KOWA PARTY.

2015 MANIFESTO FOR A NEW NIGERIA

***I.        Security of life and property***

KOWA will tackle crime and improve the security of lives and property through the consistent pursuit of economic and social policies that generate employment, foster cohesive communities, and stabilize families. We will also ensure the strategic reformation of the criminal justice administration as well as upgrade and enhance law enforcement and security agencies including the judiciary

**Boko Haram**: On security, Nigeria spent N966bn in 2014 on all agencies that make up the security sector. Boko Haram continues to take over several areas in the North East, the most recent fallout being loss of control of border areas with Chad, Niger and Cameroon. Our government will bring a new approach to confronting this challenge. We will start with efficient use of resources in the sector. Corruption and waste will be eliminated to ensure better welfare for officers in battle front. We will provide arms, ammunition and equipment. These steps should engender greater trust in government’s efforts among the populace, who will then be encouraged to participate more in intelligence gathering without fear of their identity being revealed for monetary gain. Furthermore, no form of partisanship will be allowed to influence the matter of security, which is a collective responsibility; expertise will be recognised wherever available and used for the common benefit. We will train and retrain our soldiers to confront the terrorists ravaging our country. Security will also form a crucial part of our foreign policy, given the international nature of terrorism. We will engage our neighbouring countries more and our partners in the West to leverage on the assets and knowledge in confronting BH.

**Police**: We will empower the police to better protect lives and properties. This empowerment will start from improving the barracks, providing communication equipment, improving intelligence gathering through use of soft technology that is cost efficient and secure. In 2014, less than N7bn was available for capital expenditure for Police commands and formations. This is grossly inadequate for the challenges facing the police. A plan than that will invest at least N20bn in capital expenditure every year will be put in place. This investment will go to improving barracks condition. A transparently managed fund that will involve the private sector will be set up to ensure provision of equipment for the police.

**Brutality against the populace**: A major point of concern and worry among the people has been the increasing incidence of brutality visited on the populace by uniformed and arms-bearing officers. The newspapers have reported several horrific stories of such incidences, for example, of pregnant women being beaten with the butt of guns and citizens stripped naked and beaten black and blue. Members of the public have equally captured several cases on mobile phones and shared over the social media. A KOWA government will seek to stamp out this worrying trend by all legal means possible. There will be zero tolerance for brutality in any form by our armed men and women. People who are armed and paid to secure the lives of the populace will not be allowed to turn those very arms against the people. Correcting this evil will require serious training and re-training of our armed forces in order to re-orient their minds towards becoming much friendlier towards the people, and not extortionists and brutalizers.

**II.            Stable Energy Supply**

In government, KOWA will bring bold, ethical and dynamic leadership to the development and management of the energy sector. Our goal will be to promote and encourage investment in clean and renewable sources of energy, as well as to better manage our oil and gas resources by obtaining global standard agreements, rents and environmental terms with multinationals and local companies operating in the sector and enforcing strict energy efficiency standards and regulations for all operators in the sector. KOWA will increase the capacity of our Nation to refine petroleum products. We will also ensure delivery of time-bound targets in electricity generation, transmission and distribution and strict performance management to ensure the timely completion of new power projects.

**Electricity:** KOWA’s policy for the sector will be to provide incentives and an enabling environment that will attract investment. We will grant import waiver for power generation equipment and tax breaks for companies investing in new power generation plants. KOWA government will explore alternative clean energy sources like solar and wind especially in the North, while continuing with gas powered stations in the south. We will invest in completing a supergrid while encouraging investment in an off grid system that will allow for development of small gas powered stations to be made available directly to targeted users. NERC’s current rule limits the number of clients that an off-grid mini-power station can take. This has stalled new investment in this area as prospective investors must find a single client who will uptake whatever is generated.

**Refineries**: Government will work with the private sector to ensure our local refining capacity meets local demand. This will be our first step to ending Nigeria’s reliance on imported petroleum products. To show good faith, government will commit to equity investment in new refineries; this investment will not exceed 30% to allow for it to be private sector driven. Eliminating importation of refined petroleum products will heavily impact our foreign currency reserve by easing dollar demand by oil marketing companies. A regulatory framework will also be put in place to ensure that products remain affordable for the vast majority of Nigerians.

**III.           Education for life and development**

There is an urgent need to transform Nigeria into an enlightened or, at least, a learning society. The formal education sector can only thrive when it is supported and reinforced by an environment that appreciates the importance of information and knowledge, and actively promotes their application in order to improve the quality of life. So far, education has not had a sufficiently significant impact on life in general, as the approach tends to promote rote learning.  Attention must be paid to both formal and informal/civic education.

In 2015, Government is projecting to spend N450bn on education; of this sum, N472bn will go to recurrent expenditure while N20bn will go to capital expenditure. This imbalance will be radically redressed. KOWA’s reforms in the education sector will include ensuring that the content of education, whether formal or informal, and irrespective of field of study, will **engender critical thinking as well as the spirit of enterprise and personal agency**. The huge investment the Nation makes in education must make the products of our educational institutions competitive on the global, excellence-driven market. This requires that fundamental changes be made.

A KOWA government policy on education will also address obvious areas of deficiency like the disparities among the various states of the nation in terms of educational achievement, as well as actively promote the education of the girl-child where needed.

