

# **SOCIALIST PARTY OF NIGERIA (SPN)**

## **MANIFESTO**

The Socialist Party of Nigeria (SPN) is a political party formed by socialists, trade unionists, workers, youths and student activists.

The party is open to all Nigerian citizens of 18 years of age and above who do not belong to any other political party. SPN hopes to replace the existing dispensation of poverty, hunger, homelessness, joblessness, illiteracy, underdevelopment and suffering amidst plenty with equitable and democratic use of Nigeria's abundant human and natural resources for the collective benefit of all citizens.

The SPN therefore aims to serve as a platform to defend peoples' interest through policies and programs that will reverse the growing inequality in the society. A democratically elected SPN government will focus on the needs of the people unlike the existing order where pursuit of profit and greed overrides the welfare of the people.

### **(2) OUR VISION**

The Socialist Party of Nigeria (SPN) is founded on the ideals of Freedom, Equality and Social Justice. The vision of the Socialist Party of Nigeria (SPN) is partly summed up by Chapter 2 of the 1999 Constitution which clearly spells out among other things that "The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that the material resources of the nation are harnessed and distributed as best as possible to serve the common good;". We believe that faithful implementation of Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria can be a starting point for the reversal of Nigeria's age-long underdevelopment and unrealisation of the potentials of its vast human and natural resources for the betterment of its citizens.

In essence, the SPN plans to build a new Nigeria where no one will be poor, hungry, illiterate, homeless or jobless. SPN believes that Nigeria's vast agricultural and mineral resources and human capital are sufficient to guarantee a decent life for all Nigerians. Under the present unjust system of capitalism, the profit of a few is prioritized over the needs of the mass majority, hence a situation where just 1% consumes over 80% of oil wealth while the majority of Nigerians scramble for the rest 20%. Even official statistics shows that the vast majority of Nigerians live below 2 dollars a day! The level of poverty amongst Nigerians is said to be one of the highest in the world despite being the world's sixth largest exporter of crude oil. Nothing in the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria supports this condition of mass poverty amidst plenty which a majority of Nigerians are subjected to.

Therefore to reverse this unwelcome trend and provide the best possible living standards and a happy and harmonious life for all citizens of this country, an SPN government shall in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 2 particularly Section 16 (Subsections 1C and 2C) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria bring the key sectors of the economy and the Nigeria's enormous mineral and agricultural resources under public ownership and democratic management to serve the common good of the people

### **(3) OUR MISSION**

The SPN will be the political party of Nigerian people with the mission to partake in elections and all lawful civil activities through which we hope to win political power so as to begin in earnest the building of a new Nigeria where the interest of the majority will form the basis of governance and economy.

## **PROGRAMMES**

If elected, the Socialist Party of Nigeria (SPN) shall democratically evolve policies and programs in compliance with the provisions of the 1999 constitution to ensure the rapid growth and development of the national wealth and their judicious distribution to ensure the common good of all. In particular we shall implement to the letter the provisions of Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution which in details spells out the fundamental directive principles of the state as the control of "the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity". This the SPN shall do along with other policies in different spheres of our national economy with the sole aim and intention of promoting the common good, barnishing poverty, illiteracy, joblessness and homelessness and, while defending the environment, ensuring the rapid industrialisation of Nigeria and the happiness of all citizens.

In addition, an SPN government shall take steps in consultation and deliberation with the people to implement the following policies which are partly derived from the directive principles of the State as provided for in the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as well as the democratic socialist philosophy of the Socialist Party of Nigeria (SPN):

### **(1) EDUCATION**

According to Chapter 2 section 18 (1) of the 1999 constitution, "Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels". In compliance with this and in order to speedily eradicate the shameful incidence of mass illiteracy which grips millions of our citizens like a cankerworm, an SPN government will make education free at all levels with due consideration of the fact that this is very practicable now.

