

PARTY DEFECTIONS AND SURVIVAL OF DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The issue of party defection is becoming a serious threat to Nigeria's democratic stability with special reference to the frequency in the fourth republic. This paper traces the historical antecedents of defection or cross carpeting from Nigeria's first and second republics; it notes that though, parties of those republics had strong ideological base, particularly the first republic than political parties of the nascent fourth republic democracy which lack clear ideological focus and divides, while the politicians lack principles. It relied on the review of extant literature and content analysis to expound the circumstance under review. The study argues that party defections in Nigeria should not only be blamed on lack of strong party ideology and manifestoes but on the self-centeredness of the average Nigerian politician in place of service to the people and the country. It maintains that the strength of character of politicians reflects the strength and effectiveness of Political Parties which invariably is directly proportional to the degree of resilience democracy enjoys. This unreliable and egoistic nature of the politicians and parties reflect to the fluidity of Nigeria's political party system that is threatening our democratic consolidation and good governance. It concludes by proposing some antidotes to this aberration.

KEYWORDS: Defection, Democracy, Good governance, Nigeria, Political Party

INTRODUCTION

Nigerian political parties have had chequered history of defections and cross defections of party members from one political party to another from the colonial era to the present fourth republic. The country has struggled without success to evolve virile political parties that would fit into the role of what political parties represent in other democratic politics of the world, which is, advancement of national interest and development through well thought out party ideologies and manifestoes.

As institutions, political parties usually consist of more than a single interest in the society and so, to some degrees, attempt to "aggregate interests" (Boafo-Arthur, 2003; 209, in M. Salih; Ed.) It is this interest articulation and aggregation that drive the parties to seek influence in a state by attempting to take power and control the machinery of government. Conversely, political parties in Nigeria seem to have remained mere platforms for the advancement of ethnic and individual interests and ambitions. Where these selfish interests are not served or threatened, Nigerian politicians have evolved the culture of defections and cross-carpeting in desperate bids to serve individual, sectional or group interest. Hence, defection from one political party to another has characterized the political landscape of Nigeria. It has become an established political culture in the Nigerian case to defect. This comes with a lot of debilitating challenges and implications for democracy and party politics in the country.

Historically, Nigerian political parties have largely revolved around individuals and godfathers who parade as the

best people to articulate ethnic positions either in alliance with others or alone in opposition. Issues and party ideologies have always been given secondary considerations at best, despite the tags of conservatives and progressives, socialists and feudalists, populists and elitists, and the likes.

The route of party defection in Nigeria could be traced to the run-up independence political party of the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM), which was formed from the Lagos Youth Movement in 1939 as an open party with national outlook and spread. The “charter” of the party erected for the Movement the ideal, among others of bringing together different ethnic groups in the country in addition to raising their collective awareness, and practically established branches in the East, West and North of the country. However, the party could not sustain its promise and spirit of national front and identity. In 1941, the spirit of national character of the party bowed to ethnic pressures when Samuel Akinsanya and the Ijebu Yoruba are pulled out of the Movement. The reason was that the non Ijebu Yoruba’s and other ethnic groups, mainly the Igbos, supported the victorious candidacy of an Ijaw, Ernest Ikoli, to the vacant seat in the Legislative Council over that of Akinsanya. This incident marked the beginning of party defection in Nigeria. The Igbo Union in Lagos, whose members were booed by the Yoruba’s prevailed on Azikiwe to form a new party, and this led to the formation of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroun (NCNC), with Herbert Macaulay as the first leader. The second case of party defection was the early morning cross-carpeting of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) elected members, to the Action Group (AG) on the floor of the Western Nigeria House of Assembly in 1951.

During the first republic, the former Premier of the defunct Western Region of Nigeria, S. L. Akintola left the Action Group in a crisis rooted more in personality clash and personal principles of the need for him to move the Yoruba race into the mainstream of Nigerian politics. He formed the United Progressive Party (UPP) which later entered into alliance with Zik’s NCNC and formed the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). Even within the political fold of Azikiwe, Dr. K. O. Mbadiwe defected from the NCNC to form his own political party, the Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN) in the 50s based on his disagreement with party leaders.

In the second republic, Akin Omoboriowo, the then Deputy Governor to Michael Ajasin of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) in the old Ondo state defected to the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) and became its gubernatorial candidate in the 1983 general election which turned the state to a theatre of political violence because of the desperate move by the NPN to win the governorship election through massive rigging and falsification of election figures.

