

**Minutes of the 15th Annual National Convention of Nnewi USA
(NUSA)
Hosted by Nnewi Union Houston Chapter**

Thursday July 1-July 5th 2010
Marriott Houston Westchase, Houston

Theme: Nnewi Youths, Family Enrichment and Our Future

Person Completing the Minutes of this Convention
Dr. Susan Odunukwe, NUSA Assistant General Secretary

DAY ONE: Thursday, July 1, 2010

Arrival and registration began at approximately 6:00pm followed by Dinner for all members and their families. Thereafter, Sylvan Odobulu as the Chairperson of the local convention planning committee welcomed Nnewi people present for this convention. Ndubisi Azubogu, the Houston chapter president also gave a welcome address which was followed by kola nut presentation by Dr. Chris Ulasi to Mr. Nathan Momah, the current NUSA president. President Momah accepted the kola nut thanking the Houston chapter for all the hard work that was put into hosting this year's convention. The Kola nut was blessed by Mr. Chike Momah (Nnabuenyi Nnewi).

Executive/Delegate Meeting was held between 10:30-11:30 pm. The meeting adjourned at about 11:35 pm to be continued the next day.

DAY TWO: FRIDAY, JULY 2, 2010

This morning's session was called to order at approximately 9: 58am by Dr. Chris Ulasi, the chairperson of the National Convention Committee. He welcomed those present stating that Houston is happy to have Ndi Nnewi at Houston for this year's convention. He informs this meeting that Houston is happy to be hosting this meeting and will ensure that families have a good time. Following the opening of the convention, Dr. Ulasi called on Rev, Dr. Ernest Oramasionwu to say the opening prayers.

Thereafter, Ndubisi Azubogu, the Houston local chapter president welcomed Ndi Nnewi and presented them with kola-nut. During his welcome address, he thanked those present telling them that a host of activities have been planned for them and their families. The National Chapter president, Mr. Nathan Momah called on Mr. Chike Momah Nnabuenyi Nnewi to bless the kolanut. The kolanut was blessed, broken and passed to the convention participants to partake of. Prior to the roll

call, Mr. Edward Ukatu, the Financial Secretary for NUSA urged all chapters present that if they are not current on their annual dues; they would not be eligible to participate in NUSA elections during this convention per the stipulations of NUSA's constitution.

Roll Call

Atlanta.....Onyebuchi Ekwegbalu

Boston.....Peter Modebulu

Chicago.....No representation

North Carolina.....Henry Mbonu

Washington/Maryland.....No representation

At-Large Membership..... Dr. Chukwukadibia Odunukwe
Mississippi, Ohio, Minnesota, Oklahoma & Florida

Los Angeles..... Chi Uba

Houston..... Ndubisi Azubogu

Dallas----- Madu Azubogu

Dallas..... Dr. Ikechukwu Ofomata

NY/NJ TriState.....Ossy Okeke

Chicago.....Not present

CHAPTER REPORT

Atlanta:

The president of Atlanta Chapter, Mr. Onyebuchi Ekwegbalu stated that his chapter is sound. Atlanta successfully hosted the 2009 convention and is sufficiently represented here at this convention. Onyi informed this convention that his chapter donated the sum of 250.00 dollars to Pamela Mojekwu to support her recovery. He acknowledged the donations made by Mr. and Mrs. Ifebi, Mr. and Mrs. Nwizu and Mr. and Mrs. Chinedu Obi towards the next medical mission to Nnewi. Atlanta is continuing to grow in membership. Members are provided life insurance paid with the chapter dues collected from members.

BOSTON

Peter Modebelu representing Boston stated that he had served as the president for chapter for two terms stepping down about two months ago for Chike Ajene who is now the Boston chapter president. Chike Ajene was reportedly on the way and is expected to be participating at this year's convention.

Peter is now one of out of the two Boston delegates having served 2 terms as a president of the Boston chapter. He informs this convention that Eke Okeke is the second delegate representing Boston. Mr. Goddy Agbasi recently joined the Boston chapter.

At-Large Membership

Dr. Chukwukadibia Odunukwe representing the at-large chapter membership noted that this membership comprises of Oklahoma, Florida, Minnesota, Mississippi, and Ohio. The At-large Oklahoma members are Dr. and Dr. (Mrs.) Chukwukadibia and Susan Odunukwe, Minnesota, Mr. and Mrs. Eddy and Hope Ukatu, Mississippi, Mr. Leo Okoli, Florida: Mrs. Chinwe Enemhukwu, and Ohio: Mrs. Margaret Okoli.

DALLAS

Madu Azubogu representing one of the Dallas chapters reported that his chapter is happy to report that they recently witnessed the holy matrimony between two Umudim families here in the U.S. He also reported that one of Nnewi sons namely Arthur Unachukwu is going to be ordained soon as a catholic priest. Several children from this chapter graduated from High School this year. Amongst the graduates was the daughter of the late Ike Anazodo who was blessed with a car by this Dallas chapter. Madu stated that it is kind gestures such as this that makes a difference and shows care and concern for one another.