In saying this, we are mindful of the terrible state in which previous and present governments both military and civilians have put the education system. In a deliberate attempt to run down public schools and promote private schools, governments at all levels have continually reduced funding for education. This has in turn led to a situation of continuous deterioration of infrastructures, overcrowding of classrooms, inadequate teaching personnel, poor welfare of workers in the sector etc., leaving those who do not have the means to accept the condition in the public schools or seek private alternatives, which are largely unaffordable for the masses. Even the meager funds budgeted are most times not properly accounted for by those in positions of authorities and so under bureaucratic management, improved funding does not guarantee quality education.

Socialists see education not only as a method of adding to the efficiency of production, but also as a method of producing fully developed human beings. SPN will strive to place education vis-à-vis the management of schools under the management and supervision of elected education workers, parents, students and the communities so that funds will be well managed and maximally utilized according to needs.

Through this democratic public education system, there will be expansion of schools and facilities while recruitment of teachers and non-teaching staff will be accorded priority. Education will be made a right and not the privilege of a few. SPN stands for an immediate and dramatic expansion of the number of teachers, so that no class size is greater than 35. Children of public officers under SPN government will attend the same schools with children of workers and the poor.

To achieve this we shall pursue the following as immediate steps:

- (a) Scrapping of all fees including tuition and other charges; Provision of free education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels
- (b) Adequate funding of public education to the level of guaranteeing quality and functional education at all levels.

- (c) A crash programme to implement a class size not more than 35 in every primary and secondary school.
- (d) A crash programme to build standard, modern and well-equipped primary and secondary schools across the country to increase enrolment.
- (e) A special focus to increase enrollment of the girl-child, improve education access for nomads, physically-challenged and other socially-disadvantaged groups in society
- (f) A democratically planned and equitable admission policy based on genuine education needs of all Nigerians and not the present arrangement, which encourages ethnic division and marginalization.
- (g) Improvement of teaching facilities in all schools across the country, including upgrading and provision of modern libraries, laboratories, lecture theatres and decent hostel facilities.
- (h) Running of Schools by a democratically elected committee of teachers, representatives of school management, representatives of parents and the community where these schools are located.
- (I) A review of the present national education policy and curriculum through a democratic process involving teachers, students and parents to produce a new policy and curriculum that makes education functional by linking the process of learning with the economy; also providing considerable local flexibility where pupil and teacher innovation are encouraged.
- (j) Payment of living wage to all teaching and non-teaching staff and provision of opportunities and facilities for research and re-training.
- (k) Retention of all staff and a crash program to employ more teachers, non-teaching staff and lecturers.
- (l) Full respect of the democratic rights of students and staff to form and organize unions without interference from the state.
- (m) Introduction of free and functional adult education to eradicate adult illiteracy.
- (n) SPN elected public officials to send their children to public schools.

## (2) **HEALTH CARE**

According to Chapter 2 section 15 (b), "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". Today in Nigeria aside from ethno-religious crisis, accidents and crimes which daily claim lives, diseases and poor health condition are one of the greatest threat to the security and welfare of Nigerians. The public hospitals have been neglected by the successive governments in compliance with the IMF/World Bank Policies of cuts in social spending thereby leaving the poor and those incapable of paying for expensive private health care to their fate. This has led to a sad situation in which poor Nigerians with curable diseases die prematurely because they could not afford the cost of health care and oversea treatment. Nigeria despite its huge resources has one of the worst cases of maternal and infant mortalities in the world.

In compliance with the provision of the constitution under Chapter 2 Section 17 subsection 3 (c) "that the State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons", an SPN government shall implement the following:

- a. Making health care free for all and at the point of use.
- b. Striving to see that the ratio of health workers to patients is brought to the barest minimum through employment of adequate and well remunerated health personnel.
- c. Reversing the infrastructural decay in public hospitals and construction of new hospitals, clinics and health centres in order to meet the needs of the people whose population is growing and expanding are necessary and vital.
- d. Massive expansion of standard primary and secondary health care system, as a way of reversing the ugly trend of overcrowding of tertiary and specialist health care centres that should attend to special cases and research works.
- e. Prioritizing preventive healthcare with provision and expansion of sanitary facilities and services
- f. Mandating SPN's political office holders and members of their families to patronize public hospitals as a means of ensuring sustainable quality.

