

## An Ambassador for Peace and a Peaceful Political Transition

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*UPF ambassadors for peace were among the many who helped maintain peace during the recent presidential election in Nigeria.*

In the context of the recent election and a peaceful transfer of power, the Nigerian national leader at the time explains about how True Parents have helped his nation

Nearly a hundred and fifty ambassadors for peace, trained by the West African Network of Election Observers, worked to ensure the voting process was free and fair in Nigeria's recent presidential election. They underwent one day of training. Seeing observers at the polling booths that are well dressed and dignified has a good influence on potential voters. They get the sense that things are well organized; this encourages people to behave well. Many people who vote in elections represent the grass roots population, so having observers apparently from the more educated classes helps ensure that the voting goes smoothly.

If you are an election observer, you cannot vote. Still, our ambassadors for peace agreed to do this. Moreover, because of the possibility of unrest or even attacks, this can be a risky task to undertake. In fact, during the election, many citizens left the big cities to travel to their hometowns to keep safe.

They were worried about something happening. So for the ambassadors for peace to have this sacrificial heart, the willingness to observe at polling booths, they had to have their nation in their hearts. They also believe in the ambassador for peace ideal of living for the sake of others, and doing something to benefit others.

In 2011, True Parents came to Nigeria. This, to my mind, has protected Nigeria until today. This was for me the main turning point. If True Parents had not come to Nigeria in 2011, Nigeria would have been in trouble.

This is true. I know it, I see it and I feel it. When Father spoke with our president, Father was very serious. He was speaking loudly, banging on the table and saying strong words. The main things Father conveyed to him were to "resemble God," "maintain a pure lineage" and "keep traditions." Father spoke about these things very strongly, and our president seemed to be thinking, something must be happening here; this man is talking so seriously, so strongly.

Father also said that in three years' time our nation would begin to grow and develop, among the developed nations in the world. I thought, "Nigeria?"

In three years' time?" But because Father said it, I took it as true. Local predictions based on the situation of the country, even during the year that Father came, were that Nigeria would divide or totally collapse by 2015!

In 2014, Nigeria celebrated its centenary. Even though Father had predicted a good future, our responsibility also matters. I saw that the economy was growing but even the very year Father came to Nigeria, we experienced our first suicide bombing. When I heard about that, I wondered whether True Parents would cancel their trip, but soon after, I received news that Father had said the event in Nigeria would be a global event. People from around the world should come. True Parents' point of view was completely different from mine.

Of course, we did everything in terms of security -- we went to the police department, and the anti-bomb squad came and checked everything; even so, I was worried. On the day of the event, I felt as though the whole world was in that hall. True Parents were there. True Children were there.

Famous leaders were there. In a way I was praying that everything would finish quickly, that Father and Mother would leave the venue quickly and everyone would be safe.

The event with the president was not very smooth, but Father later said that it was perhaps 70 percent successful.

Nevertheless, True Parents accepted that offering. I would say that this saved Nigeria. Many things have happened since but I feel that worse things would have happened if True Parents had not come.



*UPF ambassadors for peace attended training for what many considered a dangerous task.*

### **The 2015 election**

In Nigeria, the incumbent leader always has the upper hand when election time comes -- he has everything at his disposal. Most people want to keep their jobs, so the government ministries call for people to vote for the incumbent, so that they can keep their jobs. This time the opposition parties did not compete against each other. People were worried that whichever side won -- the incumbent or the new person -- there would be trouble. Many people left the capital city, left the major cities, to get away from this.

Naturally, I felt I needed to be in Nigeria for the elections, which were originally to be held on February 14. Yet, the election was postponed to the time I knew I would be in Korea on a forty-day workshop, as would the UPF director and the president of the Women's Federation. All we could do is pray. Of course, activities continued in Nigeria, such as UPF's organizing people to observe the election, which was a very good condition.

I came to think that it was good we were in Korea. The best internal condition we could offer was to be in Chung Pyung on a forty-day workshop.

I mentioned to Dr. Cho, the West African region regional president, that I was worried and that the leaders that had come from Nigeria were going to have a special prayer. I asked him, please, to pray for Nigeria.

We also spoke to the East Africa regional president, Bakary Camara, to ask that all the African national leaders in Chung Pyung pray.

The president began to take a stronger stance against Boko Haram at that time. Although terrorists did

attack as expected, they did not succeed in disrupting the election on a national scale. What is more, one or two days before the election, we had a special prayer in Dae Mo nim's prayer room. In this prayer room, we need to pray with all of our heart and all of our mind. We could pray for our country. I knew that not only the four of us from Nigeria but also other African leaders were praying for our country.

The incumbent president reached the point where he felt that he would not win, and he called the leader of the opposition party to concede the election. This was a heavenly victory.

It meant that neither side was moved to accuse the other. Our president said, "Thank you. Congratulations," so no one supporting the incumbent president could say a word. The president gave a speech in which he said, "I promised the country free and fair elections. I have kept my word." His party should be happy that they have fulfilled that mission.

I believe this was not only external but also spiritual. We have to believe in the spirit world and that True Parents' love gave Nigeria this opportunity to succeed. This is my strong belief.

Goodluck Jonathan (Nigerian president 2010–2015) became an ambassador for peace when True Mother was in Nigeria in 2006. True Mother blessed him and his wife at the time.

We could not teach him enough. When he became the vice-president, we reached out to him but there were always situations. What he said during the election demonstrated that he has the character of an ambassador for peace. In his official profile, he had it written that he is an ambassador for peace. That an ambassador for peace said, "Congratulations, you have won," and then relinquished his power, I feel, was a victory for God and True Parents because an ambassador for peace voluntarily said this and this not such a common occurrence. Sometimes, they go to court.