



Pan-Yoruba Sociopolitical and Economic Organisation

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Second Edition, 2016.

AFENIFERE RENEWAL GROUP...A MISSION, OUR MANDATE

Afenifere Renewal Group (ARG) is a pan-Yoruba organization with mandate to promote, protect and accelerate Yoruba development in all spheres of human civilization. We subscribe to the ethos of our development patriarch, Chief Jeremiah Obafemi Awolowo (1909-1987). We also subscribe to the effervescent Yoruba *Omoluabi* world view. Our primary mission is the pursuance of Yoruba development along the lines of progressive ideology.

We relentlessly pursue the Yoruba cause, and we place issues of Yoruba development on the front burner of our Agenda. We believe that strong people, with strong institutions, will build strong nations. We have therefore evolved into veritable platform for harnessing the best of us to tackle the most critical issues confronting our people. We are deliberately recreating the development platform for Yoruba intelligentsia and leaders of thought to ponder, develop and synthesize ideas, opinions, views and tendencies for the development of our Motherland.

As an organization, we guard our independence of thoughts and actions very carefully. We pursue ideas for development, we project the development aspirations of the Yoruba, we put the welfare of the people at the centre of all our activities; we respect our elders, honour our heroes and esteem our talents.

We are decidedly political. We believe in politics and political association as strong platform for making the change that we seek possible. Indeed, today, our members are State Governors, Senators, members of the House of Representatives and State Houses of Assembly, including political appointees in executive, policy and public sector management positions. We also have technocrats, bureaucrats, members of the professional class, the academia and ordinary Nigerians in our midst. Together, we are working to harness the common values, the unifying heritage, the collective enterprise and the latent capacities of our people to advance a composite Yoruba Development Agenda.

Of course, we build networks and develop leverages. We have relationships and associations with critical groups, stakeholders, self determination groups, Yoruba in Diaspora, and where required, other ethnic nationalities with similar aspirations for development. We are very proud, albeit with every sense of modesty, of the roles we have played at every critical junctures, and at difficult times, not only in Yorubaland, but in the country Nigeria. We can only say that we will continue to build on the legacy of service bequeathed to us by our elders, past and present. And as we usually sing...*Ise wa fun 'le wa.*

**Hon. Olawale Oshun,
Chairman, Afenifere Renewal Group**

BRIEF HISTORY

During the peak of the rift within the Afenifere family, a group of then younger folks began to meet to deliberate on possible solutions.

The group's main objective was to resolve the feuding factions in Afenifere. In pursuit of this mandate, members of the group decided not to align with any of the two factions but resolved to treat all of them on both sides equally as elders.

The foundation members of the group are Hon. Olawale Oshun (Chairman), Mr. Biodun Oyebanji (General Secretary), Mr. Ayo Afolabi, Mr. Kunle Famoriyo, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, Prince Demola Oyinlola, Dr. Bayonile Ademodi, Asiwaju Bisi Adegbuyi and Mr. Jimi Agbaje.

It is noteworthy that several attempts had been made to ensure reconciliation between 2000-2006. The foundation members played key roles in some of the reconciliation attempts and Throughout this period,

They were meeting in Dr. Fayemi's house initially, planning for a proposed reconciliatory retreat. The group was then known as the *Ibadan Retreat Group*. After the 2007 General Elections, the membership was expanded to include others like Yinka Odumakin, Mr. Dipo Famakinwa, Prince Oye Oyewumi etc.

The group's effort led to a major, if not epical reconciliatory event which held at IITA, Ibadan in 2007. All the Afenifere elders were in attendance, including Pa Ayo Adebajo, Sen. Ayo Fasanmi, Sir Olaniwun Ajayi, Chief Olu Falae, Chief Bisi Akande, etc. For three days, they were all locked up in IITA resolving the grievances. Besides the resolution, the meeting also focused on development of Yorubaland within the country called Nigeria or (if the former fails) outside it.

It was a successful meeting and everybody embraced and left the venue as one family again. Part of the resolution at the meeting was that no one should go on the pages of newspaper to vent his/her annoyance or misgiving about anyone again and that all complaints should be resolved in-house.

A few days after the IITA retreat was the birthday of one of the elder and members of the group were already planning how to use the occasion to consolidate the gains made at the retreat. But, as part of the activities to mark the birthday, the particular elder granted a newspaper interview in which he castigated members of the other faction (against the resolution reached at IITA). That of course broke the truce and others followed suit in series of interviews.

With everything back to square one and with each faction proclaiming their respective leaderships (one under Chief Fasoranti and the other was led by Sen. Fasanmi) after Baba Adesanya's death in 2008, it became obvious that:

1. The IITA retreat might have been the last chance at reconciliation and it would be impossible to resolve the rift again.

2. That the rift within Afenifere family was not an ideological rift but one driven by ego.
3. Therefore, there was a need for a renewal of the codes and practices of the Afenifere philosophy, which has served the Yoruba nation so well. There is no need to jettison the ideology, or replace it as some are canvassing. But certainly, how the ideology is practiced by its adherents has to be renewed.