DALLAS

Dr. Ikechukwu Ofomata representing the other Dallas chapter stated that their president Walter Mojekwu was on the way. He reports that their chapter enrolled 40 families last year and since then 3 more families have joined. Their annual picnic and fundraising is being planned. Life insurance is a benefit already provided to their members. He thanked the hosting Houston chapter for taking on the responsibility for this year's convention giving Ndi Nnewi yet another opportunity to congregate and fellowship with one another. He reminded the people of Nnewi to remember that NUSA's second medical mission has been scheduled to take place this December 2010 urging them to participate. Mr. and Mrs. Chike and Ethel Momah as members of this Dallas chapter announced that they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this year.

Well wishers present extended their congratulations to them for this monumental achievement.

Houston

The hosting Chapter president, Mr. Ndubisi Azubogu welcomed everyone to the convention again. He informed this convention that the Houston chapter had made numerous contributions to Nnewi: donation of books to schools, donation of computers to every secondary school in Nnewi, to the teaching hospital and to each of the Obis at Nnewi, donations and supplies to the Motherless Babies Home and the annual picnic which is a well attended annual event hosted by this chapter. Dr. J.O.S Okeke was acknowledged as one of the founding members who is continuing to contribute immensely to the betterment of the Nnewi people in Houston and at Nnewi. His is notable for his hospitality and generosity. He was openly acknowledged particularly for his reception and good care of Igwe Nnewi and his family when they visited Houston.

LOS ANGELES (LA)

Chi Uba representing Los Angeles informed the convention that their president, Mr. Chidi Metu was unable to attend this year's convention because his wife had just delivered a baby. Stated that the LA chapter has just begun the formal recognition of their new graduates. Acknowledges that the LA chapter was impressed with the way and manner that Dallas had conducted their annual yam festival and therefore had borrowed a leaf or two from Dallas to be added to their own celebration.

NY/NJ Tri-State:

Mr. Ossy Okeke, the president of the NY/NJ Tri-State chapter introduced his chapter members present. He reports that "peace still reigns" in his chapter. States that his chapter has been focusing on replenishing their fund to be able to raise funds to be used for the painting of the Teaching Hospital at Nnewi. His chapter had embarked on a fundraising venture which was successful. They donated the sum of 200.00 dollars through the American Red Cross to Haiti for the earthquake disaster. Reports that during the period of last year's convention, his chapter was exploring the possibility of providing group insurance benefits to their members. He reports that as of this date, that idea has since materialized and all the NY/NJ Tri-State are covered under a group life insurance policy which was obtained at a reasonable rate. Lastly, Ossy reports that beginning last year their chapter instituted an annual picnic for members which is scheduled for the second week of August.

North Carolina

The president of the North Carolina chapter, Mr. Henry Mbonu stated during his presentation that the North Carolina chapter participated in development of the NUSA. Since then however, NC chapter has "stalled"

due to decrease in membership. They have just resumed with their meetings to give their children the opportunity to meet and familiarize themselves with each other while learning the Nnewi customs and culture. Reports that his chapter had intended to give a donation to the Motherless Babies Home but could not because they discovered at the time that the orphanage had been shut down and the babies had been moved to Enugu. His chapter is planning an end-of-year party for its members.

Guests Remarks

Mr. Goddy Agbasi

Mr. Goddy Agbasi informed this convention that he recently came to the States with his wife and that they have both joined the Boston Chapter. He sends greetings from his wife of whom he reports appreciates NUSA's contributions to Nnewi. He acknowledged the tireless efforts made thus far by NUSA pointing out the remarkable accomplishments made by this organization particularly during the 2007 homecoming. Mr. Agbasi mentioned the outstanding work performed by NUSA under the leadership of Isaac Emefo, (immediate past president of NUSA). He asked that NUSA members not be discouraged but that they should continue to persevere to complete the work that ought to be done in Nnewi noting that NUSA is an organization that has already made its mark at Nnewi.

Christian Udegbu

Mr. Udegbu greeted NUSA members informing them that he is coming from Canada and glad to be participating in this year's conference noting that he has been hearing about NUSA's work in Canada. He thanked the present and past administration for all their dedication and hard work. He would like to continue to be involved in NUSA convention going forward.

Recess, Houston Family Bus Tour and Lunch

Minutes of the 2009 NUSA Convention & Matters arising after the Minutes has been Read

Susan Odunukwe, the former NUSA General Secretary read the 2009 convention minutes taken during last year's convention in Atlanta. Immediately following the minutes, discussion ensued pertaining to the minutes as so read followed by minor corrections and amendments. They are as follows:

Rev. Dr. Ernest Oramasionwu wants the minutes to be corrected and to reflect that while he was still speaking during the last convention, Chidi Metu, the former Vice President stood up and snatched the microphone from him stating "who asked this man to speak?" The record should also

reflect that Mr. Chike Momah interceded and stated that Rev Oramasionwu should be accorded his due respect and be allowed to finish making his point.