### (3) HOUSING

There is a painful scourge ravaging Nigerians; that is the scourge of mass homelessness. This is a betrayal of the Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution and the social contract. At least ten million houses are needed to put decent shelter over the heads of millions of the poor and working people and stop them from living in substandard houses and even under bridges or open places. To effectively address this scourge requires faithful implementation of the directive principles of State Policy as enshrined in Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution as well as other policies and programs aimed to ensure the total well-being of Nigerian citizens.

SPN will embark on massive public works programme on housing which will be rented to Nigerians at affordable rates. One major problem in the construction industry is the growing cost of building/constructing materials like cement, iron rod etc due to the existing private ownership of industries in the sector.

In order to drastically reduce the cost of construction an SPN government will:

- a. Embark on massive public works programme on decent and affordable housing
- b. In line with Section 16 Subsection 1 (C), (D) and Section 2 (A) of Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution and after due consultation with the people, nationalize the private cement companies and big construction companies and place them under public democratic control and management in order to ensure that the unhealthy monopoly and speculations which exist in the construction, property and housing sector is dismantled such that cheap, affordable housing can be provided by government to reverse the shameful scourge of mass homelessness afflicting millions of our citizens. Adequate compensation shall be paid to deserving former owners of these companies and firms. This pro-people approach will be anchored on planning of resources and production to meet the needs of all.
- c. Massively invest in building materials like cement, iron, sand, wood etc., as a means to reduce construction costs.
- d. Provide low interest rate for private builders under public democratic scrutiny to adhere to set standards and prevent profiteering.

### (4) ELECTRICITY

Electricity is very crucial to industrial development and job creation. Its importance for household is also enormous. No sector of the economy can survive without it. The poor state of electricity means that artisans, business organizations, schools, hospitals, etc rely on generator run on expensive and sometimes scarce fuel in order to remain in operation. But this means high cost of doing business, and high prices of goods and services as energy contributes more than 40 percent of the cost of doing business. This high cost of energy has led to the collapse of many small and big companies with some relocating from the country to survive. Many artisans have also closed shops and the cost of living for families have become high and unbearable.

The SPN strongly holds that the electricity sector which is one of the "major sectors of the economy" as defined under Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution can be efficient and guarantee cheap electricity if kept public. The SPN will achieve this by:

- a. Re-nationalisation of the electricity sector. Placing all electricity generation, transmission and distribution companies under the democratic control and management of elected committees of workers, consumers and representatives of the government in order to ensure that public resources spent to improve the power sector is not mismanaged or looted. What this means is that instead of a few bureaucrats appointed by the government to run public utilities and enterprises, decisions must be taken among rank-and-file workers and consumers elected into management committees at local government, state and national levels with the mandate to oversee the affairs of the power sector in compliance with the needs of the people and economy.

- b. Investing public resources to embark on comprehensive program of electrification of rural and urban areas in the country and ensure the provision of adequate and affordable electricity for both domestic and industrial use
- c. Investing in research and technology on environment-friendly means of generating electricity such as wind, solar and wave power while phasing out fossil fuels (gas, coal, oil, etc.) which do not only damage the environment but are also non-renewable sources of energy.

