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The Nigerian Physicians Advocacy Group

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PRESIDENT OF NIGERIA

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SCAN ME



INTERVIEW WITH MR. GODSWILL NWANKWO - 2023 PRESIDENT OF NIGERIA ASPIRANT - PART 1

Dr. Susan Edionwe MD Houston, TX

Dr. Susan Edionwe interviewed presidential hopeful, Mr. Godswill Nwankwo, a diasporan presidential candidate for 2023.

Edionwe: Thank you so much for taking the time for this interview. We will get right into it. You are running for president of Nigeria. Who are you? What is your background and what has made you decide to run?

Nwankwo: I was born and raised in Port Harcourt and I attended Federal Government College, Port Harcourt which was a really good opportunity to meet people from different backgrounds and different parts of the country. I went to college to study mechanical engineering; after graduating I was deployed to Kogi state which was an interesting experience especially coming from Port Harcourt and did my youth services with Schlumberger. After my services, I was hired by Schlumberger Anadrill and worked with them for a couple of years.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

During that time, I had a very strong revelation [about] the difficulties of graduates [around me] who also got a really good, first-class education but just because of the country's dysfunctional economy,...couldn't find a place to work. That hit me real hard because I was looking at myself and saying 'I could easily be in their shoes'. I became a mentor to so many of them and graduates would come to visit with me because they didn't have a job.

After I worked for a little while, I was transferred to the United States. From there, I worked with Halliburton and other companies until I started my own oil and gas company. After that, with all the issues happening in oil and gas such as the big oil spill by BP, I started to focus on discovering a system that I could build that would take away the human error of the workflow. I got my masters in engineering and I also got my MBA in finance at the U of Houston and then started an oil and gas private equity company that would give smaller entities access to capital. We have a network of investors and partners that we bring into the ecosystem and allow them to be a part of the deal process. We help smaller companies not just access capital but create a strategy. Everything I've seen & been involved in with corporate business & working in Nigeria and in the U.S. has shaped my perception of being a problem solver.

“We have a hard date of 2023, if we don't get it right there may not be a guarantee that we will have a country, that is the urgency of the situation right now”

Usually, it's easy for people to point out problems but very few people can actually come up with solutions. All of my professional careers, I've been in this perpetual cycle of problem-solving and as a business owner I have to deal with problems every day. I want to bring that mindset to Nigeria because when I see Nigeria with all its problems, we don't have leaders that are problem solvers. We have leaders who don't even understand what the problem is. They've abdicated their responsibilities. Nigeria needs a new generation of leadership that will actually bring solutions. And the unfortunate thing is that a majority of the leaders that are in Nigeria believe that they live in a functional society and they don't know any better.

Edionwe: So what is your solution?

Nwankwo: The mindset that I'm bringing to my campaign is to create a team, a select group of electoral candidates, and have them come in just like I do with

private equity; we create a portfolio and bring certain assets to the portfolio and we create a workflow in the portfolio that allows us to optimize processes. In this political scheme, we will build a system with political consultants from around the world and a political box and bring in candidates in all levels of government and put them in the box and they will now adopt strategies that are built by [experts] and employ them in their different constituencies.

Why? Because what we find is people that ran for office in the past, what they do is spend lots of peoples' money on the election and when they get into office, they focus on recouping their expenses and less time on actually solving problems. So this system I am building, where you have all these candidates coming, we are not going to spend any of your money; we are going to provide the resources to build out that framework for [like-minded] candidates, and all the candidates have to do is take that framework and play them in the areas where they're running their constituency and run for those elections so that when they get elected, their focus will not be on trying to recoup the money spent. So that is one lane I'm looking to eliminate - recouping of investments after elections.

Edionwe: So it's about keeping candidates honest. This sounds good in theory but with all the tentacles of corruption and how far it runs through the system, do you think this is realistic?

