



EGBÉ OMO YORÙBÁ

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF YORÙBÁ DESCENDANTS IN NORTH AMERICA
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EGBÉ OMO YORÙBÁ CALLS FOR A TRULY INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION

For Immediate Release

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COTTAGE CITY, MD, August 18, 2006. ...*Due to current and recent developments at home, including but not limited to the news of the "dire state" of the health of Honorable Alhaji Rauf Arégbésolá, the Egbé Omo Yorùbá, National Association of Yorùbá Descendants in North America (Egbé) has decided to restate and expand its Communiqué issued on August 14, 2006. We once again use this opportunity to call on all Nigerians, Yoruba, Obas', Yoruba Leaders, political aspirants and law enforcement to do whatever they can to prevent a state of emergency being declared anywhere in Nigeria. We do not want a reoccurrence of the "wetie" era, but we are concerned that history may already be repeating itself.*

TAMPA, Florida, August 14, 2006. ...Egbé Omo Yorùbá, National Association of Yorùbá Descendants in North America (Egbé) held its 14th Annual Yorùbá National Convention last weekend in the City of Tampa, Florida, United States of America. In attendance were delegates from 18 member-chapters from all geopolitical regions of North America.

At the general assembly, the opening address on the convention theme "*Yorùbá Homeland and Diasporas: Joining Hands for Development*" was given by its National President, Adéolá Òdúsànyà, after which the National General Secretary, Oládàpò Odúnlámi gave the State of the Egbé Address. Other speakers included Òtúnba Olú Awótèsù former Minister for Agriculture, Chief Bísí Àkàndé, former Governor of Òsun State, Professor Mobólájí Àlùkò of Egbé Ìsòkan Yorùbá Washington DC, President Nigerian Democratic Movement and the foremost political commentator in the Diaspora, Chief Àlào Adédayò, Publisher Aláròyé Yorùbá Newspapers, Mr. Yínká Òdúmákin, Publicity Secretary of the Afénifére and Mr. Tóyin Olánrewájú, President Midland Financial Services.

His Royal Highness, Oba Adéjuyìgbé Adéfúnmi of Òyótúnjí chaired the 11th Excellence Awards banquet which was held on Saturday night and the Keynote Speaker for that event was Senator Olálékè Mámora, representing the Lagos East Senatorial District and who is also the former speaker of the Lagos State House of Assembly. Other speakers and attendees included Honorable Adé Adégbénjò, Member of the National House of Assembly, Dr. Osadebe Anam who represented Dr. Orji Uzor Kalu, Governor of Abia State, Nigeria, Dr. Mohammed Ladan, President of Zumunta, USA and Dr. Qú Òtúbùsìn, power attorney and former President of the Egbé.

After deliberations from the three-day event, the Egbé made the following Observations and Resolutions:

The Egbé observes with great consternation:

1. The federal government's continued over bearing influence on Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) through the use of the executive power over funding for INEC amongst other things.
2. The developing purported plan by the President Olúségún Obásanjó led administration to hand over power to an interim government following its failure to secure a third term mandate. President Obásanjó and the Nigerian Legislators should be mindful that their terms expires in 2007, and therefore should as a matter of urgency resist any undemocratic and slick attempt to manipulate and extend this deadline.
3. Statements made by President Obásanjó and the PDP to the effect that the 2007 presidential elections would in some fashion seek to exclude Yorùbá aspirants and candidates due to Obásanjó "occupation" of the Yorùbá presidential slot from 1999-2007.
4. The lack of an electoral timetable and guidelines from INEC with less than a year to the general elections. Also, based on the 2003 history and performance by five of the six Electoral Commissioners appointed last June to the Yorùbá States, the Egbé is gravely concerned by the appointments.
5. The rampant and sporadic political assassinations and lack of tolerance over political differences amongst our people. This continues to lead to wanton arrests, intimidation and barbaric killings of such political opponents. To that effect,

the Egbé cites the recent killing of Chief Fúnsó Williams in Lagos State, Dr. Báýò Dáramólá in Èkìtì State and the detention of Lagos State Commissioner for Public Works and Infrastructure, Alhaji Rauf Arégbésolá in Òsun State and notes that such acts of blood-letting are uncivil, undemocratic, disgraceful and unacceptable within Yorùbáland.