## **(5) ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTION**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 20 of Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution which says that "The State shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air and land, forest and wildlife of Nigeria", the SPN as an environment-friendly party will ensure that no project will be undertaken without conducting a comprehensive and genuine environmental impact assessment. Such assessment will be conducted by elected representatives of affected communities working with relevant professionals. This will ensure that the needs and safety of the people take precedent over profit or self-serving interest in the execution of projects. The SPN will ensure:

- a. The provision of adequate and efficient drainage system to prevent flooding.
- b. The development of well-planned housing policies that do not only guarantee affordable and decent housing but also prevent flooding.
- c. Investment in research and technology on the mitigation of effects of climate change as well as its adaptation
- d. That oil pollution is a rarity by ensuring the immediate and comprehensive clean-up as well as adequate compensation when there is pollution. This is bearing in mind that the major feature of oil producing communities is the pollution of water and land which does not only make fishing and farming, the traditional occupation of the locals, extremely difficult but also make the environment unsafe and living unbearable
- e. Development of policies to confront the challenges of desertification and deforestation.
- f. Maximum utilization of gas and stoppage of gas flaring.
- g. In line with the provisions of Section 17 subsection 1(d) of Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution which says "exploitation of human or natural resources in any form whatsoever for reasons, other than the good of the community, shall be prevented", an SPN government will strive to implement environmental policies that will not be at expense of safety and food security or driven by profit interests of corporate organizations. For instance, agrofuel is said to be more environment friendly than fossil fuel but its production at commercial quantity involves several tonnes of grains that could serve as food.

## **(6) TRANSPORTATION**

The transportation system in Nigeria is in terrible state. The roads are mostly bad; the railway is largely non-functional and archaic; water transportation is largely unexplored despite the potential while air transportation is in such bad conditions that air mishaps have become a frequent occurrence. Yet transportation contributes immensely to production and exchange. It links different parts of country and connects agriculture to industry and markets. Hence, the transportation of human and goods is a top priority for the SPN.

Therefore in line with Section 15 subsection 3 (a) which provides that it shall be the duty of the State to "provide adequate facilities to encourage free mobility of people, goods and services throughout the Federation, the SPN shall pursue the following policy and program on Road Transportation:

- a. Construction of roads through publicly owned companies which are placed under the democratic control and management of working people. The companies will be adequately equipped and manned by qualified personnel.
- b. Investment in public road transportation companies under workers and communities democratic control as a means to end corrupt practices while engendering efficiency.

- c. Massive building and maintenance of communities, villages, towns and cities link roads.

## **RAILWAY**

Railway transportation is key to industrialization because of its capacity to move large goods and passengers from one place to another. Modern railway transportation is faster than road and more effective in densely populated cities. The SPN shall pursue the following policy and program on railway Transportation:

- a. Modernizing the present railway network and connecting strategic parts of the country.
- b. Investing massively in the Nigeria Railway Corporation under democratic management and control of workers, professionals and unions in the industry.

## **AIR TRANSPORTATION**

Nigerian airports lack functional and modern facilities for efficient and safe air travel. The aviation industry itself is dominated by private interests who readily compromise safety and standards because of profit considerations. The SPN shall pursue the following policy and program on Air Transportation:

- a. Resurrection of Nigeria Airways with massive investment in modern aircrafts on its fleet.
- b. The employment of the right set of experts and workers on living wage and introduction of democratic management and control by workers and passengers.
- c. Massive public investment and improvement in the facilities at the airports across the country.
- d. All necessary measures to guarantee safe air travel and a viable aviation sector which is not driven by blind pursuit of profit at the expense of safety.

## **WATER TRANSPORTATION**

Water transportation is necessary for transportation of goods and passengers in riverside communities.

The SPN shall pursue the following:

- a. Investment in big and small boats to enhance movement of passengers and aid fishing.
- b. Investment in publicly owned shipping lines to enhance cargo transportation.

## **(7) AGRICULTURE**

Agriculture has suffered massive neglect despite the fact that it used to be the mainstay of the Nigerian economy until the 1970's. Farming is largely carried out with backward tools while most farmers lack basic training and knowledge required to move the sector forward. For the few farmers who farm for commercial purpose, about 30% of produce get spoilt because of lack of storage while most farmers farm for subsistence. The same is for livestock farmers.