Nwankwo: Well, here's the thing, we need a new system. When people ask why don't I run for Senate or House of Assembly, I've seen the way that function works and I'm passionate about making and bringing FUNCTIONAL systems to Nigeria. If I am in a position where there's corruption around me, I'm going to call it out. When I call it out, what is going to be the result? People are gonna be pissed off, are going to try to assassinate me or kill me because I'm pointing out corruption. Would I risk my life as a senator when people are going to kill me? No. Instead, the best thing to do is build a system not just about occupying the executive branch but also finding people with the same mind to fill the legislative branch. We have to have the right people in legislation both at the federal and state level for us to be able to drive this. It's not gonna be possible for us to bring substantial change if we still have corrupt officials still muddying up the waters. You're fighting every day against people who are so entrenched in corruption it's going to be an uphill climb. For me, it'll be ideal if I can ensure that the people that are elected are people that have the same vision as I do... [they] have to understand [their] ultimate role is to provide that service to Nigerians. So with that mindset, we can all be on the same page and create visions that Nigerians want.

Again, I am bringing my corporate mindset to situations like this is to build controls [in this new system] such as financial controls that will make it absolutely difficult for people to steal. As a matter of fact, when I get into office, the first action I will take is to come up with every legal way I can to limit the salaries of elected leaders because I want to clarify to them that the reason they're coming here is not to enrich themselves but to serve Nigerians. I will build a system that will encourage people that want to serve. I'll make sure that all the ministers, departments, and agencies will have a situation where they are reporting their financial budgets not just every quarter but every year, just like you have with public companies and annual reports that are public. I am going to attach an accountant for every level of government that can generate financial reports every quarter and annually and make them public online so everyone can see them.

Edionwe: It is clear a new system and accountability are integral to your plan. Your vision will require a lot of support. Will you be running under any political party?

Nwankwo: What we're looking to do is we build out our mission and goals and all of our candidates and out of the currently registered parties, we will explore which of the parties will actually be on the same page with us when it comes to our mission and our goals. If we find one that is on the same page as us, then we will take our community into the party. Now, if we can't find a party that'll match our missions and goals, then we have to form our own party because what we're not going to do is compromise on our missions and goals.

Edionwe: I noticed you said, "we". Do you mean you have a ticket or other candidates who are going to be running alongside you?

Nwankwo: Yes, I would have someone who's going to run as Vice President, Senate candidates and House of Assembly candidates and Governors, etc; we will have all that up and down so that when we're ready to go, we will be moving with people that have the same mindset as us. That's our mission. But we do hope to find a party that is in line with our own mission and vision. Right now, we are still watching them closely. Nothing is off the table. If we have a call by representatives of any of these parties and they want to have a discussion on how we can come together, we are open to that.

Edionwe: You are currently in the diaspora, some people may see this as a strength but many more say this is going to be a steep, almost impossible climb for you. What do you think about your ability to overcome these challenges and make it to the highest office in the land in Nigeria?

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PRESIDENT OF NIGERIA

QR CODE
 SCAN ME

VISION 2025 AGENDA:

- 📍 Body Cameras for all Law Enforcement & Community Policing
- 📍 Eradicate Boko Haram and ISWA by 2025
- 📍 Digital Governance, Controls & Accountability via Blockchain
- 📍 Reliable Electricity for all Nigerians by 2025 (at least 40 GW)
- 📍 Free Primary & Secondary School Education for all Nigerians
- 📍 Free Skills Acquisition for all Nigerians in Construction, Tech and Agriculture
- 📍 Broadband Internet Access for all Nigerians
- 📍 Access to Good Primary Healthcare to all Nigerians

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Nwankwo: Well the way I look at it is, currently there are 84 million registered voters, PVC cardholders. The total votes for Buhari in 2019 was 15 million yet 84 million people registered to vote. 35 million people voted total in 2019, over 50 to 60,000,000 people did not vote. The question is, what strategy are we going to put in place to attract those people. We don't need all those 60 million people to vote for us; all we need is 20 or 30 million to vote.