The third republic which was aborted by the same military that conceived it saw a creation of two political parties, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC) with different ideological plumes – “a little to the left and a little to the right” as they were identified. It was clear to political observers that the republic would have produced a more defection drama if it had survived another election term, as some political leaders of the NRC were already admiring Moshood Abiola, the acclaimed winner of the June 12, 1993 presidential election that was annulled by the then military president, General Ibrahim Babangida. Some party chieftains whose party lost governorship elections in most of the states were already toadying and horse-trading with the governors and the leadership of the parties that won elections in their states in readiness for decamping to the party in power.

As if these were not enough to put the character and integrity of the Nigerian politicians to question, the rate of defection of party members from one political party to another in the present fourth republic has brought Nigeria’s party system to a theatre of mockery and disrepute. The scenario portrays Nigerian politicians not only as people without character and principle but also as people who are in politics for self aggrandizement. How does one explain a situation

where lawmakers defect from one party to another and then defect back to their original party in the space of only one month and under circumstances that celebrate disregard for principles? Party leaders in Party *A* suddenly move to Party *B* and begin to contradict everything they had done in Party *A*. How does one explain the claim that political office holders are paid to remain in their party? How does one explain that negotiations for party allegiance are premised on automatic ticket and pre-determined political posts? In all these types of horse-trading and deal-making, no one seems to talk about the people or securing obligations or commitments on infrastructural development. No one seems to raise the issue of free education or healthcare, let alone anything remotely representative of the needs of the people. The failure of political parties has dire consequences for the quality of governance in Nigeria.

In the last 16 years of democracy, Nigeria has witnessed unprecedented drama of party prostitution by self-styled political leaders at the various levels of our democratic setting. The development which is generally referred to as party defection, cross-carpeting, decamping, party-switching, canoe-jumping, party-jumping, party-hopping, floor-crossing etc. (Mbah, 2011, Malthora, 2005) has become so popular that the average Nigerian sees it not only as a tradition but an indispensable feature of democracy. The situation has become worrisome because political parties on their own now encourage defection based on the philosophy of “the more, the merrier” which is posing a serious threat to democratic consolidation in Nigeria. The researchers are of the view that the strength of character of politicians reflects the strength and effectiveness of Political Parties which invariably is directly proportional to the degree of resilience democracy enjoys. It is within this context that this paper is concerned with the character of Nigerian politicians and the relationship between political parties and democracy; and the extent to which the parties can contribute to the survival or failure of democracy in Nigeria.

Studies have revealed that under the present 2015 general election, out of the 29 governorship candidates of the main opposition party, the All Peoples Congress (APC), 18 had at one time or the other been members of the ruling party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which lost the March 29, 2015 presidential election to the APC. The roll call of these defectors are as follows: Aminu Tambwal – Sokoto, Abubakar Bagudu – Kebbi, Aminu Masari – Katsina, Umar Ganduje – Kano, Nasiri el-Rufai – Kaduna, Abubakar Badaru – Jigawa, Mohammad Abubakar – Bauchi, Inua Yahaya – Gombe, Abubakar Sani – Niger, Jibrilla Bindow – Adamawa, Simeon Lalong – Plateau, Aisha Jummai Alhassan – Taraba, Dakuku Peterside – Rivers, Okey Ezea – Enugu, Rochas Okorochoa – Imo, Julius Ucha – Ebonyi, Samuel Ortom – Benue and Anyim Chinenye Nyerere – Abia. Some like Labaran Maku of Nasarawa and Adebayo Alao-Akala of Oyo after losing party primaries in the PDP dumped the party to become governorship flag bearers in All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) and Labour Party respectively. The absurdity of all is that these candidates of APC have held positions like senators, House of Representative Members, including Speakers, Ministers, Governors and other political appointments in the PDP government.