Ossy Okeke pointed out an omission noting that Nzuko-Ora Nnewi was omitted in the minutes as part of the entity to be included in the letter to be written by NUSA to the Nnewi local government relating to the issue of waste disposal”.

The minutes should also be corrected to reflect that the end-of-the-year gift given to Igwe and the Obis is a total 500.00 dollars and not \$700.00 as recorded in the minutes.

“Dr. Ulasi called for a motion to have a line item of \$3,000 added to this year’s budget to fund activities for the children’s program” should be revised to reflect that it a resolution that was passed to do so.

Mr. Chike Momah pointed out that Alphonso “Okwummo” is not the right last name and should be changed to “Okwowulu”.

Contrary to the information captured in the 2009 convention recording, Mrs. Nneka Okonkwo wants the minutes to be changed to read that she was not the one heading up one of the Dallas chapters (as mentioned by Rev. Dr. Oramasionwu in his chapter presentation). She wants the minutes to reflect Madu Azubogu as the then president for this Dallas chapter.

Chukwukadibia Odunukwe moved for the adoption of the minutes seconded by Chinyere Orizu.

Budget and Financial Report:

Mr. Eddie Ukatu, NUSA’s Financial Secretary indicated that NUSA’s bank account as of June 30, 2010 shows a total amount of \$58,792.59. Out of that amount, \$29, 788.24 is contained in the main account, \$12, 518.42 in the library account and \$ 9,855.93 is what is in the Nnewi account.

Nonso Mojekwu suggested the removal of receivables from net income from the budget as it tends to give an erroneous impression that the organization has money. Eddie Ukatu responding to Nonso stated that it was resolved by the general assembly not to remove the receivables until collected.

Isaac Emefo questioned why the Nnewi Account is noted as “undocumented” in the financial report. Nathan Momah, NUSA’s current president pointed out that the account is fully “functional”. Nathan also suggested that the statement noting “undocumented account based solely

on our Trustee's Ajulu Uzodike) 5/12/2008 e-mail" is inappropriate for a formal financial report and therefore should be removed. Eddie states that he has no bank statement to support the reported amount hence the need to report it as so indicated.

Ossy Okeke offers a rebuttal of the report that NY/N.J. chapter owe NUSA money from 2008 when they hosted the convention. Ossy denies owing NUSA any money urging NUSA to collect money from the people who have not paid for their brochures. Eddie responding stated that if the convention modality is applied, Ossy will realize that his chapter owes money as so reported. On the issue of the collection of brochure payments, Eddie Ukatu noted that it would be unrealistic to expect NUSA to collect payment for brochures that were produced and sold by the hosting chapter (N.Y/N.J Tri State chapter).

Chukwukadibia Odunukwe moved the motion for the adoption of the financial report seconded by Chukwudi Nsoedo.

For complete details on the financial report, please refer to the report as prepared and distributed by Eddie Ukatu, the former NUSA Financial Secretary.

Cultural Night: Youth and Young Adult Forum and Fashion Show/Performances

DAY THREE: SATURDAY JULY 3, 2010

Dr. Chris Ulasi as the chairperson for this convention, called the meeting to order at about 11: 11am. Opening prayers was said by Rev., Dr. Ernest Oramasionwu. Dr. Ulasi acknowledged the presence of Mr. Goddy Agbasi, the former Commissioner of Sports in Anambra State, Nigeria, Dr. J.O.S Okeke, a retired Surgeon residing in Houston and this year's keynote speaker, Chief and Mrs. Chike Momah (Nnabuenyi Nnewi), the present NUSA President, Mr. Nathan Momah and NUSA immediate past President, Mr. Isaac Emefo. Chief Ubajiaka, Okaka Anaedo and his wife visiting from Nigeria were also welcomed and thanked for their attendance.

Guest Keynote Address by Dr. J. O. S. Okeke

Our guest speaker for this occasion was Dr. J. O.S Okeke, a respectable Nnewi citizen who is an accomplished Surgeon and a well known Philanthropist who although is retired is continuing to contribute in so many ways in the promotion of Nnewi both here in the U.S. and at Nnewi.

He is the founding chairman of the World Igbo Congress (the largest diaspora organization in the U.S.) and was also instrumental in forming the Nnewi local chapter in Houston. He has donated several books and items to be shipped to Nnewi.

In addition to his philanthropy, he is also known for his hospitality and has hosted several dignitaries from Nnewi including Igwe Nnewi, his Royal Highness, Kenneth Orizu III.

Nnewi Youths and Family Enrichment and our Future

Dr. Okeke's address this convention was based on the convention theme: ***Nnewi Youths, Family Enrichment and our Future***. Dr. Okeke began his speech by thanking the past and present executive administration for their endeavor in keeping NUSA organization a viable organization. He however, stated that NUSA has been in existence for the past 15 years and there comes a time when the organization would need to reflect on its effectiveness and how far it has gone in trying to achieve its mission. NUSA would need to ask itself: How am I doing? Am I doing well or am I stagnant? What changes need to be made?