6. The continued systematic destruction of the Yorùbá agricultural economy and infrastructure. With great interest, the Egbé notes that prior to the petroleum era, the main stay of Nigerian economy was centered on agriculture, with most of the production coming from the Western States, but the structure that carried the country in the past, continues to undergo a deliberate and intentional destruction in order to undermine and reduce the influence of the Yorùbá on the Nigeria economy.

7. The continued detention of Òtúnba Gàní Adams and Dr. Frederic Fáseùn leaders of the Yorùbá stabilization group. The Egbé believes this is a deliberate attempt by the Administration to dampen the fighting spirits of well meaning Nigerians that are bold enough to stand up and challenge the dictatorial tendencies of the Government; that this as an attempt by those who do not wish Yorùbá well to disorganize this Yorùbá stabilization group prior to the upcoming national elections; and the Egbé views the charges of "treasonable felony" against these two Yorùbá leaders as frivolous, baseless and unfounded.

Therefore, the Egbé:

RESOLVED THAT, President Olúségún Obásanjó and other powers that be, release the shackles and stranglehold over INEC and allow it to do its job of conducting free and fair elections in the short time it has left in order to preserve the Nigerian fledging democracy and the idea of an interim government is unacceptable and should be terminated immediately. We encourage all citizens and lover of democratic ideals everywhere, to pressure the Nigerian legislature and other leaders, to stay the current path to succession through free and fair democratic elections; and be it further

RESOLVED THAT, INEC, whose guiding principles are, Transparency, Integrity, Credibility, Impartiality and Dedication, be true to its principles and ensure that the electoral process is not compromised in any way or fashion. We put INEC on notice that the resident electoral commissioners currently assigned to the Yorùbá States are unacceptable because, being all holdovers from the ignominious 2003 elections, they have proven to be biased, without integrity or credibility and the Egbé if necessary will use all means available to it to challenge any electoral pronouncements made by these commissioners. The Egbé also puts all Police Commissioners assigned to Yorùbá States on notice that any acts to harass the masses during the elections or to unduly influence the elections in any way will not be tolerated; and be it further

RESOLVED THAT, all credible and worthy aspirants from Yorubaland should vie for all political positions in all political parties in Nigeria, including the Presidency, irrespective of President Obásanjó presidency from 1999-2007; and be it further

RESOLVED THAT, all Yorùbá including our elders be vigilant and not allow forces that do not wish the Yorùbá well, to cause there to be havoc and unrest in our motherland. We also ask for a cessation on all political killings and riots in Yorùbáland and in Nigeria. We again remind our legislators that there is dire need for the decentralization of the Nigerian Police and the creation of States' or regional police to ensure that the basic constitutional right of every Nigerian to live in peace and safety is assured; and be it further

RESOLVED THAT, all political prisoners detained unjustly and under false pretenses are released or have their cases adjudicated expeditiously. Particularly, we ask that the Chief Báýò Òjójó, Ministry of Justice ensure that the case against Òtúnba Gàní Adams, Dr. Frederic Fáseùn and others detained with them be adjudicated or dismissed without further delay. We also specifically urge that the health and safety of Alhaji Rauf Arégbésolá, a seasoned and well-tested friend of our Egbe, be ensured in his current travails with the political machinery of Òsun State government. We also use this opportunity to plead with all political intimidators, murderers and or harassers to desist from such actions immediately and be it further

RESOLVED THAT, we express our deepest condolences to the families of Chief Fúnsó Williams and Dr. Báýò Dáramólá over the loss of their worthy fathers, sons and benefactors, and pray that such days of blood and tears no longer re-occur. We continue to express our disappointment that the killers in our political midst, starting from those of Chief Bólá Ìgè, have not been found, and urge that they be hunted down and brought to justice.

The Egbé calls on all Yorùbá, to work together to rebuild Yorùbáland and reform our processes including the process for selecting our political representatives and making them accountable to us. We further advocate for the harnessing of all Yorùbá resources, be it natural or human any where in the world, for the actualization of a self-sufficient Yorùbá nation. More than ever, we ask all Nigerians to join us in advocating for smooth transition and a new administration next in 2007.

//Signed,

Adéolá Òdúsànyà, National President

Bólájí Olárfìgbé, National Secretary Public Affairs