

The new Nigeria I dreamt about (2027–2031)

By Kenneth Igwebuike

It was just another weary afternoon at the Federal Secretariat in Abuja. The office clock ticked towards closing time, but instead of relief, I felt a familiar anxiety. My problem? I had just ₦300 left in my pocket. That was all I had after paying my way to work that morning. Now I faced the same daily dilemma: how to get home. Should a Level 8 civil servant—a university graduate—really be battling transport fare? Is this the reward for national service? I considered trekking to AYA Junction, about two kilometers away. Maybe I'd get lucky and hitch a ride. This is the kind of quiet suffering we've learned to normalize under leaders who have long lost touch with the people they claim to serve. By chance, an old schoolmate now working in the banking sector who also resides in Masaka spotted me and gave me a lift. I got home. Physically, yes. But my mind was restless. That night, lying on my bed, wrestling with fatigue and frustration, I began to imagine something radical: a Nigeria that works. A country where dignity is not a luxury. Somewhere between exhaustion and sleep, I began to dream. It was 2027. The general election was underway. The ruling party, backed by a familiar and compromised electoral commission, tried to steal the vote again. But this time, the people refused. From every corner of the country, citizens gathered outside the Bola Tinubu International Conference Centre in Abuja. They came with placards and purpose, day and night, demanding the real results. Security forces tried to disperse them, but failed. Some officers even joined in solidarity. On the third day, the electoral body caved. The candidate of the opposition coalition was declared President-elect. Just like that, Nigeria turned a new page. The new President wasted no time. He didn't hide behind tinted convoys or marbled gates. He stepped into the chaos, shoulder to shoulder with the people who elected him. And then something happened—something no one thought possible: peace. Banditry stopped. Terrorism ceased. The agitations in the regions calmed. It was as if his sincerity crossed lines bullets never could. Factories reopened. Manufacturing hubs bloomed across the country. Youths had jobs—not slogans. In the North, farmers returned to their fields. The IDP camps emptied out. Agriculture became not just a tool for survival, but a thriving sector of wealth and pride.

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leadership. The President publicly declared his assets and demanded every appointee do the same. He offered amnesty: return what you stole and walk away. And the unthinkable happened. Every morning, queues stretched outside the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) offices nationwide. Former officials, ex-ministers, retired generals—even pastors and imams—lined up to return looted funds. The EFCC no longer chased thieves. The thieves chased the EFCC, eager to confess. Government became lean. The President submitted a bill to cut the number of ministers to fifteen. He scrapped the Office of the First Lady. He sold off the presidential jet fleet, keeping only one aircraft for essential duties. All luxury vehicles in the convoy, including the Cadillac Escalade recently acquired by his predecessor, were replaced with Innoson cars and other Made-in-Nigeria cars.

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A new executive order mandated that all government vehicles be locally manufactured. Lawmakers pushed back. But the people pushed harder. They marched on the National Assembly, reminding them who held the mandate. The message was clear: Nigeria was no longer for sale. Slowly, the country began to heal. The

foreign exchange rate improved with Naira exchanging for \$1 to ₦640. Food became affordable. Schools worked. Teachers were paid. Hospitals were stocked and staffed. Electricity was stable. Young Nigerians were starting businesses, creating jobs, reviving hope, and rebuilding dignity. And for the first time in a long time, we could say with pride: We are Nigerians. By 2031, the people wanted more. Opposition parties refused to even field candidates. Everyone wanted this President back. But he declined. He reminded the nation of his promise—to serve only one term, in respect of a power-sharing agreement between North and South. And he stepped aside. Just like that. In his final national broadcast, he said, simply: "I told you, my people, that a new Nigeria is possible." And the nation wept—not from loss, but from gratitude. For once, we had known what good leadership felt like. Then I woke up. Nigeria was still here—gripped by poverty, corruption, and despair. Tinubu was still in charge. And I still didn't have transport fare. But now I know what's possible.

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