Dr. Okeke commended NUSA for focusing on family and our future during this year's convention pointing out that we need to prepare our children to be able to understand our mission, goals and vision so that they would be willing and able to take over from us in perpetuating NUSA's mission. He posed the question: Is NUSA fulfilling the needs of the people and are we measuring up to their expectations? He wondered how realistic is it to expect that our children should take over and continue to run NUSA if they are not even in attendance to learn the cultural underpinnings and intricate details governing the NUSA organization. Dr. Okeke acknowledges the inherent difficulties facing not just the Nnewi families, the Igbo families but also all the diaspora families who are striving to find a balance between the American culture and the Nigerian culture.

Dr. Okeke reminded this convention that an integral part of NUSA's constitution is the "propagation of the customs of Nnewi people, in particular, and Igbo culture in general." He then postulated the question: What is it in Nnewi culture that we want to propagate? Dr. Okeke taunted some of the great attributes and values characteristic of the Nnewi people noting amongst many, the following: industriousness, relentlessness, diligence, frugality, humility, wisdom, and respect for authority (elders), problem solving and decision-making abilities. Dr. Okeke made it known that these highly priced values is not only what sets Nnewi apart but were also the reason why Nnewi as a town was able to thrive for "thousands of years before the advent of the white man". In the olden days, when a squabble arose in the family, the matter was brought before the elders and immediately resolved not because the elders were always right but it was a way to ensure the institution of peace and order within the family unit. Men, women and children all had their roles and responsibilities which they were all expected to fulfill to ensure the proper functioning of the family unit.

Dr. J.O.S. Okeke stated that they are these same values that we as Nnewi families should be striving to inculcate in our children here in the U.S. and hope that they understand and appreciate its significance for perpetuity reasons. How well are we doing as diaspora parents in teaching our children our culture?

Dr. Okeke expressed profound disappointment in the way and manner that we as Nnewi people living in the U.S have been conducting ourselves noting that Nnewi culture is being eroded by the disrespect shown in the Nnewi forum-this forum has been turned into "an instrument of destruction". Should we be surprised if these kids show no interest in what we are doing particularly with so much pressure and attraction from the larger American popular culture? Dr. Okeke seized this opportunity to bring up the Dallas conflict noting that it is unbelievable that after so many years and several attempts by many to settle the Dallas squabble, it is still lingering. He demanded that all parties involved agree to "bury the hatchet for the sake of peace and progress and for the sake of our children. A sili na madu nabo \ ada pu ala no ofu oge". We must learn to use two words **PLEASE** and **SORRY**. He encourages us to emulate the way the Jews have exemplified solidarity and how they have collectively united to tackle their own issues.

Sustaining an organization cannot be achieved through annual conventions alone when during the year, each chapter is focused in "setting their own agenda with very little communication and interaction amongst chapters". Dr. Okeke notes that it is bothersome that National has no solid program to be implemented by the various local chapters. There is "no cohesion and unity" he laments. To ensure the success of NUSA as a viable organization, Dr. Okeke proposes that a solid uniform agenda be developed by national with the active involvement of all chapters and in conjunction with the youths. We will need to engage the youths in exploring and identifying what their interests are. He cautions against forcing the youths to do things that they are not interested in doing noting that it would be counterproductive. He rather proposes that the youths be made to feel as if they have a say and can make meaningful contributions that would help to promote and facilitate the growth of the organization.

The world is changing and we must change and adapt in order to survive. Some authors are predicting that the Igbo language will become extinct in the next fifty years. How do we intend to preserve our language? It is not sufficient to name our children Igbo names or make them wear our traditional attire. To ensure the preservation of our culture, Dr. Okeke proposes an "individual and collective serious and conscious effort to observe our culture particularly those aspects of it that enriches us as a people" In closing, Dr. Okeke likens the challenges of the preservation of

culture to a “battle between David and Goliath. We have to give it all that we can. The leaders will have to listen to and accept criticism. He concludes by saying “hopefully, when I come back in my next life, NUSA and Igbo language will still here.”

State of NUSA Address by the President-Nathan C. Momah

Nathan Momah, the NUSA current president began his speech by thanking the Houston chapter for their efforts in hosting this year’s convention. He also thanked Dr. Chris Ulasi, the NCC Chairperson, Sylvan Odobulu, the local convention committee chairperson and other members of the Convention Planning Committee. Nathan acknowledged members of his executives for their work and support.

He thanked Dr. J.O.S. Okeke for his remarkable speech acknowledging the concern he raised in his speech pertaining to unity and cohesion within the NUSA Organization making it known that unity was his main priority when he took office. He briefly mentioned the reconciliation endeavors made to ensure that the long standing feud between the two warring camps in Dallas was settled. It is his desire to increase NUSA’s membership but cannot accomplish this goal if the NUSA organization is divided.