Conversely, the PDP governorship candidate in Adamawa state, Nuhu Ribadu was the presidential candidate of the then main opposition party, the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) in the 2011 general election and a front line member of the APC. The immediate past governor of Anambra state, Mr. Peter Obi having lost in the political chess of becoming a minister, resigned his membership and position as the Board of Trustee (BoT) chairman of APGA to become a frontline and caucus member of the PDP Presidential Campaign Organization, and was later “settled” with an appointment as the chairman of the Nigeria Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The same is former governors of Kano and Sokoto states, Ibrahim Shekarau and Atahiru Bafarawa who decamped from the APC to PDP to become the minister of education

and frontline member cum leader of the PDP in Sokoto state respectively. In the same vein, Tom Ikimi, the founding interim national chairman of the APC is noted to have traversed the defunct All Progressives Party (APP), ANPP, ACN and APC to PDP, also Femi Fani Kayode from PDP to APC and back to PDP and endless of them!

LITERATURE REVIEW

Extant literature are of the view that the reasons for the spate of party defection in Nigeria are as a result of the parties having no ideological base or clear-cut ideology and manifesto and the politicians having no principles.

Sagay (2015), Falaiye (2015), Falana (2015) cited in Akinkuotu (2015:3) are of the view that the trend of defection is a reflection of the decay in the larger society where ideology, morality and principle have taken the back seat. They maintained that as a result of lack of political ideology among the parties, politicians now see power as the only ideology. They advocated that the constitution should be amended such that defectors should lose their seats and/or office on defection because it is unfair to those who voted for them.

Okwaraji (2010) also opined that party defectors are political prostitutes without political principle, morality and conscience who lack political ideology to champion the course of leadership. Awanem (2010), cited in Okwaraji (2010:1), adduced reasons for defection of politicians in the last three republics as resulting from personality clash, power tussles, divergent views on the operation of political party's philosophy, crises within a political party, disagreement on party's position on an issue, realization of one's personal ambition and party leaders reneging on agreed issues of political party like on power sharing formula. He, however, lamented that politicians have consistently defected from one party to another in the Nigeria's fourth republic; some abandoning the parties on whose platform they were elected, while others after losing elections found it best to cross carpet to the party in power.

Abbiye-Suku, (cited in Okwaraji 2010:2), warned that defection portends danger for the political system. He explained that the trend shows the despicable chameleon character of Nigerian politicians and struggle for relevance without conscience and political ideologies as a driving force while they are in politics.

Ikhariale (2015:5) contends that African opposition political parties have not learnt their lessons, and it is even worse in Nigeria where neither ideology nor principles are part of the political process. According to him, "people are in opposition because they have no quick access to power and whenever they are called over by the ruling party, they promptly forget their earlier stand, criticisms, and shamelessly join the party in power for the fleeting opportunity to eat." Also commenting on the effect of defection on democracy, Ejiofor (2014:3) lamented that the series of political defections merely reflect the level of desperation for political relevance in pursuit of public office. He maintained that the present crops of Nigerian politicians are not statesmen and they do not believe in party ideologies, rather they are just power-drunk.

Lamenting on the ideological bankruptcy of Nigerian politicians, Ilo (2014:2) noted that great countries are not built on an ideologically-retarded political class. He exclaimed that most of our politicians stand for nothing, which means they are effectually "open to everything". It is therefore premature for Nigerians to celebrate their political 'choices'. What the people have now is not only a contaminated pool of parties, but also a structurally-debased political culture that relegates the need of the people behind the greed of the few. The reality is that most Nigerian politicians are currently tarred with the same brush. The compromises they have made, the characters they have welcomed, and the inconsistencies they have shown underscore the value-free nature of the country's politics.

On the other hand, Aleyomi (2013) argues that there is nothing wrong with party defection. He opined that it is a prerequisite for democratic consolidation, with great emphasis on strong and credible opposition choices. He concluded that order based on pluralism is needed if value should be added to the process of democratic consolidation.

Asinugo (2014) though observes that the series of high profile defections in the eve of the 2015 general elections is not only pathetic but makes a mockery of the nation's democratic evolution, as well as degrade and humiliate the political class in the eyes of a civilized society. He contends, however that the pleasant thing about recent political defections in Nigeria is that it has curiously thrown up new challenges to Nigeria's voting masses. They have presented an escape route for the electorates who, over these years, have seen themselves as mere victims of the whims and caprices of a mindless political class, and an even more mindless business community. He maintained that a mega opposition party has become necessary to contain the excesses of the ruling party.

