrigation farming, are now left idle and dejected. How can a nation with such vast agricultural potentials be importing food and livestock products?

17. Infrastructure, that is, roads and bridges, rail and air transport, electricity power and water supply, etc. are near absent in Nigeria. The roads and bridges are so impassable that they are called, "death traps". Rickety airplanes and rail-couches fly the airspaces and ply the rail-lines respectively. Electricity power supply is so erratic that 80% (or even more) of the existing small, medium and large scale industries have folded up, talk less of new ones springing up. Portable water is so scarce that only the rich can afford it through drilling of boreholes in their residences. The rest of Nigerians have to depend on nature's rainfall that is trapped in rivers, lakes, ponds and wells for water supply. Each State in the country has a Water Board that is busy managing dry taps.

18. Schools, colleges, polytechnics, colleges of education and universities lack basic infrastructure and teaching materials. Teachers and lecturers are so neglected that an applicant accepts to be a teacher only as a last resort when all attempts to get a

"lucrative" job failed. Likewise, hospitals lack basic infrastructure, equipment and medications. The rich and the powerful in government get their children admitted in foreign schools and universities and fly their family members and themselves to foreign hospitals and leave the ordinary citizens to go to hell!

The above listed **“ingredients”** and several others not listed here that make up **“product Nigeria”** must be changed for the better if the rebranding exercise is to succeed. The sicknesses of bribery, corruption, cheating and injustice must be properly quarantined and treated with appropriate "medicines". They must be brought down to a tolerable from the present intolerable level. However, it must be stressed that even though ALL categories of Nigerians are to blame for the ills of their dear country; the leaders must take the largest chunk of the blame and must therefore spearhead a "corrective surgery" that will solve the problems bedevilling the nation.

Besides the eighteen major impediments to rebranding Nigeria listed above, the issues of the unemployed, the idlers, the beggars and the hangers-on need urgent attention. Nigeria cannot be rebranded without solving these problems. Unemployment is the root of youth restiveness. The millions of **unemployed** University, Polytechnic, Colleges of Education and Secondary School graduates pose serious threat to national peace and security. The over 100 million **idlers** who inhabit Nigerian rural areas also pose serious source of concern. The development of agriculture and small scale industries and trades will go a long way in reducing the menace of unemployment and idleness. The **beggars** are in two categories. One is made up of young children who roam the streets begging for alms simply because they are pupils or students of the *madarasa* (the Islamic Schools). The other is made up of the

destitute, some of whom are handicapped, while others profess poverty. The **hangers-on** are the worst group made up of faceless and healthy adults who do nothing productive but traverse the towns and move from one house to another seeking for money and material wealth from others, especially from those in public office. If a political office holder steals money from public funds and greases their palms, he is the "good guy". If he does not steal and therefore has nothing to give them, he is the "bad guy". Funnily enough, such people are in the forefront of carrying rumours about on "the big thieves" in government! By the way, what is the difference between a thief and the receiver of stolen properties? Perhaps if there are no receivers of stolen properties, there would be no thieves!

Unfortunately, because most beggars are Muslims, the "begging trade" is ascribed to Islam. Let it be made abundantly clear that Islam does not condone nor encourage idleness or unnecessary begging. Abu Abdullah bin Awwam (RLA) narrated that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

*"It is more desirable for one of you to take a rope and go to the forest to collect fire-wood and sell it, in order for Allah to guard his honour than for one to ask other people to assist him (with money or other things)".*

The above Hadith (sayings of Prophet Muhammad SAW) is reported by the two greatest books on the Hadith i.e. *Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih al-Muslim*. The two books also reported that Abu Huraira (RLA), narrated that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

*"(Most) Prophets of Allah had the professions of livestock herding".* He was asked, "Including you oh Prophet?" He

answered, *“Yes including me. I was a herdsman who was paid for it”*.

Al-Hakim (RLA) was also reported to have narrated that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

*"Prophet Adam was a farmer (and hunter), Prophet Nuhu (Noah) was a carpenter, Prophet Idris was a tailor and Prophet Musa (Moses) was a herdsman".*

The Glorious Qur'an and the Hadith amply demonstrated that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and all other Prophets of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon them) never relied on begging anybody for sustenance, as all of them had one productive profession or another. In addition, all the Companions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and all the great men of Islam (e.g. Sheik Usman Danfodio in Hausaland who was a great herdsman and farmer) relied on productive professions for sustenance. Who then would claim an Islamic licence to beg? Islam does not condone nor encourage idleness or unnecessary begging.