**Employment:** Unemployment is unacceptably high. Our plans for ensuring that a much greater portion of the populace find something dignifying to do for a living, are tied to our plans for informal and vocational education. We produce about 1.8m graduates annually, yet only about 10% are employed in their field of study. Paradoxically, employers complain that those they do manage to employ have to be extensively retrained. This means that we are faced with an educational system that produces people who can neither be employed nor self-employed. Meanwhile, artisans like seamstresses, masons, carpenters and the like are frequently imported from our West African neighbours like Ghana, Senegal, Ivory Coast and Togo, who place much greater emphasis on skills acquisition. The orientation has to change.

KOWA government will pursue policies that support the giant strides already being made by young Nigerians in the technology and entertainment sectors without government support. KOWA’s intervention will be in the area of providing the enabling environment that will support growth in these and other sectors. Considering the potential for employment in the agricultural sector, a policy that will lower the entry barrier into the sector for young people will be pursued through providing guarantees for loans and tax incentives/breaks for agro/agro-allied businesses.

To create employment, KOWA will focus on Technology, Entertainment, Agriculture and Infrastructure Maintenance (roads, government buildings and other public installations).

**IV.          Vulnerable Subpopulations**

A KOWA government will seek to be all-inclusive, working to ensure that no section of the population feels excluded from participating in the life of the society or enjoying the benefits which should be for all. Policies will be put into place to ensure that buildings in all public places (banks, schools, business and leisure places, as well as places of worship) are accessible by wheelchair. Braille and sign languages will be mainstreamed into public communication activities.

There will be a minimum living pension for the aged and people living in the very low income bracket. Under a KOWA government, the dignity of all human beings will be upheld and defended.

Policies and programmes will take gender perspectives into consideration Women must be protected by law from all forms of exploitation (e.g. young girls held by force in baby factories) as well as from all socio-cultural practices which rob them of their dignity (e.g., upon the loss of their husbands).

All children will be protected from exploitation through increased support to all agencies working in this domain. A KOWA government will work to ensure that no Nigerian child is trafficked: that the years of mandatory schooling are adhered to; and that all our children are given the opportunity of a safe and happy childhood.

**V.            Building a robust economy**

The Nigerian economy has been based almost exclusively on the exploitation of our oil and gas reserves. The plummeting of oil prices currently being witnessed makes even more urgent the need to diversity our economy.

**Investment in Agriculture:**Agriculture should support and provide raw materials for industry, export and food security. Nigeria’s rich agricultural resources must be harnessed to attain these ends, with the different regions of the country exploiting their natural endowments in coffee, tea, cocoa, cotton, groundnut, kolanut, plywood, rubber, maize, palm oil, cashew, yam, rice, beans, plantain, banana, wheat, millet, soy, plywood and many more. This means that the farming population will be oriented away from mere subsistence farming to commercial farming. Steps are already being taken in this direction; KOWA will pursue it more aggressively.

Other steps to be taken will include the establishment of farming collectives and cooperatives to encourage food processing and healthy preservation; the provision of incentives (grants and soft loans, modern farming implements) to attract young, unemployed graduates into the farming business; the promotion of livestock production (e.g. poultry and fish farming) and the cultivation of economic plants (trees, flowers, vegetables) around homesteads by individuals and communities – to provide better nutrition, increased income, and protection for the environment. A KOWA government will also promote increased organic farming (thus reducing the use of fertilisers) for good stewardship of the environment.

**Other Mineral Resources**: Nigeria’s wealth of mineral resources will be harnessed for local use and export. All states have mineral deposits and they will be encouraged to exploit them fully for the benefit of their people. These include: iron ore, tin, bitumen, bauxite, limestone, clay, copper, glass sand, coal, uranium, kaolin, granite, lead, zinc, salt, gold, gemstones, etc. Just, equitable and environmentally-friendly policies will be developed to regulate and control the ownership and tapping of all mineral resources.

**Develop Human Capacity**: The people are the greatest resource we have, and KOWA will invest in developing human capacity in all its ramifications. In particular, the majority of the population cannot be kept in perpetual penury through the running of an economic system which concentrates wealth in the hands of a few (like having 25% of the budget overhead going to the National Assembly, as claimed by a former CBN governor). Every worker must receive fair and just remuneration for their work, and this must be made available without delay.

**Equality Before the Law**: A convincing approach to deal with corruption, institutionalise the rule of law, promote fiscal transparency and accounting as well as realistic and frugal budgeting, will create an environment where every citizen will get their rightful due of the nation’s resources. Those who rob other citizens of their rights must be made to face the consequences of their actions. No individual who commits impunity will enjoy immunity. In this regard, it will be important to watch the watchdog or police the policemen. Effective and independent mechanisms will be put in place to monitor institutions and agencies like EFCC, ICPC, CBN. The resources of such organisations must be tracked so as to ensure that the monies and material resources recovered are properly remitted and their use accounted for.

**Political Culture:**A culture of democratic accountability will be rigorously pursued. Public officers will be required to render an account of their stewardship, bearing in mind that they are in office to provide services to the people and are being paid to do so. The people will equally be empowered through civic education to recognise that sovereignty belongs to them, and that they must demand accountability from those they have entrusted with the task of governance. Constant interaction between the people and their representatives will be encouraged, and the people should recall officers who do not fulfil their campaign promises. No public officer must be allowed to act as if he or she is doing the people a favour by serving them. It is the duty of public officers to address the people with respect, not to threaten or talk down at them, and to work towards providing for them a dignified existence. The people, through civic education, will equally be made aware of their own duties to the state: e.g., payment of taxes, appropriate use of public spaces and property, etc.

**General culture**: Finally, a general culture of discipline, hard work, respect for time, and a lifestyle that shuns wastefulness and extravagance will be exemplified by a KOWA government.