Robinson (2010) argues that defection is not a crime in Nigerian politics because there is nothing ideologically different in the manifestos of all parties in Nigeria. In his words:

"The word "cross carpeting" in politics can only be relevant in a situation where parties have distinct ideologies and manifestos. Every one joins a party where his interest can be better served. Why should one continue to remain in a party that does not have his interest at heart? Political parties in Nigeria are not driven by any ideology other than making money. They all claim to be democratic just to deceive the public. Yes majority carries the vote, but must it be a majority made up of zombies or illiterates? It is obvious that one cannot play honest party politics in Nigeria unless he is ready to discard some principles that may not go well with his party. Unfortunately, there are some principles one cannot part with, even after becoming a member of a political party. One may have decided not to lie or be involved in rigging elections. How can one accept that because he decided to be involved in partisan politics he must descend to the lowest social, educational and intellectual level to be relevant?" (Robinson, 2010:1)

Oke (2014) also opines that defection is not unexpected in a growing democracy like Nigeria as the country is going through a critical period of transition from experimental democracy to true democracy. He contends that at the beginning of the dispensation, parties were not driven by philosophies or ideologies, rather, friends and strange bed fellows were just coming together. It was therefore expected that there would be period of purification where people of unlike minds would part and people of like minds will come together. He also believes that the PDP have been operating as a mass party, some of the visions of the founding fathers have been abandoned along the way. It was no longer rewarding hard work, it was no longer recognizing merit and it was no longer operating by the rules. There was no discipline and the PDP became swollen-headed in size because of its huge control of power. So it was expected that somewhere along the line there was going to be an implosion; and unfortunately because the membership was not driven by ideologies, it was easy for some to jump the boat into another party.

OVERVIEW OF REASONS FOR PARTY DEFECTION IN NIGERIA

Weak Formation of Parties: Political parties formed from the second to the present fourth republic were formed with the utmost aim of wresting power from the military and so, they were not rooted in strong ideological base and common vision. According to Tyoden (2000), former President Shehu Shagari observed that the political parties in the fourth republic "were created within a matter of weeks, and prepared for elections within days". Lacking the required

social and political foundations of normal political parties, they were nothing more than electoral machines, put together by individuals for the contest to fill the power vacuum that would be available with the then impending departure of the military. They, therefore, lack the elementary characteristics of political parties. As aptly put by the Professor Nzungola-Ntalaja (2000), these parties were mostly electoral coalitions put together to satisfy organizational criteria laid down by transitional authorities, rather than groups that have grown organically with a clear cut and long term political project or vision for the society. Also corroborating Ake's view, Tyoden pointed out that Nigerian politics was "dissociated from issue of ideology and social forces." Political parties were created, abstracted from social realities – "They belonged to everyone in general and to no one in particular and thus constituted "*anarchy of ambitions*" (Tyoden, 2000:14). In the face of this seemingly visionless formation and mixture of strange bed fellows, it is expected that the parties would be characterized by intra-party crises that would result in persistent defections.

Lack of Internal Democracy: Internal democracy describes a wide range of methods for including party members in party deliberations and decision-making (Aleyomi, 2013:77). It allows the registered party members the opportunity to exercise their franchise in the selection of delegates to party conventions as well as candidates that contest general elections for the parties. Critical decisions like amendment of party constitutions and election of new party executives require the inputs of party members through conventions and congresses. It is a common knowledge that political parties in Nigeria do not practice free and fair elections in the nomination of candidates that contest elections for their parties. Results of party conventions or primaries proper are conducted as mere formalities. Candidates are picked against the desire of majority of party members, and in some cases names substituted in Abuja without due regards to results from their constituencies. It is most unthinkable to contest primary election in the same party with an incumbent state governor in any of the parties or contest for any party position without being endorsed by the governor of the ruling party in any state. Most candidates that stand for general elections are anointed or selected by one or a few party godfather/s. In most cases, the most popular and credible aspirants are not selected; rather a gullible, naive political neophyte who would maintain asymmetrical relationship with the godfather is 'anointed'. It is based on this premise that most of the aspirants who are denied fairness defect to other parties to prosecute or realize their political ambition