The Nigerian rebranding team must look for solutions to begging, unemployment and idleness. Politicians should stop creating laxity in people just in order to make them subservient and dependent on them. Leaders have the onerous task of ensuring that the societies they lead live in progress and prosperity and not in degradation and poverty. Leaders should ensure that all citizens are given equal opportunities and the right atmosphere to live useful and reasonable professional lives and not begging for alms or being dependent on the few rich and powerful in the society for sustenance!

## PART FOUR

### REBRANDING NIGERIA STARTS WITH GOOD LEADERSHIP

It is only by having good leadership that the machinery can be set up for the "**bad ingredients**" making up "**bad product Nigeria**" to be changed for the better, thereby making rebranding the nation easy and effective. Leaders are like drivers. A good driver is expected to drive his passengers safely to their destinations. Even if the vehicle develops some minor mechanical faults along the way, a good driver uses his expertise to drive safely. However, it doesn't matter how good a vehicle is, as long as the driver is a bad one, accidents are likely to happen and if the vehicle is in bad shape, that worsens the matter. Likewise, good leaders deliver the "dividends of democracy" to their people, especially in a wealthy nation. They also manage to turn a poor nation into a wealthy one and make life meaningful for its citizens. Therefore, good leaders would ensure that the Nigerian nation is united, and becomes strong and progressive.

Nigeria is a country habited by over 90% Muslims and Christians who are supposed to have faith in the Glorious Qur'an and the Holy Bible both of which teach justice, fairness peace and love. The two great religions also teach the importance of good leadership and its benefits. They also teach the misfortunes of having bad leadership. Islam and Christianity teach their adherents that "they are all shepherds who shall account for their flocks" either in this world or in the hereafter. There are several levels of leadership in Islam and Christianity. In these two religions, family, ward, village and district heads; Emirs and Chiefs; Governors and Presidents; Pastors and Imams; employers of labour, managers and directors; etc. are

all considered as LEADERS and they shall all account for the **"flocks"** they lead. However, the two religions lay the greatest emphasis on the importance of **"those leaders who have authority and responsibility over the wealth and the affairs of a nation and the power to reward those who are good and to punish those who are bad"**.

In the Nigerian context, the three major arms of government (i.e. the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary) are the ones that have the authority and the responsibility over the wealth and affairs of the nation and can reward and punish people accordingly. Therefore they carry the responsibility of over 140 million people and shall account for that responsibility!

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

*"...A leader is a steward in respect of those who are placed under him...and is accountable (to Allah) for those people and things placed under his care".* (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim).

The Bible, Hebrews 13:17 states:

*"...They (leaders) keep watch over you as men who must give an account (to God)".*

With this background therefore, Nigerian leaders, who take their oaths of office holding either the Glorious Qur'an or the Holy Bible in their hands and ending the swearing with "so help me God", must lead the rebranding exercise by example, as they shall account to the people in this world and to God in the hereafter.

The prerequisite for having good leadership is a free and fair election. No more, no less! **Free and fair elections** will lead to giving leadership to those who merit it. God in His infinite wisdom normally assists such leaders who are freely chosen by the people

and in most cases those who are led by such deserving leaders do willingly help them in the discharge of their responsibilities. On the other hand, God does not help those who rig elections or those who take over power by the use of the barrel of the gun; neither will those being led help such leaders! So the attainment of leadership positions through rigging or the use of gun-power usually spells disaster for the leaders and the people they lead. The electoral machinery in Nigeria must therefore be “rebranded” thereby eliminating rigging and installing true election winners into office!

Several religious scholars and social scientists have advanced what they consider as the **qualities of good leaders**. Below are ten of such qualities that "rebranded" Nigerian leaders should have if they were to lead a successful "rebranding" of the nation!

