

COMMUNIQUE OF THE 16th YEAR ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION OF THE BONNY ISLAND FOUNDATION(BIF) OF USA/CANADA.

Preamble:

The Bonny Island Foundation (BIF) hosted a grand, colourful and successful 16th year anniversary Bonny in Diaspora Convention with the theme ***“Celebrating our Grand History and Cultural Heritage”*** from August 30th to September 2nd, 2019 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Edison (City of lights), New Jersey, United States.

Notable for its warmth, hospitality and remarkable kinship, over 200 Ibani Sons and Daughters, delegates, distinguished guests of honour and representatives of sister organizations from all over the United States, Canada and Nigeria converged for this epoch-making event.

Warisenibo Teddy Denton Banigo, President of BIF in his warm welcome address thanked everyone from home and abroad for their sacrifice, presence and good will. He reiterated the need for unity and progress amongst all Bonny people and challenged all Ibanis to rededicate themselves to a grand vision regarding how to protect and uplift Bonny Kingdom now and tomorrow.

Dr. Leslie Green, Chairman of BIF Board of Trustees and the convention in his address cautioned against the anomaly of self-interest and “the war of all against all” and asserted that as Bonny Citizens, we are better served when we collectively operate from the position of “common good” because we are one people out of many-‘E Pluribus Unum’.

Other notable events at the convention included the Women’s cultural dance (Eremina-ekpete), Men’s Masquerade display, BIF Scholarship fund raising program, launching of the late Mr. J. A. Green’s memorial headstone project (Nigeria’s first indigenous photographer) and a distinguished panel discussion/town hall meeting that focused on the convention theme and public safety and security in Bonny Kingdom.

Resolutions:

At the conclusion of the panel discussion delegates and members “resolved as follows:

- 1) That all Bonny people in diaspora and at home regardless of distance, persuasion or allegiance recommit themselves to a united, safe, secure and peaceful Bonny Kingdom through collaboration, dialogue, selfless sacrifice and solidarity.
- 2) That all stake holders including Bonny Traditional Chiefs’ council, Elected government officials-Local, State and Federal and community leaders take every communiqué

seriously in order to build national cohesion and sustain an increasingly strong, equitable, united, peaceful and progressive Grand Bonny Kingdom

- 3) That all Bonny citizens in diaspora and at home endeavor to uphold and ensure our Grand Bonny History and rich cultural heritage is not distorted but preserved and promoted for our present and future generations.
- 4) We observe with dismay the continuous decline of the Ibani language and traditional etiquettes amongst Bonny people and recommend that the Bonny School Board through the Bonny Local Government initiate the immediate incorporation of Ibani language into the Primary and Secondary school curriculum in Bonny Kingdom.
- 5) We call on the Bonny Local Government to introduce and implement the use of bi-lingual (English and Ibani) notices on all official billboards and signposts, Roads and Streets in Bonny kingdom.
- 6) That Bonny local government develop, implement and enforce a comprehensive *Maritime public safety policy* with regard to sea transportation between Bonny, its villages and Port Harcourt ensuring that boat owners/operators and passengers alike, follow the safety guidelines (licensing, boat capacity and proper safety gears), set forth by the policy; violators must adequately be punished in accordance to the law.
- 7) That the Bonny local Government ban overloading of watercrafts so that capsize hazard is significantly reduced and provide adequate facilities for search and rescue for the Bonny-Port Harcourt sea route.
- 8) That the Local Government with the support of the Traditional Chiefs' council provide adequate security and safety on the Bonny-PH sea route using armed escorts (Naval, Police and Civil defense) for the watercrafts and passengers.
- 9) That the Local Government institute and enforce maintenance capabilities and a culture of safety for Bonny waterside, watercrafts and engines and institute prudent observance of national maritime safety rules and regulations.
- 10) That a Bonny Kingdom Public Safety and Security committee be inaugurated and consist of security experts and critical stake holders such as Bonny Traditional Chief's Council, Bonny LGA, Titled Citizens, Nigerian Navy, Police, Security and Civil Defense Corps, Nigerian Inland Waterways, Liquefied National Gas (LNG) and other companies in Bonny, Boat owners/ operators association and other interested Bonny organizations and the youths.
- 11) That the Traditional Chiefs' council, Titled Citizens, functionaries of government vis-à-vis the local, state, and federal along with other influential indigenes of Bonny join forces with the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Company and Julius Berger Construction

Company to ensure the timely completion and commissioning of a modern and befitting Port Harcourt -Bodo-Bonny Road.

Finally, we encourage and advocate for visionary and exemplary leadership, will power, resource mobilization, accountability, fairness and honesty for Bonny Citizens in positions of authority so that they will be able to bequeath an enduring legacy to our future generations.

God Bless a united, safe, secure, peaceful and progressive Grand Bonny Kingdom.

Signed by, for and on behalf of Bonny Island Foundation (BIF) of USA/Canada:

Board of Trustees:

Dr. Leslie M. Green (Chairman)
Mrs. Fortune Bello(member)
Senibo Nengi Halliday(member)
Senibo Gibson Green(member)
Dr. Peter D. Hart(member)

Executive Committee:

Warisenibo Teddy Denton Banigo (President)
Professor Adango Miadonye (Vice President, at-large)
Mrs. Ogunne Odulana (Vice President East)
Mrs. Irene Brown (Vice President West)
Dr. Adiebonye Jumbo- Abinye (Assistant Secretary)
Mrs. Joyce Soso Halliday (Financial Secretary)
Ms. Beauty Jumbo (PRO)
Mrs. Princess Benstowe (Provost)

Signatories:



Warisenibo Teddy Denton Banigo
President, BIF



Dr. Leslie M Green
Chair, Board of Trustees



Dr. Peter D. Hart
Chairman, Convention Planning committee



Professor Joy Ben-Jumbo
Convention Secretary