Agriculture is one major avenue for raw materials that feed industry, hence, without a viable and highly mechanised agriculture, there cannot be a strong industry. And one major militating factor is the lack of basic infrastructure like power, good road network, etc. For instance, lack of power makes production and storage very expensive, and hence contributes to the continued collapse of factories.

To achieve a viable agriculture sector, SPN shall pursue the following policies:

- a. Rural and urban electrification to guarantee 24 hours energy supply.
- b. Investment in publicly owned plantations which are democratically run, and encouragement of cooperatives among farmers in different areas.
- c. Cheap loans for farmers and public funded training of farmers.
- d. Renting of mechanized farming tools to poor farmers at cheap rate; provision of seeds and fertilizers at affordable rate.
- e. Improvement in cash crop farming and export without endangering food security.

- f. Linking of education with agriculture and industry in terms of training and research.
- g. Provision of good road networks between the rural and urban areas.

## **(8) INDUSTRIALIZATION**

- a. In line with the provisions of the 1999 constitution which says states that the State shall "harness the resources of the nation and promote national prosperity and an efficient, a dynamic and self-reliant economy;" an SPN government shall diversify the economy away from the mono-economy of the past decades. This will entail massive investment in agriculture, industry mining, tourism, etc.
- b. SPN shall strive to achieve local production of most products needed for self-sufficiency in our own country through research in science and technology.
- c. SPN will ensure massive investment in the steel industry especially Ajaokuta steel and other steel companies under public ownership with democratic management and control of workers
- d. SPN shall resurrect the textile industry as well as other areas of industry where Nigeria has and could achieve viable growth and self-sufficiency.
- e. In order to achieve a planned and balanced economic development, SPN will strive to reverse the mono-economic status of Nigeria as an exporter of raw materials to exporter of both raw materials and industrial products to correct trade imbalance.

## **(9) EMPLOYMENT**

Unemployment is a rising phenomenon. As of 2011 about 40 million Nigerians are unemployed while millions are still under-employed. Unemployment among the youths is put at 42%.

To reverse this trend, an SPN government will impement all the provisions of Section 17, subsection 3 (a - g) under Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution. Additionally an SPN government will strive to achieve the following:

- a. Massive investment in the expansion of infrastructure, facilities and productive capacity to be able to mop up unemployment.
- b. To End casualization and the new casualised job schemes recently introduced by governments and private employers where youths are employed on poverty wages and work under slavish conditions.
- c. Creation of decent, well-paid jobs with good condition of service and trade union rights.
- d. Payment of adequate unemployment benefit to those without a job and welfare benefits for the unemployed, sick and elderly.
- e. Full employment for all able-bodied men and women who desire to work and a work-study opportunity for young people.
- f. Public works programme under democratic control that will speedily and steadily reduce unemployment.
- g. Implement a national minimum wage in all sectors of N52,200, first demanded by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) in December 2008; to be reviewed upward periodically to match the rate of inflation and cost of living.

## **(10) CORRUPTION**

Corruption thrives when resources are undemocratically and bureaucratically managed. Only open and democratic management of resources, production, services and exchange can guarantee accountability, transparency and probity. While it is reported that over \$140 billion was looted between 1999 and 2009 in Nigeria by the political elite, it is noteworthy that this is aside the officially sanctioned pilfering, where 17, 474 political office holders have collected or allocated to themselves as 'salaries and emoluments' over N6 trillion since 2006. This is not to mention corruption perpetrated through the privatization and commercialization policies, pro-big business trade and economic policies (e.g. bail out of banks, fraudulent loan policies, etc).