**1. A good leader must have knowledge and wisdom.** People who are not knowledgeable and lack wisdom in their approach to daily affairs should not be made leaders. For example, if a carpentry trade group wants to appoint a Chairman to lead it, the most qualified person to occupy that seat will be a skilled carpenter, who is full of wisdom in handling people and carpentry affairs. Anybody who is not knowledgeable in the carpentry trade cannot make a good leader of a group of carpenters. At the national level, a well educated and experienced person who is full of wisdom will make a better National Leader than a dull and illiterate person. Certainly there is no basis for comparison between a knowledgeable person who is full of wisdom and a stark illiterate who is dull!

**2. A good leader must be fair and just.** Justice and fairness sustain leadership and injustice and tyranny destroy leadership.

When a leader tyrannises and inflicts injustice upon people and is not appropriately punished in this world (because he enjoys political might or immunity), he will pay back on the Day of Judgement (where there is no political immunity). History has amply demonstrated the fall of unjust and unfair rulers, dynasties, kingdoms, empires and nations.

**3. A good leader must be honest, trustworthy and strong in character.** Honesty and sincerity lead to trustworthiness, which is a major quality of good leadership. Dishonest and untrustworthy people cannot make good leaders, as they cannot discharge their responsibilities creditably well. Good leaders hold a nation's income in trust and expend it in the interest of the people they lead. Bad leaders do the opposite.

**4. A good leader must be able to fulfil his promises.** It is a very common practice today for leaders to make promises at campaign periods (for politicians) and at power take-overs (for military coupists) and not to fulfil those promises. This is a grave error, as God hates those who do not fulfil their promises and people do not have an iota of respect for such leaders.

**5. A good leader must shun bribery, corruption and embezzlement.** Bribery, corruption and embezzlement are three evils that bedevil particularly governments of developing nations. These evils contribute greatly to the decay in both the public and private sectors. Therefore good leaders must shun them and those who indulge in them should be booted out and sanctioned according to the laws of the land.

**6. A good leader must be patient and visionary.** People differ in their behaviour, outlook and perception of affairs. Therefore, a good leader must have the capacity to be patient and accommodate



all shades and characters of people. At the same time, he must have vision and good foresight. "Vision" is what distinguishes a leader from a simple manager.

**7. A good leader must be gentle, kind, consultative and listen to advice.** Anyone who is not gentle, does not consult his lieutenants and does not listen to advice, should not be made a leader. Gentleness, kindness, consultation and listening to advice have been known to be the hallmarks of successive successful world leaders from time immemorial. Leaders who do not listen to advice or hold consultations are referred to as "dictators" and certainly every dictator is a failure!

**8. A good leader must be able to groom future leaders.** A good leader must identify prospective future leaders, bring them close to him and groom them as his successors. The continuity of a good leadership depends on the grooming of those who would continue in the event of the retirement, official term completion, incapacitation or demise of the current leader. A leader is deemed to be selfish if he corners all responsibility to himself and does not allow others to learn the art of leadership. In such a situation, the state will have to grapple with the search for new leadership when the incumbent leaves office. However, this does not mean that a leader will be at liberty to install a successor by hook or by crook! No. It means that a leader should groom successors and allow the people to choose those they deem fit in a free and fair election.

**9. A good leader must be worthy of emulation.** No one can be certified as a good leader unless what he does is worthy of emulation. Therefore, a good leader must say excellent things and act in the best ways in order to make others to emulate him. How

can one be adjudged as a good leader when his words, acts and actions are detested by people and not worthy of emulation?

**10. A good leader must appreciate the limits of his capacity and that of his people.** One of the qualities of a good leader is the ability to assess the capabilities and limits of himself and those of his people. No one has monopoly of knowledge, wisdom or ability neither could one expect his people not to have limitations in thoughts and in actions. Therefore a good leader should do what he can within his limits and guide his people to do what they can within their limits. Anything beyond this will lead to chaos.

## PART FIVE

### LEADERSHIP AND FOLLOWERSHIP OBLIGATIONS IN REBRANDING PRODUCT- NIGERIA

There are certain basic obligations incumbent upon both leaders and followers if success is to be achieved in rebranding a country. Both parties must strive to fulfil their obligations in order to have the much needed balance to succeed. No nation can live in peace and harmony and attain progress and development without excellent cordial leadership and followership relationship.

