

## National President's Welcome Message



Umunnem ndi Mbano, Unu abiaruola !! Ndewo nu !! Welcome to the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of MNA. We have arrived from around the globe for our annual tradition, this time in the “Energy Corridor” of Houston, Texas.

We have gathered in “The Lone Star State” to continue our relentless efforts in promoting charitable and humanitarian ventures. Let us enjoy each other’s company, network with one another; share our experiences, aspirations, expectations and concerns.

Moreover, let us vigorously deliberate on our well being in this country as well as the welfare of those we left behind in Mbano. We need to keep up the momentum to actualize and bring our collective efforts to fruition.

We all know or have heard what happened in our homeland in recent weeks. Nmiri Ezola, Gbacha !! The people have spoken and so shall it be. That is democracy in action. We have also learnt some lessons in the process. Regardless of what side of the fence you belong, something is definitely clear. We have some work to do. We need to get back to the drawing board, to determine our options and next steps. So, this convention in Houston will be an interesting one. Do not miss the discussions. As I have always said, "The show must go on !!". We need to converge and strategize.

Imo State is our state and we should do everything to better the life of our people who live there regardless of intricacies of Nigerian polity. So, we will continue to liaise with Ndi Eze, our Local Government Chairpersons, and establish a cordial cooperative relationship with Imo State Government.

It is important that we continue to liaise with our community leaders and ensure that there is unity and sense of purpose. We need to avoid the distractions of the past, learn from experience and stand united. The events of recent years and months have exposed how insensitive, reckless and disunited our leaders have become. They have disappointed us. They have displayed lack of solidarity, leadership, sacrifice or mentorship. They failed to understand that at times it is more honorable to be a king maker than to aspire to be the king. Obviously, a king has a father and a father deserves the respect of his son. Undoubtedly, to be highly respected by a king is very honorable, especially when you are the king’s father. Instead, our leaders have put their personal objectives above the interest of the general community. It is the conduct and collective disposition of the so-called leaders of Mbano, their selfishness, insensitivity, arrogance, disunity, egotism and short-sightedness that culminated in our losing the key to “Douglas House”. We lost our mandate without having that much to show for it. Our counterparts made fun of us. If we continue with this trend, we will end up a disgrace to our grand children. Our lack of unity has become an impediment to our community progress. It has also contributed to our continual socio-political and economic marginalization. It is only a mad man that will pursue rats when his house is on fire. A fly that does not heed advice may eventually get buried as it follows the

coffin to the grave. Do I need to say more? What else need to happen before we learn to forgive, forget and start working together as a community? So, Umu Mbano, let us wake up and stand united before it is too late. We must move Mbano forward. Always, remember that **Mbano, Bu Ala Anyi !!**

Obviously, we have accomplished a lot. However, there is still more work to be done. So, we have to roll our sleeves and face the challenges of our time. We should continue to embark on projects to promote the advancement of our people and development of our communities. We must embrace and promote our cultural heritage and continue to educate our new generations on the culture and traditions of our people. We should seriously work on the revitalization of our Micro Credit Finance initiative and create investment opportunities that will benefit our people. We are definitely equal to the task, if we work together in unity and with great sense of purpose and objectivity.

Through the “Tripod Scheme” we streamlined and brought more focus to our activities. We will continue to promote community healthcare and education; youth and membership development; socio-political awareness/relevance and economic advancement of umu Mbano. The priority and frequency of these activities will be continuously reviewed for appropriateness. So, your participation and ideas are highly needed. “Anyukoo mamiri onu, ya agbaa ufufu”.

So, as we gather at this convention in the great state of Texas, let us put our differences aside, put our heads together and work diligently with a sense of purpose and determination to come up with actionable plans for economic advancement of our people. If we do that, then our time spent here will be worthwhile.

We must continue to strive for qualitative membership, ignore detractors and focus on those who are really committed to the cause of Mbano and the objectives of MNA. So, Umunnem, let us keep up the good work of charity, put smiles on many faces, be the envy of our detractors and continue to be the pride of Mbano.

I extend my sincere thanks to the Houston Chapter and the National Convention Planning Committee for their hospitality and hard work in planning and hosting this event. I wish you a most successful convention and when we depart at the end of this convocation, may you all have a safe journey to your various places of abode.

Thank you and May God bless you all.

Udo diri unu,

Chief Chidi Anumudu  
President, Mbano National Assembly

