

POLITICAL PARTIES

CODE OF CONDUCT

2013

NIGERIA

1. **PREAMBLE**

We the registered political parties of Nigeria.

Cognizant of the roles of political parties in consolidating and deepening our democracy, ensuring an environment conducive for successful elections, political stability, enduring democracy and overall wellbeing of Nigerians;

Realise the need to be more democratic in the conduct of our activities in ensuring peace, unity, understanding, respect for each other, transparency and credibility of the electoral processes;

Mindful of the experiences and opinions of Nigerians with previous elections and the need for all political parties, in and outside of government, to work harmoniously towards the entrenchment and defence of democracy in Nigeria, and

Committed to respecting the legal framework guiding the electoral process in Nigeria, particularly the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) and the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended), do hereby resolve to give to ourselves the following Code of Conduct which shall be binding.

2. **RULE OF LAW**

1. All political parties, their leaders, members and supporters and candidates shall adhere to all existing laws, and regulations pertaining to elections, and the conduct of political parties, especially the elections guidelines established by INEC through the authority of the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended), and the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) and shall do nothing whatsoever; individually or collectively to undermine, flout, disrespect or circumvent them.

2. Every political party shall provide equal opportunity to qualified persons to participate in electoral activities.

3. Political parties have the right and freedom to put forward their views to the electorate without hindrance.

4. All political parties are enjoined at all times to hold the rights and freedom of the Nigerian people, as guaranteed by law.

5. All political parties shall ensure, and practice internal party democracy by adhering strictly to the provisions of their Party's Constitution.

6. No political party shall engage in violent activities of any kind, as a way of demonstrating its strength. All political parties shall publicly condemn any form of political violence.

7. Political parties shall ensure strict compliance with this Code of Conduct and assist the security agencies and electoral officials in apprehending and sanctioning their members who attempt to, or flout the provision of the Code, the Electoral Act and or INEC electoral guidelines.

8. Political parties shall co-operate with other stakeholders in developing further compliance and monitoring mechanisms to give the full effect of this code.

9. Every political party shall ensure the promotion of active participation of women, youth and the physically challenged in the electoral processes. Consequently, every political party shall:-

- (a) Respect the rights of women, youth and physically challenged to communicate freely with parties and candidates;
- (b) Facilitate the full and equal participation of women, youth and physically challenged in political activities;
- (c) Ensure the free access of women, youth and physically challenged to all public political meetings, marches, demonstrations, rallies and other public political events; and
- (d) Shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that women, youth and physically challenged are free to engage in any political activities.

10 Every Political Party shall (through the Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC) or its; (recognized agencies).

- (a) Recognise the authority of the Commission (INEC) in the conduct of an election;
- (b) Work together with the Commission to promote transparency, impartiality and confidence in the electoral process;
- (c) Obey any lawful direction, instruction or order of the Commission, or a member, employee or officer of the Commission;
- (d) Establish and maintain effective lines of communication with –
 - (i) The Commission; and
 - (ii) Other registered parties contesting the election.
- (e) Facilitate the access of the Commission or any person authorized by the Commission to their meetings, marches, demonstrations, rallies, fund raisers and other public political events of that party or candidate;
- (f) Co-operate in any lawful investigation by the Commission;
- (g) Take all reasonable steps to ensure –
 - (i) The safety of members, employees and officers of the Commission, and the Chief Electoral Officer, in the exercise of its powers or the performance of any duty assigned by the Electoral Act;
 - (ii) That persons referred to in subparagraph (i) are treated with utmost respect and not subjected to insult, hazard or threat by any representatives or supporters of that party or their candidate; and
 - (iii) That representatives of that party or their candidate attend meetings of any party liaison committee or other forum convened by the Commission.

- (iv) No political party shall keep, use or employ a private security organization or any other group to provide, security or assist in that regard during meetings, campaigns, rallies, processions or election, except as permitted by law.