The major obligation of leaders to followers is that they must be just and fair in their dealings with them and honest and sincere in the distribution and utilisation of state resources. Besides being fair and just, leaders must fulfil all promises made to their people, ensure that peoples' health, education and economic wellbeing are safeguarded and boosted in order to provide a conducive atmosphere for day-to-day comfortable living. In addition, peace and security of lives and properties must be enhanced and guaranteed by leaders.

Leaders have the onerous task of ensuring that the societies they lead live in progress and prosperity and not in degradation and poverty. Leaders should ensure that all citizens are given equal opportunities and the right atmosphere to live useful and reasonable professional lives, with each tradesman supplementing the other. *Amirul Mumineen* Sultan Muhammadu Bello, the son and successor of Sheik Usman Danfodio who founded the Sokoto Caliphate, wrote on this issue in his booklet, *Usul al-Siyasa* in 1808. Those authoritative views are still relevant today and therefore quoted below:

*“The Amir (leader) should provide public amenities for the people of his state for their temporal and religious benefits. For this purpose, he shall foster the artisans, and be concerned with the tradesmen who are indispensable to the people, such as farmers and smiths, tailors and dyers, physicians and grocers, butchers and carpenters.....The ruler must keep villages and the countryside in prosperity, construct fortresses and bridges, maintain markets and roads and realize for them all what are of public interest, so that the proper order of this world may be maintained.”*

Followers, on the other hand, are obligated to respect and obey their leaders. Without respect and obedience to leaders, whatever good plans they have for the people cannot be actualized. When leaders are not doing the right things, it is obligatory to advise them accordingly. However, caution must be exercised in giving the advice. It is common nowadays for people to rush to the mass media and castigate leaders instead of using wisdom and fair speech in advising them. This only angers the leaders and shields them from listening to or taking the advice. Therefore, leaders should be respected and obeyed and if they go wrong, they should be advised through the use of mild and not harsh language. In addition, they should be supported and assisted to carry out good works.

## **PART SIX**

### **THE EFFECTS OF GOOD OR BAD LEADERSHIP IN REBRANDING**

The effects of good or bad leadership are obvious. Good leadership leads to peace, stability and progress. Bad leadership leads to the opposite! Therefore if positive results are to be achieved in a rebranding exercise, there must be a good leadership in place. Bad leadership cannot bring about the desired change for an effective nation rebranding as such leadership is normally the major impediment to positive change. Let us take some few examples from Nigeria over the last 200 years and see the effects of both good and bad leadership.

1. Sheik Usman Danfodio led the famous Islamic revival (popularly referred to as the Sokoto Jihad) in 1804. He and his followers overran the whole of Hausaland that today extends to most of parts of Northern Nigeria, Southern Niger Republic, Northern Cameroon and Northern Benin Republic. The Sheik and his revivalists are still held in high esteem in Muslim Hausaland due to their excellent leadership. Similarly, Mai Idris Alooma of Borno Caliphate and his successors, like Shehu el-Kanemi, are revered by the Kanuri and the Shua-Arab for the excellent leadership they gave the Caliphate. Other respected personalities of yesteryears are also found in all ancient Empires and Kingdoms like those of Oyo, Benin, Opobo and Ife.

2. The leaders of Nigeria's First Republic, particularly the late Nigerian Prime Minister, Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the late Premier of Northern Nigeria, Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello (Sardaunan Sokoto), the late Premier of Western Nigeria, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the late Nigerian President, Dr Nnamdi

Azikiwe, the late nationalist, Chief Herbert Macauley, the late Premier of Western Nigeria, Chief Samuel Akintola, the late nationalist, Alhaji Aminu Kano and several of their wonderful colleagues of blessed memory, are still revered even by those who were not born when they died. That is the result of their excellent leadership.

3. The Military officers and their cohorts who led Nigeria for almost 70% of its life as an Independent Nation are today subjects of castigation and abuse due to their bad leadership. Nigerians blame them for the nation's poverty in the midst of plenty! Indeed, their governments were referred to and still considered as "military dictatorships" and dictatorships are resented the world over.