After several consultations, members of the Ibadan Retreat Group, in accordance with their decision not to join any of the factions but treat them both as elders, decided therefore to move on as an offshoot – not a faction – of the Afenifere family. The group’s name was changed to **Renaissance Group** based on the thinking that ‘retreat’ speaks of the past. They decided to continue with the resolutions reached at IITA on development of Yorubaland.

After another rounds of consultation, the group’s name was changed to **Afenifere Renewal Group**. The decision was based on the obvious need for renewal of Afenifere philosophy, both as a group and as an ideology.

Afenifere Renewal Group therefore became a pan-Yoruba socio-political and economic organisation that is committed to the lifelong aspiration of progressive Yoruba political movement, which is embodied in the slogan “freedom for all; life more abundant”.

ARG's foundation rests firmly on the Afenifere Philosophy and progressive politics of welfarist/developmental governance.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Within its short period of existence, ARG has been able to appreciably raise the pan-Yoruba consciousness among Yoruba people both at home and in Diaspora. Some of the achievements, in concrete terms, are outlined below:

1. Established *Yoruba Academy*, as a policy think tank and research institution.
2. Midwived the establishment of *DAWN Commission*, a regional integration and development institution for the Southwest], with the collaboration and buy-in of the Southwest State governments.
3. Had representation at the 2014 National Confab and through *Yoruba Academy*, provided research and policy intelligence to all delegates from Southwest at the Confab
4. Organised a pan Yoruba summit and forum at Abeokuta and twice at Ibadan to focus the mind of Yoruba people on expending their votes based on *Omoluabi* values at the 2015 elections
5. Commissioned focused studies and reports on germane issues that are pertinent to our existence as a people, for example *Net Migration Study, Education Attainment Policy, Herdsmen menace* etc.
6. Carried out an analysis of '*what ifs*' of the 2015 Presidential election to inform strategies and actions to manage risks identified.

Contact the secretariat for a full list of our reports.

OUR POLITICS

The Yoruba Agenda defines the political ethos that Afenifere Renewal Group subscribes to. An executive summary of this timeless document is hereby provided, pending the time the complete book will be provided.

Executive Summary of the Yoruba Political Agenda

By the time of Independence on October 1, 1960, Yoruba culture was already anchored on good education, industry, hard work, and patriotism (*Omoluabi* code of conduct).

Unfortunately, Yoruba are not allowed the unfettered freedom to continue on this cohesive cultural developmental trajectory, ever since it was truncated through the imposition of a unitary constitution administered by a conniving ruling cabal.

The new culture of those administering the central government is such whereby government is treated as nobody's property and therefore not accountable to anyone. This culture is antithetical to the lifestyle (culture) of Yoruba, which is inextricably founded on principles of self-governance and uncorrupted federalism.

This situation has created a cultural war that predisposes the Yoruba race to marginalisation since Yoruba people found the predominant "cabal politics" of the federal government distasteful.

As if that is not enough, the loss of autonomy of federating units within Nigeria has made it difficult to protect our values, norms, and geographical boundary. The overbearing culture of impunity that pervades the central government has percolated deep into the cultural and moral root of our people, corrupting the entire race in the process.

We are now fighting to salvage and regain our identity, something that used to be our heritage!

Over the years, concerned Yoruba people have been organising themselves for this fight and the only missing factor now is unfettered autonomy to develop Yoruba land. This missing, and most important, factor can only be gotten through partisan politics. This is why we are decidedly political in our approach, preferring to pitch our tent with a political party whose manifesto mirrors our objectives.

The problem under the political structure portends a situation where ethnic nations in Nigerian will forever and fruitlessly contend with one another, creating avenue for unaccountable government that will continue to inflict us all with astounding poverty, unemployment, insecurity, etc.

Any political movement that will maintain this status quo is insensitive to the aspirations of Yoruba people and will not receive their blessing because it is clear that unfettered autonomy needed for purposeful transformation of Yoruba land can only be attained by a restructuring of the current Nigerian constitutional and political structure.

Yorubas are convinced that only a negotiated understanding of Nigeria among representative leaders of the entire population can ensure lasting peace; guarantee a durable

and sustainable democracy; and establish an enduring federation that enjoys genuine support of the people.

Our demands are extensively recorded in the *Yoruba Agenda Document* and they are to the effect that Nigeria must be restructured.

Restructuring, in clear terms involves the following:

1. Devolution of Power to the federating units by unbundling the Exclusive Legislative List (Second Schedule, Part I, 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria). Responsibilities of Federal Government, as contained in the Exclusive Legislative List has 68 items covering almost every aspect of national life and thereby concentrating powers and responsibilities of government in the Federal Government. The nature of the Exclusive Legislative List makes Nigeria's federalism essentially a unitary system of government and it does not allow for effectiveness in service delivery. Analysts are united on the fact that this unitary system is a hindrance to the country's socioeconomic development; it encourages corruption, nepotism, cronyism and 'cabalism'. Worse still, we are realising this unitary structure of administering Nigeria is the country's biggest security threat. The way to go is to devolve power to federating units.
2. Reduction of cost of governance by trimming the official bureaucracies, which though consists of less than 5 percent of Nigerians, is responsible in terms of personnel and overhead cost, for more than 60 percent of public expenditure.
3. Adopting the six geopolitical regions as the federating units in Nigeria and the second of only two tiers of government, thereby allowing Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo states to form a regional government. The Yoruba people in Kwara, Kogi, Edo, and Delta States should be given the right through a referendum to decide whether they want to join the Southwest Region or not.
4. A return to fiscal federalism that allows federating units to keep a certain percentage of all revenues generated within their jurisdictions and remit another agreed percentage to federation account. In addition, the share of Federal Government in Nigeria's Revenue Allocation Formula should be reduced to allow states have higher percentage share.
5. A sovereign national conference where a new constitution would be written based on mutual understanding, support, and cooperation of all ethnic nationalities in Nigeria.

OUR CREDO

ARG is an organisation of the Yoruba that believe in the following:

- (i) Human being is the unit, the prime mover and sole purpose of development.
- (ii) Equality of persons irrespective of race, colour, creed or gender.
- (iii) Every person is a natural shareholder by birth of his group and nation and is therefore entitled to certain inalienable rights that will make it possible for him to have a sound mind in a sound body as contained in the organization's core values as hereinafter stated:
 - (a) Right to free and compulsory education up to the secondary school level.
 - (b) Right to free healthcare for the young, aged and indigent persons.
 - (c) Right to good food and affordable housing
 - (d) Right to full and gainful employment
 - (e) The enforcement of the fundamental human rights as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and African Charter of Human and Peoples' Right
- (iv) The well being of the people is the sole purpose and *raison d'être* of government and the glory of any government is the well being of the people.
- (v) Power and sovereignty reside in the people at all times.
- (vi) The practice of democracy expressed through the ballot box and based on free and fair election.
- (vii) Every nationality within Nigeria has inalienable right to self-determination.
- (viii) The operation of true and genuine federalism is imperative in a multinational society and it shall be the basis for the continuing existence of the corporate entity known as Nigeria.
- (ix) Supremacy of the Rule of Law.
- (x) Self discipline, self-denial and loyalty in the pursuit of common goals.

MOTTO:

The motto of the organization shall be ***FREEDOM FOR ALL, LIFE MORE ABUNDAANT.***

LOGO:

Central to the logo of the organisation shall be of Oduduwa head symbolizing the origin of the Yoruba.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aims and objectives of **ARG** shall be to:

- (i) Defend and promote the collective interest of Yoruba peoples in particular and Nigeria in general.
- (ii) Forge and sustain unity of purpose amongst institutions of leadership in Yoruba land.
- (iii) Preserve and foster the age long progressive democratic culture of Yoruba.
- (iv) Provide for adequate representation of all constituent parts of Yoruba land including those in the Diaspora.
- (v) Strengthen its leadership role of mobilizing the grassroots for effective social and economic development.
- (vi) Promote the language, culture and traditions of Yoruba, particularly the *Omoluabi* code of conduct.
- (vii) Actively prepare the youths through education and enlightenment for a proper and effective role in nation building.
- (viii) Create through its structure, posture and activities and the application of its rules and regulations, effective training ground for leadership.
- (ix) Be an effective mass progressive political movement of the Awolowo school of thought and work in tandem with the political party that substantially adopts its core values.
- (x) Actively promote and support the emergence and sustenance of a non-partisan apex Pan-Yoruba organization consisting of all Yoruba organizations that shall effectively articulate and promote the greatest good of all Yoruba everywhere.
- (xi) Maintain well-considered, balance and constructive attitude and relationship with other nationalities in and outside Nigeria.
- (xii) Ultimately seek the emergence of an autonomous Yoruba state, provided that Nigeria remains perpetually unworkable.

OUR ANTHEM

The tune to this anthem could be found on ARG's Youtube channel www.youtube.com/AfenifereRG

1.

Ise wa fun 'le wa
Fun ile ibi wa
Ka gbe e ga (2x)
Ka gbe e ga
F'aye ri

2.

Igbagbo wa ni pe
Ba ti b'eru
La b'omo
Ka sise (2x)
Ka sise
Ka jo la

3.

Isokan at'ominira
Ni e je ka maa lepa
'Tesiwaju f'opo ire
At'ohun to dara

4.

Omo Odua, dide
Bo sipo eto re
Iwo ni
Imole Gbogbo Adulawo

OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

Afenifere Renewal Group operates a two-tier structure consisting of the national body and chapters. The national body oversees the general affairs of the group, supported by a secretariat under leadership of the Chairman and General Secretary.

In Nigeria, chapters exist in each of the Southwest states, and Kwara, Kogi and Rivers.

Diaspora chapters also exist in the UK, USA, Canada, and Guinea Conakry.

TALK TO US

Our doors are open as we constantly seek leverages and partnerships in the pursuit of our mandate. Therefore, for membership process, establishment of chapters, ideas that will move Yoruba nation forward, or any other enquiry, please contact us through the following channels:

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/newafenifere

Twitter: www.twitter.com/AfenifereRG