3. **CAMPAIGN ISSUES**

- (1) All political parties, their candidates, officials and agents shall work towards ensuring an environment conducive for successful, peaceful, free and fair election campaign:-
- (2) All political parties shall assist INEC in ensuring that all their members and Nigerians of voting age are encouraged to fully participate in the voter registration exercise.
- (3) Political parties shall ensure that their agents and officials are sufficiently trained for voter registration and other election related activities.
- (4) Political parties shall ensure that the processes of nomination of their candidates for any elections comply with the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended), the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended).
- (5) Substitution of Nomination process shall be transparent, democratic, and non-violent.
- (6) Political parties must ensure that nomination and/or substitution of nominated candidates are done democratically within the stipulated INEC period, to ensure the certainty of candidates for the elections.
- (7) No political party or its candidate shall during campaign resort to the use of inflammatory language, provocative actions, images, or manifestation that incite violence, hatred, contempt or intimidation against another party or candidate or any person or group of persons on grounds of ethnicity, gender or for any other reasons.

- (8) No political party or its candidate shall make indic statements through broadcast press statement, handbills, pamphlets, leaflets or other publications.
- (9) All parties shall file with the Commission details of their public rallies and meetings in any particular area prior to such meeting.
- (10) All political parties shall take all necessary steps to coordinate their campaign activities in such a way as to avoid holding rallies, meetings, marches or demonstrations close to one another at the same time.
- (11) Where there is a clash in the date, venue or timing of any such activities of different political parties, their representatives shall meet, in the presence of law enforcement agencies, to resolve the issue amicably, without resort to intimidation, force or violence.
- (12) No political parties shall sponsor or allow the wearing of uniforms and emblems depicting militant activities or allow the carrying of offensive weapons during rallies and marches, and at polling and registration centres or at any political event.
- (13) All political parties shall have equal/equitable access to public owned print and electronic media, as guaranteed by law.
- (14) Political parties, their agents or their candidates shall not protect, or exercise undue influence for the release of persons arrested for carrying offensive weapons, violation of any electoral law, regulations and guidelines of INEC's and the provision of this Code of Conduct.
- (15) All political parties shall consistently educate and emphasize to their supporters and to all voters that their vote will be secret and that no person will know how any individual has voted.

- (16) No political party or their candidates shall prevent other parties or their candidates from pasting their posters or distributing their leaflets, handbills and other publicity materials in authorized public places. Furthermore, all parties and their candidates shall give directives to their members and supporters not to remove or destroy the posters and other campaign materials of other parties or their candidates. All parties, their members and supporters shall ensure that all their party posters, leaflets and other election campaign materials are removed from public places as soon as practicable when the campaign period ends.
- (17) All parties shall discourage their members in government from using their power of incumbency to the disadvantage of other parties or their candidates during campaign.

4. **ELECTION DAY ISSUES**

- (1) Political parties, their candidates and agents shall respect the law restricting access of unauthorized persons to polling stations, collation centres, and discourage undue interference with the voting process.
- (2) Every party shall instruct its members and supporters that no weapons or any object that can be used to cause injury shall be brought to the polling station, and that no party attire; colours, symbols, emblems or other insignia shall be worn to a polling station on Election Day.
- (3) Political parties shall recognize and acknowledge the rights of accredited observers and monitors at polling stations for the purpose of observing the conduct of elections and shall grant full lawful access to party activities to such observers.
- (4) All political parties and their candidates shall ensure that their Polling Agents and officials are sufficiently trained to monitor the voting exercise to ensure free and fair elections.

- (5) Political parties, their candidates and members shall cooperate fully with law enforcement agents to ensure the safety and security of election materials, election officials, party agents, and the electorates on Election Day.
- (6) Political parties shall refrain from fraudulently procuring results and votes by invasion and forcible occupation of polling and collation centre, the manipulation of ballot boxes, result sheets or by any other unlawful means.
- (7) Political parties and their agents shall not engage in any of the following corrupt practices:
 - (a) Forcible occupation or invasion of a polling station, collation centre or INEC office;
 - (b) Destroy any electoral material or INEC property;
 - (c) Encouraging any supporter(s) to cast more than one vote
 - (d) Encouraging any supporter(s) to vote in the name of another person, living, dead or fictitious
 - (e) Buying votes or offering any bribe, gift, reward, gratification or any other monetary or materials consideration of allurements to voters and electoral officials;
 - (f) Canvassing for votes within the vicinity of a polling station on polling day
 - (g) Any other form of cheating or any act considered to be a malpractice under the electoral laws and regulations.
 - (h) Political parties, their candidates and their agents shall not obstruct, harass or intimidate journalists in the course of their duties.
- (8) All political parties, their candidates and their agents party members and supporters shall accept the official election results as certified by INEC as free and fair, or challenge the results in Court.