Kleptocracy: Most Nigerian politicians are in politics for personal enrichment. Political positions in Nigeria are contested as a "do or die affair" because it is seen as a means of having access to the national resources, being relevant, and acquiring power and wealth, not service to the people. Nigeria is one of the few countries in the world (if not the only) where one's source of wealth is not questioned. Evidence abound, that those who occupied political/appointive positions particularly since Nigeria returned to the fourth republic stupendously became rich overnight, and there has been no serious effort to probe and/or prosecute, let alone convict any of them. The anti corruption agencies like the *Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC)*, *Independent Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC)* are mere toothless bulldogs, at best, they are instruments used by the government in power to victimize oppositions or perceived enemies of the government. The situation has degenerated to the level that when political or public office holders are accused of any financial embezzlement, the much the government can do is to set up a probe panel. The probe panel system has become a lucrative and mockery venture that people who are "connected" to those in power scramble to be members of the panel because it is another quick means of "cutting your own share of the national cake." As usual, the report of the panel dies a natural death after submission.

It has become a tradition to celebrate those who misappropriate public wealth to get rich in Nigeria, while the very

few that left public offices without illegally acquiring wealth are vilified as never-do-wells. It is this mentality of primitive acquisition of wealth through public offices that leads to the desperation of politicians seeking to be elected or appointed into positions to defect at will when their ambition is not met in “their” political parties.

Godfatherism: The Nigerian political organization is characterized by political *prebendalism*, whose mode of operation is patron-client relationship or “patronage politics” which, as to Igwe (2005:315-6) states is a type of government and political society characterized by condescending autocratic rule and the arbitrary exercise of power in favour of friends, relations, allies and other persons whose loyalties have to be purchased with money, position of privilege, without a due legal process and often in violation of constitutional provisions.

Okolie (2006:171) observed that while godfathers in some countries are motivated by their resolve to control public policies in favour of their concerns, in Nigeria, the primary motivation is to control the treasury of the state. The godfathers in Nigerian politics are primarily concerned with appropriation of government contracts, political/public appointments and plundering the coffers of the state. They are in privileged positions to decide the political faith of aspirants to political offices and as such those that are not only seen, but confirmed to be “loyal” cannot be “given” ticket to be the flag bearer of the parties. This is to ensure that the godsons will be accountable to them when they get into the office. As a result of the foregoing, some aspirants defect to other parties where they do not have such powerful figures that would frustrate them from their political aspirations.

Failure to adhere to Party Ideologies and Manifestoes: Few of the political parties have ideological persuasions and manifestoes which they use to convince the electorates and secure victory; unfortunately most of them derail or even circumvent the implementation of those manifestoes when voted into power. As a result of this, most of the party’s founding fathers and some principled members leave the party in anger to another party or to form their own parties.

As is often the case, once the elections are over, the interest of the common man is no longer in the opposition party’s agenda; rather, they would be struggling to be part a unity government, if offered by the ruling party. Members of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), after 2007 general elections for example, abandoned their party and presidential candidate to be part of the Unity Government introduced by ruling party (PDP). The presidential candidate (Muhammed Buhari) of the party (ANPP) was persuaded by his party leaders to drop his case against the ruling party despite the admission of the president that the election was characterized by fraud (Gabriel, 2012, cited in Lamidi and Bello, 2014:176). After a fruitless struggle to secure justice through the judiciary, Buhari dumped the (ANPP) due to what he described as “verifiable irreconcilable differences”, and founded the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) as a “solution to the debilitating, ethical and ideological conflicts in the ANPP”.

The Activities of Nigerian Political Parties since 1999 has shown that right from the formation period, fourth republic parties are composition of people from diverse opinion. The founders of these parties share nothing in common than intra-party crisis. Omoruyi (2002) posits that the manner or origin of the parties does not fit into what is known from literature; their composition can be viewed as mere instruments of transition from military to civil rule. Adebayo (2008, cited in Lamidi and Bello, 2014:173) also posits that starting from the origin of the first three political parties (PDP, APP, AD), the ruling PDP was described as mixed bag of persons with different ideologies, that is, the conservative, the radicals and the progressives who do not only misunderstand themselves but are regularly feuding. The AD was a Yoruba-based party, formed just to see that power returned to the South West. The compositions of APP (later ANPP) are the set of politicians who supported or served under Abacha regime. This explains why the current dispensation witnessed more

