

**A SPEECH DELIVERED BY EMMANUEL JOHN NKANTA;  
COORDINATOR, BUILD A BETTER NIGERIA VOLUNTEERS, AT  
THE 2011 ABUJA PEACE AND UNITY DECLARATION AT THE  
UNITY FOUNTAIN, ABUJA ON THE 31<sup>ST</sup> OF JANUARY, 2011**

**GOD BLESS NIGERIA**

Dear Compatriot,

I am glad to welcome you to this epoch making event; an occasion that will go down in history as a Voluntary Assembly of Nigerians desirous of Peace and Unity for our Nation, Nigeria. It is an assembly that is significant because of the symbolic nature of the place we gather today; ‘The Unity Fountain’. This is a place central to our Dear Country. This is a place where the thirty- six States of the Federation is represented as one.

Ninety Seven Years ago, we were amalgamated as one Nigeria. Forty-Seven years later, we saw a great light of independence and a sign of hope after several toils and labour of our heroes past. But Fifty years later, we must face the tragic fact that Nigerians are still not united. Fifty years later, the life of a Nigerian is still sadly crippled by the manacles of Ethnic rivalry and Religious bigotry. Fifty years later, the Nigerians live on a lonely land of poverty amidst the vast ocean of material prosperity. Fifty years later, the Nigerian is still languishing in the canker worm of corruption, coupled with bomb blasts, kidnapping and terrorism.

In the lines of the National Anthem and the Pledge, we owe our Nation the debt of serving Nigeria with all our strength and to defend her unity. It is obvious today that most Nigerians; both leaders and followers have defaulted on this Pledge. Instead of constructing our Nation, some of us destroy our Nation. This we do with our attitude enclosed in thoughts, words and action. We are aware that violence breeds poverty. War is the mother of poverty. We are also aware that poverty and hunger could provoke conflicts. It can convert Nation Builders into Nation Destroyers. But we refuse to believe that Justice is blind. Even if it is, as Children of Light, we could make it see again. We refuse to believe that there are not insufficient human and natural resources to make our land a fruitful Nation. Even if there are, we can harness the God given talent and abilities.

For too long we have taken the back seat, stood in the shadow, tried to suppress our intellect, our knowledge and our understanding. Now is the time to live our National Anthem, Pledge and our constitution. Now is the time to live the promises of Democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark valley of violence and disunity to the sunlit path of peace and unity. It would be fatal for the Nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of the oppressed.

As we leave this fountain to our various communities, I encourage you not to wallow in the desert of despair that the situation of our Nation can not be changed. The moment has come for us to look at the future with our eyes and drink from the flowing spring of hope. Do not let the dark challenges of our Nation to suffocate the light of Greatness. I charge you to rise again to the task of building a better Nigeria as I say to you today:

In spite of the differences and frustrations of the moment, I still believe that God still loves Nigeria. God's Blessings is on Nigeria and Nigerians.

Even as we gather today to declare that peace and unity should be our watch word, we can only achieve this when we say 'God Bless Nigeria'.

Though the road ahead us be long and rough and our climb steep and slippery with difficulties of today and tomorrow, we can live the Nigeria dream when we say 'God Bless Nigeria'.

The days of long speeches are over. Now is the time to act. So, let us put on the helmet of good leadership, the hand gloves of self reliance, the belt of good morals, the shoes of discipline, and the cloak of community development service as we say 'God Bless Nigeria'.

As we recapture the mood of optimism that defined us at independence, with that legendary can-do-spirit, that marked us as Nigerians, let us harness our talent, intelligence and ability to build a productive and sustainable society as we say 'God Bless Nigeria'.

Today, we work towards the creation of a better society where violence and war will be banished from the face of the earth, medical care accessible to all especially Children, eradication of corruption and injustice, eradication of suffering and humiliation, love amongst tribes, ethnic groups and religions,

free and fair elections conducted and jobs provided for the unemployed, and to always say ‘God Bless Nigeria’.

Today, we commit ourselves to practice solidarity with those who are weaker and marginalized. Let us commit ourselves to respect the life of every man, woman or child. To refuse violence, to withstand corruption, not to decay in frustration, not to be fooled by false promises, not to flee our lands , not to fall in the trap of racism, to live in mutual respect among believers of different faiths to work for peace and to always say ‘ God Bless Nigeria’

This is our commitment. This is our prayer if we must make peace and unity a reality. We need God’s continuous Blessings to hew out the mountain of despair a stone of hope. We need God’s Blessings to be our Brother’s keeper. With this prayer and commitment, we will be able to transform the jangling discord of our Nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this commitment and prayer, we will be able to live and work together.

We therefore ask you to take this commitment and prayer seriously. We ask you to be wise men and women, enlightened politicians, responsible fathers, lovers of peace and unity. I am proud to be Nigerian; I am Proud to be African. I believe that Nigeria can rise again. Let us make a new pact for Nigeria; a pact for the future of our Nation. Too many tears have been shed. Too many lives have been broken. The World needs Nigeria, a better Nigeria. We all need each other to grow. We need each other to make our society a better place to live. We need each other for Development to flourish. Together we can build a better Nigeria.

God Bless Nigeria!!!

**EMMANUEL JOHN NKANTA**  
***FOR: BUILD A BETTER NIGERIA VOLUNTEERS***