5. **POST ELECTION ISSUES**

- (1) Political parties shall not intimidate, harass or cajole any polling agent of a political party to sign election result, if in the judgment of such an agent the election in the polling station was not free and fair.
- (2) No political party, their candidates or agents shall procure election results fraudulently or manipulate collation sheets, ballot boxes or cause to be published or displayed by the electronic and print media such unofficial or fraudulent results, except those published or announced by INEC.
- (3) Political parties and their candidates shall endeavour to send congratulatory messages to their opponents who are announced as duly elected.
- (4) All political parties and their candidates shall refrain from the use of violent or extra judicial means in expressing their non-acceptance of election results.
- (5) Political parties and their candidates shall ensure strict adherence to provisions of the law in seeking redress against perceived electoral irregularities.

6. **PARTY FINANCE**

- (1) All political parties shall at all times maintain a record of their sources and application of funds for all of their activities, including elections and campaigns.
- (2) All political parties shall endeavour to submit their audited account and reports to INEC as required by law.
- (3) Every political party and their candidates shall strive at all times to adhere strictly to election and campaign expenses limit as contained in the relevant provisions of the law.

- (4) No political party shall unlawfully acquire property or assets for itself or members or any other person outside approved sources, or allow unlawful contributions to its funds by organizations within and outside Nigeria.

7. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT

There shall be a standing Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC) whose objective is to promote interparty dialogue among all registered political parties with a view to contributing to violence free, fair, credible and transparent electoral process in Nigeria; and ensuring the adherence to the provisions of the Political Parties Code of Conduct including the consideration of any breach of the provisions of this code. Hence, political parties shall to all intent and purposes subscribe to its role as platform for interparty dialogue and adjudication of deputed.

1. ESTABLISHMENT OF INTER-PARTY ADVISORY COUNCIL (IPAC)

- (a) The instrument of authority establishing the IPAC is the political parties Code of Conduct, 2013
- (b) IPAC will continue functioning at the national level, while those of the states and the local governments are expected to evolve immediately.

2 MEMBERSHIP

- (a) IPAC will be constituted by one representative per political party who should also be member of his/her Party's National Working Committee (NWC); and
- (b) A representative of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

3 STRUCTURE

(A) General Body

The IPAC general body shall comprise a representative from each of the registered political parties and a representative from INEC. It shall serve as the General Assembly of IPAC and shall be chaired by the elected IPAC Chairperson. The functions of the IPAC general body shall include:-

- (i) Under the supervision of INEC, elect the seven (7) member Executive Committee of IPAC for a one year term renewable for an additional one year based on merit and commitment;
- (ii) In accordance with the relevant provisions of this code of conduct, nominate and elect the Executive, Technical and Standing Committee members for a period of one year.
- (iii) Receive periodic reports from the Chairperson and all the Committees; and take the necessary action as required.
- (iv) Approve the working documents of IPAC.
- (v) Nominate and approve an Electoral Committee to conduct the election of IPAC Executives at least one month to the expiration of the tenure of incumbents.
- (vi) From time to time engage in dialogues on inter and intra party issues.

(B) Executive Committee

(1) COMPOSITION/FUNCTIONS

The Executive Committee shall comprise of seven (7) members with the following specific designations: Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary and Publicity Secretary with the following functions:

- i) Carry out the decisions and instructions of the General body.
- ii) Ensure that all organs of IPAC function democratically.

- iii) In consultation with the other Committees, initiate issues for inter and intra party dialogue.
- iv) Review all reports before presentation to the General Body.
- v) Initiate and recommend policies and programs to the General Body.

