

**Conference on**  
**“Electoral Reform:  
Building Confidence for Our Future”**

**March 17-19, 2005**

**Shehu Musa Yar’Adua Centre, Abuja**

**Programme, Summary and Plan of Action**



**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**

**CENTER *for* DEMOCRACY & ELECTION MANAGEMENT**

*Conference on*  
**Electoral Reform: Building Confidence for Our Future**

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Electoral reform is an urgent challenge for Nigeria's developing democracy. Controversies over past elections in Nigeria have undermined previous democratic regimes, and dissent over elections can be a divisive influence on the current democratic Republic, with consequences for political stability. As the nation looks toward elections in 2007, it is essential to address problems in the electoral system and to prepare the groundwork for smooth, peaceful, and credible elections, in 2007 and beyond.

Motivated by these concerns, the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre and the Center for Democracy and Election Management at American University (Washington, DC), convened the *Conference on Electoral Reform: Building Confidence for Our Future*, March 17-19, 2005 in Abuja. The conference included keynote remarks by President Olusegun Obasanjo and Vice President Atiku Abubakar, along with participation by the Speaker of the House, Senators, Hon. Representatives, and state Governors. Dozens of civil society organizations were represented, including the core groups engaged in electoral reform, advocacy on governance and human rights, gender equity, legal reform, and conflict resolution. Representatives from the major political parties also participated. International participants included Ambassador Princeton Lyman, former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria and South Africa; and Professors Robert Pastor and Peter Lewis of American University. Roundtable sessions produced specific recommendations for the reform of election administration and law, changes within the political parties, approaches to ending the competitive spiral of electoral misconduct, and strategies for alleviating violence and conflict. More than 450 people participated in the conference, which was widely covered on television, radio, and in the print media.

The deliberations of the Conference provided the basis for a Plan of Action for reforms to encourage free, fair, and violence-free elections in 2007. The Conference also articulated the basis of a Statement of Principles for public circulation to government, political parties, candidates and political professionals. All parties and stakeholders in the electoral process are invited to publicly endorse these essential Principles of political conduct, and to commit their efforts to uphold and advance the best practices of fair political competition.

## Summary and Plan of Action

The *Conference on Electoral Reform: Building Confidence for Our Future* included representatives of the federal and state governments, academia, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and international scholars and policy specialists. The purpose of the Conference was to provide a forum for all stakeholders to discuss existing problems with the electoral process, and to make specific recommendations for needed improvements as Nigeria prepares for the next elections in 2007. There was a general consensus from the Conference on the following points:

**1. Political Commitment to Reform.** Free and fair elections are a key to building a democracy. There is widespread concern, however, that irregularities in recent elections could undermine the legitimacy and stability of Nigeria's democratic system. Urgent reforms are therefore needed to correct these flaws in future polls. The first step is for political leaders, from all branches of government and every political grouping, to affirm their commitment to basic principles for a free, fair, and violence-free election in 2007. A Statement of Principles, reflecting the central issues of electoral reform, is attached. Political commitment at the highest levels is need for successful electoral reform, and the major participants in contesting elections must unite around common standards of conduct. At the same time, all citizens of Nigeria have a civic responsibility to support democracy, and to participate in the political process to ensure that the plan of action is fully and expeditiously implemented.

**2. Strengthening the Independence and Capacity of INEC.** The general view among Conference participants was that INEC lacks sufficient independence or effectiveness to administer fair and transparent elections. Above all, a credible election process requires an independent, non-partisan, competent, and professional election administration. To achieve this goal, the following steps are recommended:

*Appointment.* The process of appointment for INEC has to assure that Commission members are competent and non-partisan, and that they enjoy a reputation for neutrality. While there are different ways to accomplish this, the overall modalities for selecting INEC officials should be revised. The President could nominate candidates who would then be confirmed by two-thirds of the Senate. Alternatively, a reputable body such as the Supreme Court could propose candidates directly to the Senate for confirmation. Another possibility is for the Justices (or some other vetting body) to vote directly on members.

*Term.* To secure independence, the Commissioners should have a term that exceeds that of the president by two years or more. Therefore a 6-7 year term is desirable.