Edionwe: A lot of people are realizing many Nigerians are not at the table when it comes to picking who the leadership is and it's only really a few that decide the fate of the whole country.

Nwankwo: Absolutely! I was recently out with somebody that I had run into and he was very interested in my campaign and he wanted to sit down and talk strategy; [as we talked] it was amazing how much the population experience in US and Nigeria contrast. He is from Sokoto, and he talked about how there is a need to bring them into the whole constitution of prosperity, and when I was talking about my plan, he was quite disturbed at how huge batches of the Nigerian population are abandoned and left behind and nobody cares about them.

SEE NEXT ISSUE FOR PART 2.



GODSWILL NWANKWO

A NEW GENERATION OF NIGERIAN LEADERSHIP

6 POINT MANIFESTO

01.

Accountability

Transparency, accountability, probity and good governance will be enforced at all levels of the government, starting from the office of the Presidency.

02.

Peace & Security

Security of lives, assets and properties of all Nigerians, including persons and entities residing or doing business in Nigeria must and shall be guaranteed.

03.

War Against Terrorism

Boko Haram shall be dismantled in the first 300 days of my administration. They are the scourge on humanity. They must be treated as such.

04.

Clean Environment

We will target resources that prioritizes environmental and climate justice. We will assess and address risks to communities impacted by pollution and other public emergencies.

05.

Infrastructures

Infrastructure investment in health, education, electric, agriculture and transportation systems will be key to our long term economic development and prosperity.

06.

Strong Foreign Policy

Nigeria progress has an inextricable impact on the peace, progress, and prosperity of the continent. We must embrace our role as the 'Giant of Africa' and take it seriously.



Picture: Candidate Nwankwo (right) with Mayor of Houston, Sylvester Turner (center right) and Chairman of NIDCOM, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa (center)

The LOBBY(IST)

We've DONE IT! Electronic transmission of votes passes in the Senate! Another case of successful lobbying.

Dr. Susan Edionwe MD, Houston TX

As of Tuesday, Oct. 12, 2021, headlines throughout Nigeria and the diaspora begin as follows "The Senate has bowed to pressure from the public on electronic transmission of election results by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)". No doubt, NGOs, interest groups, and pro-Nigeria stakeholders are a strong part of this success. This is another example of where lobbying and the power of the people result in substantive change.

As of Tuesday, the Senate rescinded its initial decision on an amendment to the Electoral Act Amendment Bill 2021 which was a decision that initially undermined INEC's ability to transmit electronic votes by stating "INEC can transmit election results electronically subject to confirmation of Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) of adequacy and security of National Network".

Now, the Senate has decided INEC can determine the mode of transmission of results during elections, including the electronic transmission or manual transmission.

Other amendments made by the Senate include:

- Clause 43(1) – The commission shall provide suitable boxes, electronic voting machines, or any other voting device for the conduct of elections.
- 43(2) The forms to be used for the conduct of elections to the offices mentioned in this bill shall be determined by the commission.
- 43(3) The polling agents shall be entitled to be present at the distribution of the election materials, electronic voting machine, and voting devices from the office to the polling booth.
- Clause 52(2) Subject to section 63 of this Bill, voting at an election and transmission of results under this Bill shall be in accordance with the procedure determined by the commission, which may include electronic voting.
- Clause 63(5) The presiding officer shall transfer the results including the total number of accredited voters and the results of the ballot in a manner as prescribed by the commission.
- 87(1) A political party seeking to nominate candidates for elections under this Bill shall hold direct primaries for aspirants to all elective positions, which shall be monitored by the Commission.

NPAG will continue to engage with INEC and FCT via our partners on ground. The work is not done yet. Stay tuned!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I choose to be optimistic as the fight for our democracy continues. We need to build strong systems that support the emergence of transformative leaders.

Iyore James MD/MALD, FACS