Library Project Update

Nathan Momah, as the current NUSA president informs this meeting that since the last convention, the library has been redesigned as recommended and documentation needed to commence work has been obtained and distributed to the governing body. Ike Mbelu is the designated Engineer who will oversee the building of this project under the direction of NUSA board of Trustees and NUSA executive/delegates. Nathan made it known that Ike Mbelu is volunteering his professional services in undertaking the library project and that this is not in any way a paid position.

Security Concerns at Nnewi

Nathan Momah stated that security concerns at Nnewi remains an area of on-going concern citing reports received from Nnewi about increasing security concerns at Nnewi. He reported that NUSA has written a strong letter expressing their concerns to Peter Obi, the Governor of Anambra State and is working on a press release that would communicate to the Anambra Government that NUSA like the rest of Nnewi citizens is bothered by the increasing security concerns at Nnewi and wants to call immediate attention and action to this pervasive issue.

Medical Mission

Nathan informed this meeting about the plan for a medical mission to Nnewi this December. The endeavor will be led Dr. Ike Ofomata. He implored members to send all donations through Eddie Ukatu or Innocent Izundu to be packed for shipment to Nnewi in preparation for this planned medical mission.

Development of a Suggestion System

Nathan announced that he would like to develop a suggestion system where members can provide suggestions and ideas on projects or things that they would like to see explored and implemented.

The national president ended his speech by thanking NUSA for their support and asking NUSA for continued support making his desire to run for a second term in office known.

Acknowledgement of more Dignitaries from outside of USA

Lady (Mrs.) Rebecca Mojekwu, the mother of Walter and Nonso Mojekwu was acknowledged for her attendance at this convention as well as recognized as a successful business woman who is known for her community involvement.

Comfort Udezue from Akamili, Umudim was also welcomed and thanked for her attendance.

Noble Uchendu former Houston president and now a resident in Nigeria was thanked for his presence in this year's convention as well as his continued involvement in promoting the affairs of NUSA.

Mr. and Mrs. Obiukwu Okeke were acknowledged and also thanked for their attendance. Mr. Okeke is an accomplished U.S. trained Civil Engineer who now resides in Enugu. He encouraged NUSA to continue in its endeavor towards the betterment of Nnewi noting that the current Nigerian President, Mr. Jonathan Goodluck has stated that plans are underway to provide Nigeria with uninterrupted electricity by December 2010. Corrobrates the report of increasing security concerns at Nnewi noting that kidnapping has become so rampant in Nnewi and Onitsha that by the weekends the hotels at Onitsha is sold out reserved by people seeking refuge from the kidnappers. About three months ago, they were demonstrations orchestrated by the Nnewi business owners who were protesting the increasing security problems overtaking Nnewi. It was discovered that the issue is even compounded by some police involvement.

Chief and Mrs. J.C.N Ikejiuba (Oranyelugo Nnewi) were also welcomed to this convention. Chief Ikejiuba is the present Chairman of the Body of Titled Chiefs of Nnewi and the former president of the

worldwide International Anaedo Social Club of Nigeria. He echoed the security concerns mentioned by the previous speakers noting that at least Nnewi is taking proactive steps to curb this problem by not just staging demonstrations but also by removing all check points, empowering citizens to keep close surveillance and to set up a system whereby violators can be secretly reported and dealt with. He is in support of governmental involvement in addressing this issue.

Mrs. Unoaku Ekwegbalu, Onyebuchi Ekwegbalu's mother. Mrs. Ekwegbalu thanked everyone present for this convention asking permission to present a **situation report** about Nnewi. Mrs. Ekwegbalu gave a very informative and progressive report about initiatives that are being explored, initiated and implemented in Nnewi. She said that there are presently 13,000 youths registered at Nnewi Teaching Hospital to receive HIV care. A palm processing mill has been established for widows at Nnewi. There are plans underway to ensure that town hall meetings are added at different levels to empower citizens and give them the opportunity to voice their concerns. The masses are uninformed. Constituency funds to be requested because people need to be sensitized as to what's going on in their local government areas. Mrs. Ekwegbalu suggested that respective officers in Diaspora mobilize the people and coordinate these efforts at Nnewi.

The Motherless Babies Home has resumed business. It was temporarily closed down because the person who was in charge was involved in fraudulent activities. Mrs. Ekwegbalu suggested the development of an exchange program between the youths living abroad and those residing in Nigeria.

She advocates for the improvement of the schools in Nigeria pointing out the deteriorating condition of the schools-no windows, no resources. Obi Akaboeziem established the Alutu College of Excellence Remedial Center and the traders at Nnewi are now going back to school to obtain an education.

Nonye Udo who is the appointed representative for the UN budgeting committee is also actively involved in exploring and pursuing funds that would help in the development of community projects in Igbo land. Mrs. Ekwegbalu would like to see Igbo and Nigerian civic education promoted worldwide. To that end, she proposes the expansion of the NUSA agenda world-wide to include the development of **Nnewi Diaspora Congress**.