(2) **RESPONSIBILITIES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

(a) **Chairperson**

- (i) Summon and preside over All IPAC meetings;
- (ii) Direct the activities of IPAC under the over all supervision of the Executive Committee;
- (iii) Assign specific functions to any member or Officer of IPAC;
- (iv) Ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the Political Parties Code of Conduct;
- (v) Be a signatory 'A' to all Bank Accounts operated by IPAC;
- (vi) Approve all public statements by and on behalf of IPAC;
- (vii) Approve expenditures and financial commitments on behalf of IPAC

(b) **Deputy Chairperson**

- (i) Assist the Chairperson in the discharge of his/her duties;
- (ii) Deputise for the Chairperson in his/her absence; and
- (iii) Carryout ad-hoc duties as may be approved by IPAC Executive Committee.

(c) **Secretary**

- (i) Serve as Chief Administrative Officer of IPAC;
- (ii) Be the custodian of all IPAC documents and materials;
- (iii) Conduct and direct the conduct of Correspondences between IPAC and the other bodies;
- (iv) Keep all records of proceedings of IPAC meetings;
- (v) Ensure the implementation of IPAC decisions and commitments in collaboration with IPAC Chairman;
- (vi) Render written annual report of activities of IPAC; and
- (vii) Give notice of IPAC meetings in consultation with Chairman, IPAC
- (viii) Be signatory 'B' to all Bank Accounts operator by IPAC

(d) **Deputy Secretary**

- (i) Assist the Secretary in the discharge of his/her duties;
- (ii) Deputise for the Secretary in his/her absence; and
- (iii) Carry out ad-hoc duties as may be approved by IPAC Executive Committee.

(e) **Treasurer**

- (i) Receive and pay into the Bank Accounts of IPAC all funds and payments for and on behalf of IPAC within forty-eight hours (48 hrs)
- (ii) Keep and maintain all cheque books and other financial and security documents of IPAC;
- (iii) Pay monies duly approved by IPAC Chairman;
- (iv) Prepare and submit annual statements of account and quarterly reports to the IPAC Executive Committee; and
- (v) Be signatory 'B' to all Bank Accounts operated by IPAC

(f) **Financial Secretary**

- (i) Receive and maintain records of all donations, grants and subventions paid to IPAC;
- (ii) Recommend proposals and means of raising funds to finance the programmes and activities of IPAC;
- (iii) Prepare and monitor the implementation of IPAC annual budget;
- (iv) Implement internal control measures to protect the assets of IPAC; and
- (v) Any other duties assigned by IPAC Executive Committee

(g) **Publicity Secretary**

- (i) Manage and Project positively the image of IPAC;
- (ii) Co-ordinate the flow of information and the public/media relations of IPAC;
- (iii) Publicize the decisions and programmes of IPAC with the approval of Chairman, IPAC; and
- (iv) Advise IPAC on Media Relations.

(C) **Technical Working Committee**

25% of IPAC members shall constitute a Technical Working Committee to be elected by the General Body based on merit and commitment for a period of one year to run concurrently with the tenure of the Executive Committee. The Technical Committee will have the following functions:-

- i. Observe and monitor the implementation of the Code of Conduct of IPAC and provide periodic written report to the General Assembly;
- ii. Identify and investigate violations of the code of conduct by any political party and propose sanctions to the general assembly in accordance with the existing laws of IPAC.
- iii. Receive complaints and investigate the veracity of the claims, and propose to the General Assembly the imposition of appropriate sanctions in accordance with existing laws of IPAC.
- iv. Resolve disputes between two or more political parties arising from misunderstanding and/or breach of the code of conduct.
- v. Prepare recommendations on remedies to INEC on actions taken on (iv) above for endorsement and submission by the general assembly.

(D) **STANDING STRATEGY COMMITTEE OF IPAC**

There shall be a Standing Strategic Committee comprising of all parties with representation in the National Assembly as permanent members and additional five (5) non-permanent members from other parties to be elected by the General Body whose tenure shall run concurrently with that of the Executive Committee.