*Funding.* INEC requires a secure source of funding to ensure adequate resources for election administration, and availability of funds as needed. INEC should be able to present its budget directly to the National Assembly (as is the case in Canada, another

federal democracy), and its funding should come from consolidated revenue. The level of funding for INEC could be determined by a standard formula that reflects the number of registered voters times the average cost of conducting an election per voter.

*Party Representation.* The political parties should not directly administer elections, but they need to have a voice in INEC to convey concerns, as well as a channel for being informed. Therefore, they could be represented in an established Advisory Council, which could sit in on INEC meetings but could not vote.

*Professional Training.* INEC should develop a career professional service, equivalent to the career foreign service. Amending the conditions of service and the standards of professionalism within the Electoral Commission will raise the capacities and the stature of the institution, better positioning the Commission to oversee elections. As a point of comparison, Mexico made the transition from a weak electoral system to a highly trained and professional institution in less than a decade, and a key element in its success was training.

**3. Polling and Counting Procedures.** There is great concern that the official count in recent elections did not accurately reflect the preferences of the people, and that the right to a secret ballot was often violated. To address these concerns, both voting and counting procedures should be made more transparent and subject to stronger independent oversight. The following improvements are essential:

- Polling at each precinct should be done in the presence of party agents and domestic observers, and procedures to insure ballot secrecy should be reviewed and improved.
- Sheets with final results should be signed at each polling station by designated polling officials, party agents, and domestic observers, with copies available for all.
- Representatives of party agents and independent observers must be allowed to accompany the forms to collation and counting centers, and to witness each stage of tabulation.
- The results of the ballots should be available on the web down to the precinct level, so that the original signatories can verify that they were counted accurately.

**4. Campaign Finance and Conflict of Interest.** Participants agreed that corruption in Nigerian politics undermines democracy and requires constant vigilance by government and citizens. The best approach to stemming political corruption, as seen in many countries, includes regulations on contributions and campaign expenditures by parties and candidates, along with clear rules on conflict of interest. The following steps are recommended:

*Electoral Law.* As the National Assembly considers revisions to the Electoral Act of 2002, there should be special attention to the issues of political finance and conflict of interest. Either within the new Electoral Act or in separate legislation, needed reforms would include:

- Regulations on party funding specifying sources, use, and disclosure
- Limits on financial involvement in politics by individuals and companies
- Clear criteria regulating conflicts of interest by parties and officeholders
- Strict separation of government resources (at all levels) from political, campaign, and personal funds
- Provisions for equal access to political parties and candidates in all forms of media

*Public Funding.* There should be a review of the current levels and mechanisms for public funding to political parties. Increased public funding for campaigns, if well regulated under fair rules of distribution, could be an important antidote to the undue influence of “moneybags” and “godfathers.”

*Transparency and Access.* Political contributions, campaign donations, and spending by parties and candidates must all be subject to rules of disclosure. Complete and timely declaration on the Web is essential. INEC and other appropriate authorities also need to use their regulatory authority to ensure equitable access to the media.

**4. Enforcement.** While some changes in the laws and regulations are needed, many conference participants agreed that the biggest problem is enforcement, or rather a lack of it. The roles, responsibilities, and authority of the following institutions are crucial:

*Election Tribunals.* The tribunals must be adequately funded, staffed and trained, and the transparency of their activities must be sustained. While providing better resources for tribunals to exercise their obligations, government should also give consideration to setting time limits for processing complaints before the tribunals. Electoral disputes must be legally resolved within a reasonable period after elections.

*INEC.* INEC’s responsibilities regarding campaign finance, media access, security, and election monitoring must be reviewed and clarified as early as possible prior to the next elections. These prerogatives should be published and communicated promptly to all political participants and the general public.

*Special enforcement bodies.* Certain regulatory and enforcement tasks may be referred to the regular courts, or delegated to special enforcement bodies. Oversight of campaign finance, conflict of interest, or media access could be overseen by dedicated agencies or special units. These responsibilities should be established promptly.

**5. Security.** Violence, intimidation and insecurity continue to be major concerns for the election process. In order to ensure violence free elections, it is necessary to involve the security agencies, parties, candidates and campaigns, and civil society.

*Security Agencies.* The army should not be involved in the administration of elections. The police should receive special training in order to enable them to secure the election, guarantee the secrecy of the ballot, and prevent violence and intimidation.