In addition, she proposes that exhibition boards be posted all over the convention area with the pictures of important authority figures in Nnewi displaying their accomplishments, showcasing the history of Nnewi thereby enriching our youth's knowledge of their history while promoting

cultural awareness and cultural identity. She implores us to get involved and remain involved in Nnewi and Igbo affairs as “we can collectively overcome hurdles”.

TOWN HALL MEETING

Constitutional Amendments

Constitutional items were not given out to chapters for review and discussion prior to this convention and therefore would need to be deferred back to the constitutional committee to be handled per the stipulations of NUSA’s constitution.

Youth Program

Walter Mojekwu made the observation that the youths are running up and down the hallways which suggest that there were no concrete plans made for them. Walter therefore recommends that exhibition hall containing pertinent information about our culture be set up and our youths educated on their culture and history during the convention. In addition, Walter proposes a social network site between the youths residing in the U.S and those at home. This would foster communication, mentorship, unity and increase cultural awareness.

Mrs. Ethel Momah on the other hand, proposes cultural activities at the convention that reflects and promotes Nnewi customs and traditions not like the cultural show as evidenced by the Houston youths which dominated by western-base performances.

Chukwundum Okonkwo proposes that parents serve as “kings, priests and teachers in their families” and therefore teach their children Igbo. This can also be achieved through collective efforts in Nigerian churches.

Onybuchu Ekwegbalu, the Atlanta Chapter President proposes that each chapter nominate a president for their youth program as has been implemented by the Atlanta chapter. The youth president would therefore ensure that the youth’s interests and agenda are included in the large scheme of things and therefore accorded the attention that it greatly deserves. In addition, Onyebuchi agrees with Walter Mojekwu that an exhibition Center ought to be established with adult assigned to teach our youths about their culture.

Margaret Okoli on the other hand, suggests breaking down the youths according to age groups to allow purposeful and meaningful youth programming. The college age ones should serve in a leadership and advisory capacity to NUSA. The college group can have their own website with their information added to the official website for NUSA.

Dr. Chris Ulasi mentioned the importance of planning for a keynote speaker for the youths which Houston had arranged for this convention but it fell through.

Security Concerns at Nnewi

Dr. Chris Ulasi stated that it was heard that the Federal Government had deployed army to the East to begin to tackle the increasing security problems there. Mrs. Ekwegbalu reports that people are becoming increasingly vigilant and that the "Bakassi" people were deployed to Nnewi. As a result, there have been drastic measures of accountability currently being instituted whereby people at Nkwo market have to be properly identified as legitimate business owners.

Gladys Oramasionwu is proposing NUSA's active involvement in whatever capacity is necessary in ensuring the immediate eradication of this problem.

At this juncture, Nathan Momah, the national president stated that this issue has been an ongoing concern that NUSA has been discussing. He informed this convention that to that end, NUSA administration had written a letter of concern to Governor Obi, the Governor of Anambra State. Nathan asked that Susan Odunukwe, the Assistant General Secretary read the letter to the general assembly for recommendations after which the letter would be revised and sent out immediately following the convention. After the letter was read, members of the general assembly expressed their agreement with the letter. A recommendation was made by Reginald Obiamalu that the letter include a request for the Governor's official response. Ossy Okeke made a second recommendation that the letter be copied to Nzuko Ora Nnewi and the Igwe of Nnewi. Mr. Nathan Momah also informed this general assembly that after the letter of concern is sent out to Governor Obi, it will immediately followed by a press release to the media.

Library Project

Madu Azubogu expresses his opposition of building the library in a "market place" making it known that it is not a suitable site. He also questions the transfer of funds by the present administration to Nnewi to begin the library project.

Dr. Grace Anosike-Odunukwe made an observation that the newly designed library does not have windows as the initial design. The initial design showed how donations will be made-doors, windows of which people had pledged on and now that the library has been re-designed, how will this issue be addressed by NUSA? Grace opposes the idea of having Ike Mbelu as the only contractor for the Nnewi library project.

Grace proposes that Ike Mbelu remain the "major contractor" but the organization allow other businesses to bid for the contract as a way to ensure check and balances.

Mr. Chike Momah as the chairman of the library committee stated that Ike Mbelu and the engineers responsible for the library design have given a "professional assurance" that the library will be designed in a way to take into account all the concerns raised regarding the construction of the library at the Nkwo triangle including the problem of air circulation in and around the Nkwo Triangle area. Mr. Momah states that he has long given up the struggle of the most suitable site for the construction of the Nnewi library. Mr. Momah mentioned that Igwe Nnewi, his Royal Highness Igwe Kenneth Orizu, III gave an indication that if another location is found, he will support it. Sylvan Odobulu supports Dr. Grace Odunukwe-Anosike's recommendation to open the bidding of the library project to other contractors.

Mr. Nathan Momah responding to people's concerns as the national president stated that he wants to allay people's fears and make it known that his administration has been careful in the way and manner that the library project has been handled. He mentioned that the library redesign was prompted by the initial concerns that members of NUSA had raised regarding this project.