4. The latest example of the results of bad leadership was the eight years rule by the "civilian" government of General Olusegun Obasanjo. He was released from prison on state pardon and Nigerian elites forced him on the nation as a reformed civilian with the "General" before his names changed to a "Chief". Obasanjo's government lasted from 1999 to 2007 and was supposed to be an elected civilian democratic government, but was run like a military dictatorship that had no direction. Nigeria got more revenue during that time than at any other time. But Nigerians suffered more at that time than at any other time! Corruption and outright theft of public funds were the hallmark of Obasanjo's regime. Even his kinsmen (the Yoruba tribe), who ordinarily (by Nigerian tradition) should support and shelter him, have denounced him. Page 11 of the Sunday Sun Newspaper of 24/4/08 reported the Publicity Secretary of the pan-Yoruba Association, *Afenifere*, as saying, *"We must be part of the effort to ensure that Obasanjo goes back for a second time in jail... because in Yorubaland, any child that steals is not accepted in the house"*. Nigerian workers, under the

Nigerian Labour Congress, held a nation-wide strike-rally on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008 in order to press home their demand for the new regime of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua to arrest and prosecute Chief Obasanjo for his atrocities over his eight-year rule. Indeed the leader of the Nigerian rebels who led the 1967 cessation and created a Biafran Republic out of Nigeria, who is now a reformed "democrat", Chief Ojuku, had this to say, "*Without mincing words, the man Obasanjo should be shot! In fact, if it is possible to shoot him twice, I would say the man should be shot twice*". (Reported by the Sunday Sun Newspaper of 4/5/08).

## PART SEVEN

### SPIRITUALITY AND MORALITY ARE KEY TO REBRANDING NIGERIA

The Nigerian constitution opens with, *"We the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria: Having firmly and solemnly resolved: To live in unity and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble Sovereign Nation **under God**"*.

Nigerian leaders take their oaths of office holding the Qur'an or the Bible in their hands and at the end saying, *"So help me God"*.

Nigeria is a nation habited by almost 100% Muslims and Christians who profess to be either "born again Christians" or "*Shariah* compliant Muslims" (forget about the traditional religionists and the atheists who cannot publicly profess to be so!).

The internationally renowned American scholar on religion, Mr Samuel P. Huntington, asserts on page 91 of his book, *Who Are We?* That:

*"More than 91% of the Nigerian population affirms strong religiosity"*.

This figure surpasses that of any other nation. Poland, India and Turkey come a distant second, third and fourth respectively. Nigeria is reputed to have more Mosques and Churches (from grandeur to ramshackle ones) than any other country. Therefore if Nigerian Muslims and Christians are true to their faiths, they must combine the **spiritual** aspect of their religiosity with a **moral** change of attitude for God to change the nation's bad conditions for the better, thereby making the rebranding project a success.

It is a common phenomenon for people to rush to their places of worship and pray for succour when they are in difficulty. For



example, Muslims normally rush to the Mosques to beseech Allah to give them good health, peace, security, good government, progress and prosperity in this World and salvation in the Hereafter. Christians follow suit through the Churches to beseech God. However, for God to answer peoples' prayers, they must be God fearing, love one another, change their bad habits and above all work hard! For example, in addition to prayers,

1. If people want good health, they must take care of their bodies and environments and avoid harmful foods and other materials.
2. If they want peace and security, they must unite and live as brothers and sisters and avoid anything that will disturb their peace.
3. If they want good government, they must elect good leaders.
4. If they want progress and prosperity, they must seek for knowledge and work hard.
5. If they want salvation in the Hereafter, they must worship God as He ordained it.

Many verses of the Glorious Qur'an and the Hadith (sayings) of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and many verses of the Holy Bible and the teachings of Jesus Christ (AS) support the above assertions.

Allah (SWT) in the Glorious Qur'an says, "*Verily, Allah will not change the condition of a people as long as they do not change their state themselves*". (Qur'an 13:11).

God in the Holy Bible says, "*... faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead*" (Bible- James 2:17).

