



COUNCIL OF IGBO STATES IN AMERICA (CISA)

ONE PEOPLE, ONE VOICE, ONE DESTINY

2013 CISA ANNUAL RETREAT

Igbo Farm Village, Staunton, VA USA

March 21 - 23, 2013

COMMUNIQUE

The Council of Igbo States in the Americas (hereafter referred to as “CISA”) recently conducted its 2013 Annual Retreat on March 21 - 23, in Staunton, Virginia with a resounding success. The retreat with the theme “Harness, Harmonize, and Perfect Igbo Global Agenda (IGA)” highlighted a 10-point agenda of “Atumatu na Olileanya Ndi-Igbo” (Igbo Purpose and Expectations) articulated by Ticha Akuma-Kalu Njoku.

The event was attended by a contingent of Ndi Igbo from Nigeria led by Eze Obidiegwu Onyesoh (Nrienwelana II, Eze Nri); a Canadian contingent led by Dr. Izu Asiegbunam DVM (founder, www.igbo911.com); a West African Diaspora contingent represented by Chief Okorie Mba (Eze Ndi-Igbo, Ohanaeze in Mali), and a wide cross-section of illustrious and distinguished professionals and sundry Ndi Igbo, including our African-American brothers and sisters, from all over the USA. One of the event highlights was the Ancestral Naming Ceremony for DNA Tested Descendants of Africa in USA. During the Naming Ceremony, 16 African Americans (6 of them tested as Igbo descendants) were given Igbo/African names.

The Keynote Speaker was Professor Akuma-Kalu Njoku (Ticha) who delivered an inspiring speech titled “Atumatu na Olileanya Ndi-Igbo: E Mee Anyi Mere, A Ghaa Anyi Ghara” (Igbo Purpose and Expectations. If It Is to Be, It Is Up to Us). The highlights of the speech include a call to Ndi-Igbo to:

1. Pursue Unity, Healthy Relationship, and Peaceful Living amongst themselves by applying such Igbo values and ideals as “Igba Izu” (Deliberation/Dialogue), “Nghota amaka” (understanding) and “Inyerita aka” (Cooperation).
2. To make Service, “Igbo Mkpa”, our primary mandate in the rapidly growing diaspora.
3. Vigorous pursuit of new homelands for Ndi Igbo, “Ala Igbo Oghu”, worldwide, starting with the United States of America, as a means of preserving our culture and ideals.
4. Carry the mandate of Ogu “Ijide Ogu”, so that Ogu will remain the guiding principle of Igbo moral life. Always be guided by such Igbo moral of “Egbe bere, Ugo ebere . . .,” “Ya dikwara m mma taa, dikwara mmadu ibe m”, “onye aghala nwanne ya” etc.
5. Provide a structure for lifelong service “Itu Ntoqala Ndu Di Mkpa” learning that will take Igbo children from their families to their greater Igbo communities.
6. Establish an Igbo Bond/Stock Market Organization “Ulo Ahia iji ego achog ego” that funds the Igbo longtime agenda.
7. Be our brother’s keeper and make our fellow Igbo brothers and sisters our close friends and members of our fictive family. The applicable Igbo values and ideals are: “Onye aghala nwanne ya. Aka ji aku, cheta nwanne gi. Cheta na enyi ka nwanne, Chetakwa na nwanne di na mba”.

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8. Always verbalize, at every gathering, Igbo Beliefs and Cardinal Doctrines in Igbo Affirmations (Ihe Ndi-Igbo Kwere na Ha, n'Oluokwukwe Igbo Kwenu) such as Creation (Okike), Usoro na Udo (Order and Peace), Goodness (Mma mma), Life (Ndu), Knowledge/Intellect (Amamihe), and Service (Igbo Mkpa - which is the Igbo Purpose)
9. Always make Igbo Language, especially adages "Okwu na Asusu Igbo, Tumadi Akpaala Okwu", a part of our character formation, heritage education, intellectual development and lifelong learning.
10. Have a Convention "Nzuko Igba Izu na Ajueme" every leap year to refine our vision and perfect our agenda.

After several hours of intense deliberations on the above issues, CISA made the following RESOLUTIONS:

1. Ndi Igbo, as a people, are under siege. The terrorist threat against Ndi Igbo in Northern Nigeria is real, and is a continuation of the pogrom of the 1960s.
2. The threat against our brothers and sisters in Northern Nigeria is not only a threat against them, but a threat against Ndi Igbo nile bi n'obodo d'iche iche.
3. So long as we are One Nigeria, even if it is only on paper, Ndi Igbo are entitled to live in any part of Nigeria they desire – it is their constitutional right.
4. We shall hold the federal government of the day, the applicable State Government, and the Southeast governments primarily responsible for any assault on the lives and properties of Ndi Igbo in any part of Nigeria. We shall use every resource at our disposal, including legal action, against any state in Nigeria deemed culpable for the loss of Igbo lives and property.
5. It is the primary responsibility of Igbo (SE & SS) governors to ensure that Ndi Igbo fleeing the Boko Haram-led pogrom in the North are easily assimilated into the economic structure and polity of the Igbo (SE & SS) states, and that their school age children are provided reciprocal admission in the state education system, up to, and including the graduate level.
7. As a longtime plan, Ndi Igbo in Northern Nigeria are advised to start a systematic withdrawal of their investments from that region of the country.
8. As a longtime plan, CISA will pursue the option of starting new Igbo homelands and immigration centers in USA. One of the ways we plan to do that is by bridging the divide between us and our Igbo brothers and sisters whose ancestors were brought from Africa to USA in shackles, and against their will. As a result, Ancestral Naming Ceremony for DNA Tested Descendants of Ndi Igbo in USA shall be an annual feature in CISA Retreats.
9. The next (2014) Annual CISA Retreat is scheduled for June 5 – 7, 2014.

Signed:

Mazi Chuks U. Okereke
Executive President, CISA

Echiemeze C. Ofili
General Secretary, CISA

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