He also mentioned that the engineers responsible for the design of this project have been careful and attentive to the intricacies of this project and that he is confident that they would be able to guide us successfully through all the phases of this project. He reminded this general assembly that NUSA sought biddings for the project and had received three separate biddings, one from a U.S. based company and the two were from Nigeria. There is no secrecy involved in this project and the information as obtained has been posted on the NUSA website including the initial design, the redesign and on-going updates. Proper protocol was followed in obtaining the proper documentation for the commencement of library project per the request of the delegates. Money for the commencement of the project has been sent to Nnewi but no disbursement has been made to date.

Ossy Okeke raised the issue of location of the library site noting that it was not resolved that the library project would be built at the Nkwo Triangle. The money transfer to Nigeria to be used for the library project was deemed a "a serious issue" by Ossy who points out that any time that money is being transferred to Nigeria, you have to disclose the source and what the money is intended for per the requirements of a 501 C organizations. Susan Odunukwe as NUSA's Assistant General Secretary

refuted Ossy's assertion about the resolution against using Nkwo Triangle as the library site.

Susan Odunukwe referred this general body to page 19 of the 2009 convention minutes where it clearly states that Ossy reported during the 2009 convention held in Atlanta that his Tri-State chapter had resolved to oppose using Nkwo Triangle as the construction site for the library. Susan pointed out that it was a chapter resolution and not a consensus or resolution that was agreed to by the general body. Susan further indicated that the issue for and against was debated as recorded in the minutes (also captured in tape recording) but there was never a resolution passed not to build on the Nkwo Triangle site.

Nnaerika Okonkwo stated that the Nkwo Triangle project is a massive infrastructure of which the library project will be a part of. Reminded this convention that the issue of the library project site has since been resolved and it was agreed in 2007 that the Nkwo Triangle is where the library is going to be built. He argues that it is clear from Nathan Momah's report that the delegates had approved the transfer of money to Nigeria to be used for the library project. Nnaerika referred people to review the library committee's report on recommendations on how to manage the project based on the structure breakdown.

Isaac Emefo, NUSA's immediate past president suggested that we proceed with the construction of the library project bearing in mind that this project began during his tenure in 2006 and has since been approved by his Royal Highness, Igwe Kenneth Orizu III and the Obis who had all gathered at the Nkwo Triangle in 2007 to witness with NUSA members and Nnewi people the groundbreaking ceremony and the erection of the library monument. He urges that we move forward while letting the library board and the board of trustees handle the issue of accountability for the project.

Education

Chika Oraka suggests that our children bring to the convention their achievement certificates and awards for display and recognition. She also encourages the young adults to actively participate in Igbo Unite Organization.

Chukwudum Okonkwo supporting Chika's idea added that a guided tour be arranged once every couple of years to take our children to Igbo land where they can be engaged in learning meaningful lessons pertaining to our traditions and customs.

Mr. and Mrs. Chike Momah currently recognize our graduates by giving them books and medal in recognition for their achievements. Reginald Obiamalu suggested that we take this kind gesture a step forward by developing an educational committee that would have the sole responsibility of planning educational activities and trips to Nnewi. He suggests that this committee comprise of volunteers.

Dr. Chris Ulasi informed this general body that the State of Virginia has the "Frontier Village" which has been modeled after the traditions, rituals and customs of Ndi Igbo and so any endeavor to promote the Igbo culture and tradition is doable.

Dallas Issue

Current NUSA president, Mr. Nathan Momah described his efforts in resolving the Dallas issue which he stated was also attempted by the Isaac Emefo during his tenure. He informed this meeting that there are people who have left the meeting to go and attend to this issue to see if it can be finally resolved. Gladys Oramasionwu voiced opposition as to how Nathan had addressed the Dallas issue making it known that Nathan did not provide "uniform information" to all who were involved when settling this dispute. Several members stood up and angrily expressed their disappointment and frustration about the lingering Dallas issue pointing out that the Dallas issue has lingered for four years and is destroying the cohesion and the fabric of what NUSA stands for. Thereafter, there was what seemed like a sudden eruption of emotions as many people were all taking at the same time all attempting to passionately express their opinions about the Dallas issue.

Chika Oraka wants the general body to commit the Dallas issue, Nnewi and NUSA in prayers for the Lord to help squash this issue for good and restore peace, progress and purpose back to NUSA.

NUSA Benefits/Membership Drive Incentives

Chukwukadibia Odunukwe talking about membership drive suggested that we look at progressive and enterprising countries such as China and India; countries that have exemplified what can be achieved when people pull together to collectively embark on a common goal. Chukwukadibia suggests that we individually donate money to be invested collectively but that prior to this commitment, an investment committee would need be assembled to explore what kinds of investments would be most beneficial to NUSA participants.

Convention Issues

There were several issues raised regarding the frequency of the convention as well as the allotted period that the convention is held every year. There are people who want the convention to be held bi-annually and others who want it to remain as is. The discussion was prompted by

the present economic hardship compounded by the increasing cost of living making it increasingly difficult for families (particularly large families) to shoulder the financial responsibilities associated with attendance of an annual convention.

