

Our Future Is Now – Declaration Speech by Chukwuka Monye

Dear Nigerians and everyone witnessing this moment here and all over the world, I thank you for your interest in a better Nigeria. I am honoured to be here today, filled with excitement and a sense of duty that is comparable to nothing I have ever felt before.

On this special day, which is also The Armed Forces Remembrance Day, I want to start by recognizing and honouring our gallant and brave heroes who fought and sacrificed for the existence of our great Nation. To them, I say “The labours of our heroes past shall never be in vain”. It is a sentence from our national anthem that anchors my being and commitment. And to our present heroes who even today are still defending our sovereign state, I say “your labour will not be in vain”.

Although, I wonder if our founding fathers would be content with the state of our Nation today?

Some of the questions that come to my mind are, how are the Nigerian people faring? How are owners of small businesses able to sustain their livelihood? How do we measure the value of a life when the pillars of the health sector are crumbling? How are we empowering our children when the educational systems are declining? How can we cater to the needs of the youth when there are not enough jobs for them? How can we go about our daily lives freely when violence, crime, and banditry are on the rise? These are some of the questions that bother me and perhaps are questions that our heroes past and present are pondering as well.

I represent a generation that has not yet witnessed the Nigeria our parents told us about. I represent a generation that desires opportunities to express their innovative capacities. I represent a generation that desires justice, peace, and equity. I represent a generation that excels and has attempted to create the best we can, despite the limited empowerment we have received. I represent a generation that believes that a global economy can be created out of things that we are passionate about such as music, arts, and technology. We cannot talk about

the state of our economy without including these passionate people – it should mean something to be a Nigerian with passion.

I am a Niger Deltan who is proudly Nigerian and a firm believer of 'one Nigeria' due to the wholesome exposure to different parts and cultures of the country through my secondary school days, where I met some of my closest friends from various ethnic backgrounds and my marriage to a beautiful daughter of Obosi, Anambra State.

I am grateful for my educational background which includes attending a Federal Government College in Lagos, and University briefly in Ogun State before leaving the country on a scholarship. The combination of these experiences has given me a worldview that puts a priority on the dignity of the human being.

What I have learnt from having my formative years in Nigeria has helped me to survive in other parts of the world; and what I have learnt from being away from my country has reaffirmed my love for it.

I have since then dedicated my career of 21 years to building businesses, mentoring leaders, and impacting lives through social initiatives. Through a consulting business I founded 15 years ago, I have led the transformation of numerous public and private sector institutions.

While on this journey, I experienced first-hand the challenges that Nigerians and Nigerian businesses go through notwithstanding how resilient we are as a people. The power of our experience is so valuable.

The poverty rate is alarming, with the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics in 2020 – estimating that 83 million people live below the poverty line; a figure that equates to the population of 20 of the least populated states in Nigeria. These people go to bed hungry with many of them not knowing where their next meal will come from.

Above all, is the fact that Nigerians are at a high point of hopelessness and despair. The foundational structures of Nigeria are at a brink of collapse with institutions such as justice, education, health, and the security infrastructure unable to effectively meet the needs of Nigerians.

I do not stand before you to echo the many ways in which our country is deteriorating. I only bring them to the fore because I want us to collectively reflect – especially on this Remembrance Day – our role in altering our country's destiny, of ensuring that the work of our founding fathers is not in vain. I want us to challenge ourselves to move towards our birthright of prosperity. I do not, and cannot do this

work alone. It is built on the backs of all of us – youth, clerics, traders, women, business people, private and public sector leaders, and so many more who have come before us.

I have lived a life of faith – one steadfast in our creator and another in our human capacity to influence our own destinies. So much of who we are depends on the choices we make. I firmly believe with all my heart that if together, we make the right decisions that employ all the human, mineral and natural resources that we have been endowed with, I have no doubt that we can see a better Nigeria in our lifetime.

For this reason, I, Chukwuka Monye present myself to serve as the president of this great nation, Nigeria.

I love Nigeria and I believe that Nigerians matter and deserve a better today.

Growing up as a young boy, I remember vividly being told that we are the leaders of the future. We accepted this with all our hearts believing that the future was coming soon. However, overtime I realized that the future that we were promised appeared to be a date that will not be delivered. And so, I make bold to say to every Nigerian dreaming of a better Nigeria, that the future is not on a date on a calendar yet to be revealed. Believe me when I say, Our Future is Now!

I offer to serve Nigeria in the capacity that will unify and engage the citizens to embrace and execute a plan that focuses on resetting the foundation of the nation, so that the transformation of the country into a true African leader can begin. We must reorganize our security systems and our institutions in order to create the environment that will lead to job creation and poverty alleviation. Therefore, the focus of my vision is Security, Institutional Reforms, and Jobs.

For me, these are not just political statements; they are real expectations, based on my own and other people's lived experiences, and I understand all of them to be critical ways for us to move through the present and arrive at a better future.

I believe that we have an opportunity to close gaps such as those between generations, between the public and private sectors, between the north and south and between Nigeria and the international community and I am uniquely positioned by my age and experience to serve as the bridge builder.

As a generation, we must rely on the wisdom of our fathers and mothers to ensure that our energies are properly harnessed to yield impactful development.

I believe that there is an abundance that we are yet to experience as a people. A calling of greatness. And I will do this work in service of community, knowing that all our voices are important.

Nigeria is a blessed nation with a chance to become one of the world's strongest economies.

Come 2023, we must seize this moment to prove that our generation is ready to lead our nation to a promise land and that the future we have waited so long for is now at hand... Our Future Is Now.

My prayer is that our children and grandchildren will look back at this moment in history and be proud that our generation took a stand to redirect the country for the better. Our Future Is Now!

It is possible for us to build a nation where the wealth is not a privilege for a few but for all. Our Future Is Now!

It is possible, especially with technology, for quality education to be made available to all. Our Future Is Now!

It is possible for every Nigerian to have access to decent quality healthcare. Our Future Is Now!

Our children are the leaders of tomorrow, and we are the leaders of today. Our Future is Now!

It is possible for us to achieve all of these if we come together, organize, and mobilize ourselves. Our Future Is Now!

It is time for the Nigerian diaspora to join in rebuilding Nigeria to the future that they are already experiencing. Our Future is Now!

It is possible if we arise in numbers and stand for what we desire and go for it. Our Future Is Now!

And should the people who told us that we are the leaders of the future tell us again to wait for our time, tell them – with all due respect – Our Future is Now!

Come with me and join a community that is in pursuit of a better Nigeria, wherever you are in the world by signing up as a member or volunteer at chukwukamonye.com

Let us start now, let us start today.

God bless you and God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.