*Parties, Candidates, and Campaigns.* Conflict management must include agreements among parties and candidates to restrain supporters and resist provocation. Regular consultative mechanisms among parties, campaigns, and security agencies should be initiated at federal, state and local levels, particularly in known trouble spots.

*Civil Society.* A number of conflict resolution groups, community-based organizations and religious groups have mechanisms that can assist in early warning and the alleviation of conflict, especially at local levels. These groups should be invited into local consultative mechanisms with other key stakeholders, and they should be encouraged to support security agencies or political groups in the management of tensions in conflict-prone areas. See also the suggestion below regarding “peace committees.”

**6. Civic Education and Citizen Participation.** For Nigeria’s democracy to thrive, the government needs to invest in broad civic education and information for voters on their rights, duties and the procedures of voting. The *government* can provide courses in schools and media advertisements on why and how people should vote. *INEC and the political parties* can play complementary roles in publicizing key dates for registration and elections, and educating the public on voting practices. *Civil society* organizations have an essential role to play in creating a culture of civic rights, and informing voters of procedures at the polling stations.

Another worthwhile initiative would be the establishment of local-level electoral education and monitoring committees, modeled on the “peace committees” in South Africa during the negotiations and run-up to their historic 1994 election. This could be organized by a coalition of NGOs with donor support.

In response to the concerns that have been raised about levels of voter turnout, the country could consider making voting mandatory, as Belgium and Australia do. In the short term, however, complementary initiatives from government, political parties and civil society can work to motivate and inform voters.

## **PART II: TIMETABLE AND ROLES**

This section sets out a timetable for crucial stages or tasks in the election process, and identifies key stakeholders primarily responsible for each element. (Where the appropriate stakeholders are not evident in the item listing, they are included in parentheses).

### **2005**

#### First Quarter

- Conference on Electoral Reform (NGOS/CDEM/INEC/Parties/Government)
- Presidential participation in Conference
- Presentation of Statement of Principles for electoral reform (CDEM)
- National Political Reform Conference

#### Second Quarter

- National Assembly debates Electoral Act
- National Political Reform Conference
- International donors finalize assistance strategies and allocate resources for electoral support
- Publication of Statement of Principles and Plan of Action for Electoral Reform (CDEM)

#### Third Quarter

- Passage of revised Electoral Act (President and National Assembly)
- Recommendations of National Political Reform Conference
- Presidential endorsement of principles of electoral reform and specific actions to improve elections
- Inter-Party Summit on political affairs and elections; beginning of consultative mechanism among parties on electoral conduct (Parties/National Assembly/CDEM)

#### Fourth Quarter

- Conclusion of National Population Census (NPC)
- President includes funding for elections as important budget priority
- Government releases necessary funds to INEC for the next period of election administration
- Follow-up seminar on elections and reform (CDEM/NGOs)

## 2006

### First Quarter

- Presidential budget speech: electoral provisions included
- Consultation among political parties
- Party consultations with INEC
- Public Seminar: “State of the 2007 Elections” (NGOS/CDEM/INEC/Parties)

### Second Quarter

- President participates in consultative process among parties
- Monthly consultations on electoral conduct (INEC/Parties/CDEM)
- Publication of National Population Census (NPC/media)
- Government reviews INEC’s resource needs and releases additional funds as needed
- Police training for elections
- Conflict resolution strategy (NGOs/CSOs)

### Third Quarter

- Presidential address on electoral preparations and electoral conduct
- Political party conventions and candidate nominations
- Voter’s registration exercise (INEC)
- Domestic observers: training and certification (Observers/CSOs/INEC/International partners)
- Creation of local election committees (Government/CSOs)
- Pre-election assessment by domestic and international observers (TMG/NDI/IRI/IFES/IDASA)

### Fourth Quarter

- Revised Voter’s Register posted and distributed (INEC)
- Publication of party and campaign financial statements (INEC)
- Campaigns in full swing
- Pre-election assessment seminar (CDEM/NGOs)
- Weekly consultations among parties/campaigns over electoral conduct
- Weekly pre-election assessments by observers

## **2007**

### First Quarter

- Regular meetings:
  - INEC and parties
  - Inter-party meetings
  - Local electoral ‘peace’ committees
- Domestic and International observers deploy
- National and State elections (INEC/Observers/Security/Govt.)
- Results posted in print and Internet (INEC/Media)
- Observers issue initial post-election assessments