Ofili Uba suggested and supported by Alex Nweji that instead of convening annual conventions, let bi-annual conventions be convened and the money that would have been spent on convening an annual convention be diverted towards the completion of NUSA projects.

Ossy Okeke tabled a motion to move the convention from an annual to a bi-annual convention but beginning in 2013 so that it can coincide with a four-year-term.

A second motion tabled by Uche Okeke and supported by Chika Oraka support the annual convention continue to be convened annually but proposes a change to the allotted time of the convention from 4th of July weekend to another date.

A third motion by Dr. Grace Odunukwe-Anosike supported by Dr. Mike Anazodo is not to make any changes to the annual convention including the time in which the convention is held.

As the discussion progressed; it became apparent that there are several issues at stake that would necessitate further discussion and consideration for a resolution to be reached at this convention. Chioma Okeke pointed out that for the annual convention to be changed there would need to be a constitutional amendment. Dr. Ulasi suggested that a motion be tabled for the convention issue to be resolved in our next convention.

In the interim, Dr. Mike Anazodo suggests that chapters take this discussion back to their respective chapters for continued discussion in preparation for the 2011 convention.

Registration Dues

There were concerns expressed about the registration fees as Ebele Asomugha pointed out that there ought to be a distinction made in registration dues for families with one child and families with several children. After this topic was debated, it was resolved that the registration fees ought to remain as it as any attempt to break it down might cause confusion and also take away from the money needed to help defray the cost incurred at the convention.

Chapter Conflict

Uju Uzoegbunam suggested that NUSA be involved in resolving chapter issues as they emerge. Chioma Okeke supported by Sharon Moghalu

wants to see the constitution incorporate specific terms, conditions and stipulations pertaining to the resolution of chapter conflicts. Chapter conflicts once resolved per the constitutional requirements should be considered resolved. It is important that chapters not waiver or allow conflicts to linger after a conflict has been resolved using the proposed methodology to be incorporated into the constitution.

General Issues/Suggestions

Chike Ajene, the Boston Chapter president suggested that going forward, individuals running for NUSA offices should announce their intention to run with their agendas for wanting to hold the office that they are vying for.

Onyi Ekwegbalu, the Atlanta Chapter president suggests that chapters coordinate new projects with NUSA prior to execution. Chukwukadibia Odunukwe supporting Onyi's suggestion reminded the general assembly that this issue has already been resolved in previous convention and would be worthwhile implementing to avoid duplication of efforts as well as increase accountability.

Ruby Nandi suggested that going forward, hosting chapters should endeavor either to convene the convention by an airport hotel or make arrangements for transportation to and fro to the convention site. There were complaints about the additional expenses incurred this convention for travel from the airport to the convention venue and back.

Joy Ilochionwu suggested that young adults participate in the meeting with the adults in preparation and readiness to be able to take over and run the meeting in the future.

Sylvan Odobulu as the chairman of the local convention planning committee openly thanked and acknowledged the efforts made the members of this committee. They are as follows: Dr. Chris Ulasi, the National Chairperson of the convention planning committee, Chidi Okonkwo, Anene Okeke, Austin Onyeka, Ichie Fabian Okeke, Ndubisi Azubogu. Sylvan also thanked the members of the Houston chapter for their help in planning and executing this convention.

While the town hall meeting was being concluded, the team that had left to settle the Dallas conflict returned and were welcomed with a round of applause as they entered the room. Shortly after, Madu Azubogu, president of one of the Dallas group and Walter Mojekwu, president of the other Dallas group stood in front of this general assembly and officially announced to this convention that going forward, the two separate Dallas chapters have reconciled as of this day and have now become one unified, Dallas chapter.

Walter and Madu embraced as a gesture of reconciliation witnessed by all present at this convention. They mentioned that Dallas as one unified

chapter might take on the responsibility of hosting a future convention. Mrs. Ekwegbalu and chief Goody Agbasi stated that they would be notifying Igwe that the Dallas conflict has been successfully resolved. Nathan Momah thanked JCN Ikejuba, Chief Goody Agbasi and Mrs. Ekwegbalu for spearheading the resolution team handling the "final resolution of the Dallas conflict".

An election was held and the following executives were elected to the following NUSA positions. They are as follows:

- Nathan Momah - President
- Dr. Grace Odunukwe -Anosike-Vice President
- Reginald Obiamalu - General Secretary
- Chikezie Okeke - Assistant General Secretary
- Ruby Nnadi - Treasurer
- Mr. Ifeanacho Okeke - Financial Secretary
- Chioma Okeke - Public Relations Officer
- Elias Okonkwo - Assistant Public Relations Officer
- Mrs. Gladys Oramasionwu - Provost

Meeting adjourned. Next chapter hosting NUSA 2011 annual convention is Los Angeles.

Celebration at Gala Night, the recognition of our graduates and the official swearing in ceremony of the newly elected NUSA officials.

Sunday July 4, 2010
Prayer and Departure

XX

END OF REPORT