The functions of the Standing Strategy Committee include:

- i. Develop and recommend proposals that will enhance capacity of political parties to the IPAC general Assembly for onward submission to the Commission;
- ii. Serve as a platform for engagements on topical issues of national importance on non-partisan basis and present these issues to the General Assembly.
- iii. Identify issues during the electoral process that require dialogue with INEC, and make proposals for the General Assembly.
- vi. Facilitate the interest of political parties in the preparation and passage of electoral legislation.
- v. And any other function(s) assigned to it by the General Assembly/IPAC/Commission

8. **REMOVAL FROM OFFICE /COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

An elected IPAC Executive or Committee Member may be removed from office by a vote of at least 2/3 of Members of IPAC General Body for any of the following offences:-

- a) Financial misappropriation that is verified by a disciplinary committee to be appointed at an IPAC general meeting;

- b) Failure to comply with the provisions of the Political Parties Code of Conduct as may be determined by a Committee to be appointed at an IPAC general meeting.
- c) Where such as member resigns, decamps or cross-carpet from the political party he/she represents.

9. **FUNDING**

- (1) Political parties shall contribute funds (based on criteria/formula to be determined by the General Body for running the activities of IPAC).
- (2) INEC shall provide subvention to IPAC from time to time.
- (3) The Executive Committee shall device strategies to generate additional revenues to fund its program of activities.
- (4) IPAC funds shall be maintained and administered through a bank account with the Chairman and Treasurer or Financial Secretary as signatories (as the case may be).

10. **COMMITMENTS**

- (1) Every political party in collaboration with INEC and other relevant agencies shall ensure that this code is well publicized and fully observed by its members and supporters. Political parties shall further publicize this code, and sensitize the general public, by all lawful means available.
- (2) Political parties, having freely subscribed to this code shall:-
 - (a) be bound by this code;
 - (b) take decisive steps to prohibit leaders, officials, candidates and members from infringing this code;

- (c) take all reasonable steps to discourage any type of conduct by their supporters which would, if undertaken by a party official, candidate or member, be in breach of this code; and
 - (d) not abuse the right to complain about the violation(s) of this code, nor make false, frivolous or vexatious complaints.
- (3) Any political party adversely affected by a breach of any of the provisions of this code shall report the breach to the offending party and seek an amicable resolution of the dispute.
 - (4) Any dispute which cannot be resolved between parties shall be reported to the IPAC which shall give it a fair and expeditious hearing/s. The IPAC is empowered to recommend to INEC appropriate sanctions on erring political party, this is without prejudice to the right of parties and their candidates, or agents to pursue other legal actions.

11. **MEETING**

- (1) A quorum for meeting shall be formed by fifty percent membership of IPAC;
- (2) They shall meet quarterly and at any other time as may be necessary.

12. **DECLARATION**

This document comes into effect and is binding on all registered political parties upon its acceptance by at least 50% of the registered political parties in Nigeria.

DATED 16TH JULY, 2013

12. ENDORSEMENT/SIGNATURES

S/NO	NAME OF PARTY	NAME & DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE	DATE
1.	Accord (A)			
2.	Action Alliance (AA)			
3.	Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN)			
4.	Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD)			
5.	Allied Congress Party of Nigeria (ACPN)			
6.	Alliance of Democracy (AD)			
7.	African Democratic Congress (ADC)			
8.	All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP)			
9.	African Peoples Alliance (APA)			
10.	All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA)			
11.	Congress for Progressive Change (CPC)			
12.	Citizens Popular Party (CPP)			
13.	Democratic Peoples Party (DPP)			
14.	Kowa Party (KP)			
15.	Labour Party (LP)			
16.	Mega Progressive Peoples Party (MPPP)			
17.	National Conscience Party (NCP)			
18.	New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP)			
19.	People for Democratic Change (PDC)			
20.	Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)			
21.	Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA)			
22.	Peoples Party of Nigeria (PPN)			
23.	Social Democratic Party (SDP)			
24.	United Democratic Party (UDP)			
25.	United Progressive Party (UPP)			

13. INTERPRETATION

In this Code:

- * Electoral Commission' means the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).
- * Political Party' means any association lawfully registered by INEC as such
- * 'IPAC' means the Inter-Party Advisory Committee
- * 'IPC' means the Inter- Party Committee formed by representatives of all registered political parties in Nigeria with the mandate of draft this Code.
- * 'BOT' means Board of Trustees of each political party
- * 'NWC' means National Working Committees of each party.