intra-party conflict than the previous ones

Olaniyan, (2009) also agrees that the tussle for power and control of the party machinery become the order of the day in the fourth republic as some members parade themselves as founders of the party. Those who own or play major roles in the formation of the parties end up being dictatorial. In PDP, for example, the former national chairman, Audu Ogebe lamented that there were individuals who did not see themselves as being members of the party, who rather sought to own the party or to own part of it and to dictate to the party. Consequently, the crisis in PDP prompted Sambine (2004) to argue that the party is run as factions and caucuses with many bigwigs posing as members of Board of Trustees and others as elders and leaders of the party. The collision among these groups manifested in frequent change of party leadership. Within eleven years, the PDP has had six chairmen, out of which none of them completed his tenure. In the same vein, the rift within APP (now ANPP) led to expulsion of twelve strong members in October 2002. Similarly, the crisis in Alliance for Democracy (AD) at the beginning split the party into two camps and later led to the exit of prominent members of the party. The breakaway group formed a new party, the Action Congress (AC) which metamorphosed into the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) and finally formed a merger with CPC, ANPP and a faction of APGA to become the All Progressive Congress (APC) that won the 2015 general elections.

Suppression of opposition parties: Almost without exception, those who first grabbed political powers on the African continent devised several anti-democratic schemes and shenanigans to keep the opposition out of power. That paved the way for the emergence of crude imperialistic governments that claimed to be democratic (Ikhariale, 2015:2-3). To make matter worse, the military regimes that disrupted party politics in Nigeria, and for such lengthy period of time, did not only stultify the party system, it also corrupted the political process under which power was wrestled away from the elected representatives of the people by force of arms and proceeded, like the vandals of yore, to wreck the social and political substratum of the society. This created a situation where the Nigerian political class views opposition as enemies rather than a group with different ideological leanings. It became the vogue that when they get into power, they do not obey court orders or judgments that are not in their favour, rather they play politics with them; thereby perpetrating injustice and frustration that would compel the opponents to defect to the ruling party in the name of “if you can’t beat them, you join them”.

Constitutional deficiency: Section 177 of the 1999 Constitution clearly states that a person shall only be qualified for election into the office of the governor of the state if he is a member of a political party and sponsored by a political party. The same 1999 Constitution fails to state that such a person cannot leave that party after achieving electoral victory. But in respect of elected senator, House of Representative members and state legislators, the 1999 Constitution specifically in section 68(1)(g) and (2) and 109 (1) (g) clearly states that a state or federal lawmaker must vacate his or her seat after defecting to another political party, member of the Senate or House of Representative shall vacate his seat in the House of which he is a member if “being a person whose election to the House was sponsored by a political party before the expiration of the period for which that house was elected; provided that his membership of the latter political party is not as a result of a division in the political party of which he was previously a member or of a merger of two or more political parties or faction by one of which he was previously sponsored”.

This provision has been explored by elected politicians to defect from their political party to another. Though it is evident that the Constitution stipulated that one can leave a political party on the ground of factional crisis within a given political party, it did not define “division”. It is as a result of this constitutional flaw that elected official defect to other

parties at the slightest provocation.

CONCLUSIONS

The fact remains that the strength and effectiveness of Political Parties is directly a reflection of the degree of resilience and stability democracy enjoys. It is against this background that this paper is concerned with the character of Nigerian politicians and the extent of the parties' contribution to the survival of democracy in Nigeria. It also has to be noted that it is the politicians that implement or influence the application of party ideologies and manifestoes, the manifestoes and ideologies do not apply themselves.

Given the foregoing, therefore, it becomes imperative that all activities and systems within parties should be guided by internal rules and procedures consistent with the expectations of party members and the legally established statutory organs; holding of democratic, periodic elections of party leaders, and a non-personalized leadership that willingly submits itself to these periodic elections. Thus, the question of life chairman, life patron, "automatic ticket or automatic second term" should never arise; internal debate of issues and democratized decision making; equal and open participation of all members in the decision making process in such a way that various interests are more or less equally represented; transparency and accountability in the administration of the parties; democratization of party funding, such that the party does not rely on a few wealthy individuals only for its financing, adoption of inclusive, democratic processes for the holding of party conventions, and the selection of the parties' candidates for election, that is, the use of primaries; and equally fundamental, sections 68 (g) and 109 (g) of the 1999 Constitution should be amended to specify clearly that elected officials should vacate their positions when they defect to other parties that did not produce them. This would curtail the number of political renegades as unbridled political defection is a grave danger to the country's political stability and development.

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