### Second Quarter

- Post-election mediation (if appropriate)
- All election results posted to ward level on Internet (INEC)
- Full post-election reports released (TMG/NDI/IRI/IFES/CDEM)

### Third Quarter

- Rulings by election Tribunals
- New elections held as needed (INEC)
- Continued mediation as appropriate

### Fourth Quarter

- Election Tribunals concluded for national and state polls
- New elections held as needed (INEC)

## **2008**

### First Quarter

- Local Government elections

### Second Quarter

- Election tribunal petitions filed

### Third Quarter

- Rulings by election Tribunals

### Fourth Quarter

- Election Tribunals concluded for Local Government polls

*Conference on*  
**“Electoral Reform: Building Confidence for Our Future”**

**Abuja**  
**Statement of Principles**

**March 19, 2005**

**Preamble:**

Since the transition from military rule to the civilian Fourth Republic, Nigeria’s quest for effective democratic governance has confronted many challenges. The integrity of the electoral system is a major issue facing Nigeria’s new democracy. We know from past history that turbulent elections have been a source of political crisis in Nigeria. Controversies surrounding elections have serious potential to undermine the legitimacy and stability of democracy. There could be the most serious consequences for democratic development if political leaders are unable to reach consensus on rules of political conduct, and if the Nigerian public therefore becomes alienated from the electoral process. Nigerians would universally suffer from further political crises or an interruption of democratic rule.

**We therefore resolve:**

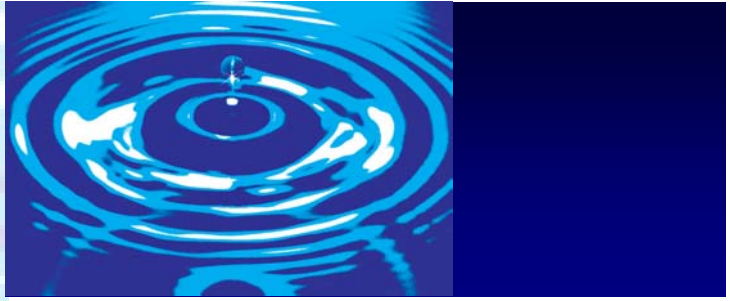
- Democracy is the sole political choice for Nigeria, and the best system for managing the nation’s current challenges, fostering better governance, and ensuring popular welfare.
- We reject all unconstitutional means of contesting or obtaining power in Nigeria.
- We recognize that public legitimacy is the bedrock for a successful and stable democracy.
- We further recognize that a fair and transparent electoral process is an important basis of citizens’ legitimacy in a democracy, and we commit ourselves to ensuring free, fair, and honest elections in Nigeria.

**We affirm the following commitments:**

- We will take every measure, on our own behalf and in cooperation with others, to promote the goals of a fair, competitive, and transparent election system in Nigeria. We condemn and renounce all forms of rigging, fraud, and election misconduct. Nigeria's electoral process must attain the highest standards of integrity, efficiency, and legitimacy.
- We support strong, capable, and fully independent Electoral Commissions at the federal and state levels. Accordingly, government must provide all necessary resources and facilities to allow INEC and the SIECs to operate with autonomy, and to promote their best performance. Those institutions must also take necessary steps to strengthen their capacities and to insure full independence in the nation's election administration.
- We condemn and renounce all forms of political violence. We commit ourselves to exercising discipline and restraint over all political forces under our authority, to resist provocation by rivals, and to appeal to legal procedures for resisting and containing electoral violence. We further renounce any forms of intimidation or coercion that would limit the participation of any candidate, voter, election official, agent, or observer.
- We expect and encourage all political party organizations to follow democratic rules and procedure in their internal affairs, and in political competition. Party leaders must effectively regulate all their members, whether incumbents, candidates, or supporters, in meeting the highest standards of fair and transparent competition. Party organizations must reject any efforts to intimidate or disenfranchise political opponents. They must also agree to refrain from any undue influence over election officials.
- We commit ourselves to a regular consultative process to insure the integrity of elections. This includes (but is not limited to) regular meetings among party leaders and campaign organizations; among political parties, INEC and the SIECs; among INEC and government; among civil society monitors and INEC. These meetings should encourage regular dialogue over best practices, and the exchange of any available information over infractions of fair electoral procedures.
- We endorse the goal of a simplified and fully transparent electoral counting process. We accept a role for independent observers to witness all stages of the counting process. We encourage INEC to post election returns down to the level of the constituency/polling station to insure transparency.