How can it then be expected that God, the creator and supreme master of all, to do to people what they want, while they refuse to

satisfy the conditions He set out for them? Let a simple example be narrated of someone who goes to the Independent National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (INEC) to collect forms for contesting a Governorship election in his State. The first condition such a prospective contestant has to fulfil is that he must belong to a political party. Supposing he tells INEC officials that he does not belong to any political party and he does not intend to join any, would they give him the forms? Certainly not! Therefore if one does not fulfil a condition set out by a fellow human being, his request will not be granted. How then do Nigerian Muslims and Christians, who believe in the oneness and powers of God, expect Him to oblige to their requests for the goodies of this World and the Hereafter while they refuse to satisfy the conditions He set out for them? What a wishful thinking!

Have Nigerians ever bothered to ask why things continue to go from bad to worse in a country that is daily in prayers? Are Nigerian leaders not reputed to be in the forefront in sending "**prayer warriors**" to Mecca and Jerusalem and still God refused to make things better for the nation? Prayers are so important in Nigeria that all public and private functions have Muslim and Christian (or a combination of both) "opening" and "closing" prayers in their programme of activities. Indeed, even a former Head of State (General Yakubu Gowon) has been leading prayer sessions in all the states of the federation (under the aegis of "Nigeria Prays" group) for several years now. The result is yet to be felt. The retired General and his "prayer group" seem to have forgotten that "*... faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead*" (Bible- James 2:17).

God does not change the bad condition of a people for the better, unless they change their bad ways. Repentance and prayers,

working hard, changing bad for good habits, doing righteous deeds, and obeying God's decrees and commands, lead to the attainment of the goodies of life!

Allah (SWT) says, *"And whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, and is a believer. We shall surely give him a goodly life in this world, and We shall reward such according to the best of their deeds"*. (Qur'an 16:97)

God says, *"If you follow My decrees and are careful to obey My commands, I will send you rains in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees of the field their fruit. Your threshing will continue until grape harvest and the grape harvest will continue until planting, and you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in your land. I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid"*. (Bible- Leviticus 26:3-6)

## CONCLUSION

Nation rebranding is the process by which a nation is given a different identity aimed at repositioning it usually in an attempt to distance it from certain previous negative connotations. **"Nation rebranding"** therefore, simply means **“changing the negative image of a nation to a positive one”**. NIGERIA, like many developing countries, is battling against a bad reputation - a negative brand image - which prevents real economic development from getting started. In this case, "rebranding strategy" is not about pretending everything is fine when it is not. But it is about changing governmental and citizen's attitudes for the better.

The overall reputation of a country has to be measured, managed and influenced by a partnership between its legitimate government, non-governmental organisations, businesses, tourism, culture, civil society, etc. For example, simply doing better tourism promotion may attract more tourists, but it will not do nearly as much to affect the “nation's brand” as when all the stakeholders work together around a single, visionary national strategy.

"Nation rebranding" therefore entails a clear understanding that it is the citizens (leaders and followers) who brand their country, who benefit from an improved national reputation, and who truly “own” that “national brand”.

Nations acquire their images as a result of the things their governments, businesses and people do, the things they make, and the way they do and make those things. If a country wants to **change its image** therefore, it must change what it does and what it makes, and change the way it does and makes things, as there is no magical shortcut to this through political gimmick, propaganda, marketing or advertising, logos or slogans!

Countries that have embraced infrastructural, attitudinal and behavioural changes do not wait until the world realises how much progress they have made. In this case, “nation branding” or “rebranding” takes centre stages by ensuring that reputation keeps pace with progress, and that the massive investments of time, effort, skill and money made by so many people, companies, governments and non-governmental organisations achieve their aims, and are so loudly professed to the whole world.

This is where good slogans, logos, jingles and advertisements in the print, electronic and other media come in.

#### **LAST WORDS:-**

**Nigeria** should embrace attitudinal, ethical, behavioural, moral and spiritual changes, invest heavily in infrastructural and other developments and profess so to the whole world! This will lead to a successful rebranding of the country. Mere political gimmick, propaganda, logos, slogans, media jingles and advertisements will not rebrand Nigeria without the aforementioned changes!

**Rebranding Nigeria** is a serious business. It is what the country needs to be great and take its citizens out of the current misery and poverty in the midst of plenty. It is the sum total of the present government's "seven-point-agenda" and beyond! Therefore all hands must be on deck to see to its success, BUT the leadership must lead the way!

Best wishes to the NIGERIAN REBRANDING project.