An SPN government will immediately implement the provision of Section 15 subsection 5 Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution which expressly states that "The State shall abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power". This will be achieved through the following policies:

- a. Democratically elected public tribunals comprising elected representatives of workers, peasants, farmers, students, professionals and the government to determine cases of corruption and prosecute indicted persons.
- b. Investment of public tribunals with the power to recover all stolen wealth since 1960 by confiscating properties of past political office holders, which were illegally acquired with stolen wealth, and convert them to the use of the public.
- c. Rejection of all jumbo allowances and salaries of political office holders. Abolition of convoys and other means of unconscionable extravagance and wastage of the national wealth. All public office holders under an SPN government will earn the average wage of a skilled civil servant and have all expenses publicly listed.
- d. Subjection of public office holders to recall by a simple majority of the voters/people they represent.
- e. Democratic management of all public departments, agencies, and companies through committees comprising elected representatives of workers and the government.

## (11) **DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS**

In order to truly build a better Nigeria, democracy must be fully practised without fear or favour. In this wise, an SPN government shall see to the immediate and full implementation of Section 14, Section 15 subsection 2 - 4, Section 16 subsection 2 (d), Section 17 subsection 2 (a - e) and Section 22 of Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In addition, an SPN government shall also pursue the following:

- a. Recognition of the right to a national minimum living wage, suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, education, health, social security including old age care and pensions, and unemployment, sick benefits and welfare of the disabled
- b. Immediate and unconditional reinstatement of all politically motivated sack/expulsion of workers/students and end to the victimization of workers/trade unionists and student activists.
- c. Defense of the right to demonstrate and strike.
- d. Trial of those responsible for human rights abuse during military and civilian rule and adequate compensation for the victims.
- e. Immediate repeal of all undemocratic and anti-labour laws
- f. Abolition of discrimination against women. Equal political, civil, property and social rights for women. Equal pay for work of equal value without discrimination on account of sex, or any other ground whatsoever.
- g. Freedom of expression, association and assembly. Full freedom and independence for trade unions and student bodies without interference from state or management.
- h. A genuine multi-party democracy with the right of every individual and groups to organize political parties. The right to stand for election as independent candidates.
- i. Democratic control of the police and full democratic and trade union rights for police and military personnel. Decent accommodation and a living wage for all police and military personnel as part of the fight against corruption.
- j. Right of all ethnic nationalities to self-determination.
- k. Support for the call for the convocation of a truly Sovereign National Conference (SNC) comprising elected representatives of social groups such as workers, peasant farmers, traders rank and file of the armed forces and police, professionals and ethnic nationalities according to their numerical strength to deliberate and decide on the way forward for the country and to draw up a new constitution for Nigeria.
- l. International solidarity against oppression, exploitation and imperialist wars.



(12) **ECONOMY**

Section 16 subsection 2 (c) of Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution states that the State shall direct its policy towards ensuring "that the economic system is not operated in such manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group". In order to provide the resources to build a more equitable society, the Socialist Party of Nigeria (SPN) shall faithfully implement this provision of the constitution by:

- a. Nationalizing the major sectors of the economy under public democratic control and management with compensation paid to former owners on the basis of proven need.
- b. Democratic management and control of public companies and parastatals by committees comprising elected representatives of workers, consumers, trade unions and the government.
- d. End to policies of privatization, commercialization, deregulation, hike in fuel price, retrenchment of workers, etc which go contrary to the spirit and letters of Chapter 2 of the 1999 constitution. Workers will not be retrenched but be constantly retrained to be able to function in a changing environment.
- e. Embarking on a public works programme to build roads, houses, railways, schools and hospitals in order to create jobs and develop public infrastructures
- h. Implementing a system of progressive taxation accompanied by effective measures to prevent tax evasion. Collections of all taxes and payments owed to the Nigerian government by local and foreign companies doing business in Nigeria.
- i. Making the interests of Nigerian citizens the primary determinant of government economic policies.

**This manifesto was adopted at the Inaugural Convention of the Socialist  
Party of Nigeria (SPN) on November 16, 2013**