- We endorse the fullest possible role for election observers. Domestic civil society organizations should have access to all polling places without intimidation or unreasonable restriction, and they should be welcome to send qualified representatives to witness the counting process. International observers should also be welcome to observe any polling place, and all stages of collation or counting.
- We encourage an independent, efficient, and public system of election tribunals. The tribunals should be enabled to process election complaints in the speediest possible fashion, and full transparency should be maintained.
- We support an increase in public funding for political parties as a means of balancing the undue influence of private funds. We commit to the goal of full transparency in political party finances. We also endorse unrestricted access for all candidates to all forms of media.
- We support and encourage efforts by government and civil society to promote civic education, public information, and other measures to ensure the fullest electoral participation. We advocate a fully inclusive electoral process that incorporates Nigerians of every gender, ethnic group, religion, and walk of life.

*These principles, drawn from the deliberations of diverse stakeholders in Nigeria's electoral system, should serve as a guiding set of rules and standards for all future elections. We invite all political parties, candidates, elected officials, and members of civil society to endorse these principles, subscribe to them in their political conduct, and treat them as a benchmark for judging the conduct of elections.*



NATIONAL PROGRAMME OF COMMEMORATION  
YAR'ADUA MEMORIAL FORUM

## **Electoral Reform: Building Confidence for Our Future**

*“The challenge of the forum is to devise a strategy for gathering a critical mass of politicians and party leaders around a platform of transparent elections and political integrity.”*

Programme of Events  
March 17 - 19, 2005



Thursday, March 17, 2005

Opening Plenary

**Vice President, Atiku Abubakar**, *Welcome Remarks*

**Dr. Peter Lewis**, *Global Overview: Troubled Election Outcomes as Threat to Democracy*

**Dr. Jibrin Ibrahim**, *Conference Objectives: Framing the Issues*

1st Roundtable Discussion

*Electoral Participation/Competitive Rigging*

**Coordinator:** Dr. Jibrin Ibrahim, Global Rights

**Lead Discussants:**

Dr. Jibrin Ibrahim

Ms. Nkoyo Toyo, GADA

Dr. Kabiru Mato, University of Abuja

**Chair:** Alhaji (Dr.) Ahmadu Kurfi, Maradin Katsina

2nd Roundtable Discussion  
*Integrity of the Party System*

**Coordinator:** Dr. Hamid Bobboyi, Arewa House

**Lead Discussants:**

H.E. Olusola Obada, Deputy Governor,  
Osun State  
Sen. Tokunbo Afikuyomi, Deputy Minority Whip;  
Chief Don Etiebet, National Chairman, ANPP  
Dr. Usman Bugaje, House of Representatives  
Prof. Abdulhameed Ujo, University of Abuja

**Chair:** Senator Udoma Udo Udoma

3rd Roundtable Discussion  
*Political Violence*

**Coordinator:** Dr. Judith Asuni, Academic Associates PeaceWorks

**Lead Discussants:**

Mr. Mike Ohiro, Deputy Inspector General of  
Police, Operations (represented by DPC Aniefiok)  
Mr. Innocent Chukwuma, CLEEN Foundation  
Representatives of Armed Youth Groups

**Chair:** Senator Evangel Diffa

4th Roundtable Discussion  
Electoral Law/Campaign Finance

**Coordinator:** Hon. Nimi Walson-Jack, Nigerian Bar Association

**Lead Discussants:**

M. A. Abubakar, INEC  
Hon. Hamisu Shira  
Prof. Musa Yakubu  
A.B. Mahmoud, SAN

**Chair:** Hon. O. C. J. Okocha, MFR, SAN

Friday, March 18, 2005

5th Roundtable Discussion

*Election Administration: Organizing the 2007 Election*

**Coordinator:** Professor Attahiru M. Jega, Department of Political Science,  
Bayero University Kano

**Lead Discussants:**

Alhaji M. A. Abubakar, National Commissioner, INEC

Prof. Abdulhameed Ujo, University of Abuja

Alhaji Isa Mohammed, former NEC Resident Electoral Commissioner, Lagos State

Prof. Rufus B. Fatuyi, SIEC Commissioner, Ondo State

**Chair:** Prof. Adele Jinadu, Centre for Advanced Social Sciences

6th Roundtable Discussion

*Election Monitoring*

**Coordinator:** Mr. Festus Okoye, Transition Monitoring Group

**Lead Discussants:**

*Representatives from:*

National Democratic Institute (NDI)

Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC)

Institute of Democracy in South Africa (IDASA)

International Republican Institute (IRI)

International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)

**Chair:** Ambassador Princeton N. Lyman, U.S. Council on Foreign Relations

Saturday, March 19, 2005

National Programme of Commemoration  
Shehu Musa Yar'Adua

**Chief Host:** H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR  
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria  
& Chairman, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation

**Opening Prayer**

**Welcome Remarks by the Vice Chairman:**  
H.E. Atiku Abubakar, Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria

**Tribute:**  
Hon. Aminu Bello Masari  
Speaker, House of Representatives

**Overview of Roundtable Discussions:**  
Professor Attahiru M. Jega, Department of Political Science, Bayero University, Kano

**Guest Speaker Presentation:**  
Dr. Robert Pastor, American University  
*Transitional Democracies:  
The Imperative of Electoral Reform*

**DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES:** A.B. Mahmoud, SAN

**Vote of Thanks:** Murtala Yar'Adua

**Closing Prayer**

## DINNER

**Chief Host:** H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR  
H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR  
President and Commander-In-Chief of  
the Armed Forces of The Federal Republic of Nigeria  
Chairman, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation

H.E. Atiku Abubakar, GCON  
Vice President of The Federal Republic of Nigeria  
Vice-Chairman, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation

**Guest Speaker:**  
Ambassador Princeton N. Lyman  
Director of Africa Policy Studies  
U.S. Council on Foreign Relations

**Master of Ceremonies**  
Ronke Bello

**Dr. Robert Pastor**, Vice President of International Affairs, American University, has combined a career of scholarship, teaching and public policy in government and non-governmental organizations. He was National Security Advisor for Latin American Affairs (1977-81) and from 1985 until September 2002, he was Professor at Emory University and Fellow and Founding Director of the Carter Center's Latin American and Caribbean Program and the Election Monitoring Program. He has a Ph.D. in Political Science from Harvard University, is the author or editor of 16 books, and is the Director of the Center for Democracy and Election Management.

**Dr. Peter M. Lewis** is Associate Professor at American University's School of International Service. His interests include state-building, institutional development, economic change and democracy in developing countries, with regional concentrations in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. He has written extensively on issues of democratic change, civil society, and economic reform in Africa; the political economy of Nigeria; and public attitudes toward democracy and markets in Nigeria and Ghana. He has observed and analyzed Nigerian elections since 1983.

**Ambassador Princeton N. Lyman** is the Director of Africa Policy Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University. He has served as U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Ambassador to Nigeria, Director of Refugee Programs, Ambassador to South Africa, and Assistant Secretary of State for International Organisation Affairs. Ambassador Lyman has a Ph.D. in Political Science from Harvard University and has published books and articles on foreign policy, African affairs, economic development, UN reform and peacekeeping.

#### **Center for Democracy & Election Management**

The Center for Democracy and Election Management (CDEM) at American University was established in September 2002 to educate and train students and professionals in the management and conduct of elections throughout the world; undertake cross-regional comparisons of democratic institutions; and promote election mediation as an instrument for resolving problems between groups within a country. The Center has an AU Faculty Advisory Committee of 35 professors and experts in democracy and elections. Dr. Robert Pastor is the Founding Director of CDEM. CDEM's project on "Election Reform in Nigeria" is managed by Senior Fellow and AU Professor Dr. Peter Lewis.

#### **Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation**

The Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation is a non-profit organization established to further the ideals of late Shehu Yar'Adua; his commitment to national unity, good governance and to building a just and democratic society for all Nigerians. Through its facilities and programmes, the Foundation endeavours to inspire future generations to embrace the leadership qualities demonstrated by Yar'Adua's life of service to the nation. The Yar'Adua Centre, located in the nation's capitol, Abuja, features a research library, a multi-media exhibition of Yar'Adua's life presented against the backdrop of Nigerian history from colonialism to present day democracy and premier conference facilities. The Foundation is administered by Jamilah Farris, Director General and Member of the Board of Trustees.