

**3rd BIENNIAL CONVENTION
IGBERE PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL (IPAI)**

**SHERATON WASHINGTON NORTH HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D.C. METROPOLIS**

July 24-26, 2009

***THE OLIVE BRANCH REPORT**

(*This document has been modified by the author following the convention)

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PREFACE

In March 2008, the foundation President of Igbere Progressive Association International (IPAI) Inc, Chief Michael Awa, delegated a commission charged with extending an *Olive Branch* to a group of Igbere sons and daughters aggrieved by the change of venue for the 2nd IPAI 2007 convention (“Ezumezu in Diaspora”) from Los Angeles to Atlanta. This initiative by the President was informed by understandable sentiments expressed at the Atlanta convention. Generally, these sentiments underscored the desire to get every Igberian in Diaspora back *onboard* for the greater goal of unity essential to attaining our aspirations as an organization. The President charged me with the task of assembling a team of two or three IPAI members, preferably from our pool of distinguished elders, with whom to work out both the contact person(s) on the aggrieved side and the strategy for negotiation. The President intended this initiative as an outreach of goodwill to the pre-Atlanta 2007 aggrieved individuals, and to complement a Delegates’ resolution at the Atlanta convention directing the President to extend an invitation to IPAI membership, *without conditions*, to every Igbere son and daughter in Diaspora. The result of this complementary effort is here titled **The Olive Branch Report**.

The results of the commission’s efforts at extending an Olive Branch is preceded by a modest detail chronicling the events that led to the change of venues for the 2nd IPAI convention in 2007. That change is often cited as the reason for lingering grievances of a handful of Igberians in Los Angeles. Gathered commentaries on this issue in the past 2 years fall into two sets with a common denominator. The first set reflects commentaries from obviously well-intentioned members of IPAI who have not followed the facts of the events of 2007 closely. The second set of commentaries consists of deliberate distortions, clearly intended as mischief by some of the aggrieved. The common denominator alluded to above lies in the shared imperative to provide a chronicled report of the events and circumstances surrounding the change of venue in 2007 as foundation facts, enabling us to put in perspective the salient aspects of the Olive Branch Report.

On behalf of Mazi Agbai Ekperi who undertook the Olive Branch mission with me, I wish to thank the President, Chief Mike Awa, for the opportunity and honor to serve in this capacity. We also wish to thank members of the Board of Directors who offered insightful suggestion in the course of this mission, and the entire Igbere people for trusting us all along. We undertook this important assignment not under any illusions that our strategies would be without risks. The foremost risk we anticipated was distortions, outright falsehood, and the misrepresentation of the contexts of discussions and facts, since these meetings were conducted via teleconferences and without recorded minutes of our proceedings. Nevertheless, we approached our task with honesty and sincere convictions, the best of intentions, and with the interest of our association and that of the larger Igbere community foremost in our hearts and minds. We can only hope that posterity will judge our efforts kindly and accommodate our imperfections.

1. FOUNDATION FACTS

Ezumezi in Diaspora, Houston 2005

A milestone accomplishment at the inaugural IPAI convention in Houston in September 2005 was the appointment of a 13-member Caretaker Committee charged with the responsibility of assembling a draft constitution and to *midwife* a nascent IPAI to a structure-based organization in two years. The 13-member Caretaker Committee as appointed on the Labor Day weekend of September 2005 in Houston is as follows:

Michael Awa
Esse Esse
Okorie Ezieme
Orji Douglas Igwe
Udemgba Igu
Leonard Ibeka
Peter Anyaogu Imaa
Barry Kalu
Elijah Kalu
Erinma Mbonu
Ogbureke Kalu Ogbureke
Ugwa Kalu Ogbureke
Chukwu Uwakwe Oko

In addition to providing a draft constitution, implicit in the committee's scope of responsibility (or mandate) were the registration of the organization as a non-profit organization, determining a venue (city) and organizing for the 2nd IPAI convention, and organizing the election of the association's inaugural and foundation officers.

Caretaker Committee's Inaugural Meeting, November 13, 2005

On November 13, 2005, the caretaker committee convened via teleconference for her inaugural meeting. The minutes of proceedings indicate that 8 members of the committee were in attendance, and the following members were absent: Ugwa Ogbureke; Ogbureke Ogbureke; Erinma Mbonu; and Leonard Ibeka. I am privy only to the reasons for the non-attendance of Mrs. Mbonu (she was unwell during this period and subsequently sent her apology) and, for the avoidance of doubt, I was absent from the meeting because I simply did not remember. Salient aspects of the business deliberation of the committee included a unanimous election, by members present, of Mr. Orji Igwe as the Chairman of the caretaker committee, and an equally unanimous choice of Los Angeles, California as the venue for the 2007 "Ezumezu" in Diaspora. The complete record of the minutes of November 13, 2005 and those of subsequent committee deliberations are available as public record to all IPAI members.

The Resignation of Mr. Orji Igwe

Days following the committee's inaugural meeting, the chairman, obviously disappointed with absentee members of the committee, circulated an email requesting an immediate vote on a motion (by him) proposing that members who fail to attend the Caretaker Committee meeting on more than three occasions be dropped from the committee. The response to this proposal was swift with members who responded voting "NO", thereby defeating the motion. The reasons adduced by members for rejecting this proposal may be segregated in a two-fold basket: first, members doubted that such power to remove another member from the committee would have been intended by the Houston Delegates who appointed them; second, such draconian measure appears to conflict with the spirit of voluntary contribution of time by members, and would only

serve to place unnecessary and undue burden, pressure, and stress on serving members. Following the defeat of this proposal was a series of back-and forth email exchange between some members of the committee and Mr. Igwe relating to the rejection of his proposal (I was not involved!). Shortly after these exchanges members of the committee received an email from Mr. Igwe notifying the committee of his intentions to resign his membership of the caretaker committee, citing competing commitments. The complete text of the single-paragraph letter, which speaks for itself, is reproduced below (Appendix 1).

-----OJ Douglas Igwe

Dear Committee Members:

Effective with this correspondence, I wish to inform you of my intent to withdraw from involvement in the committee. Due to increased responsibility at work, in conjunction with personal undertakings I am presently pursuing, it has become extremely difficult for me to devote the amount of time necessary to be an effective and efficient contributor in the committee affairs. I regret the decision. I wish you all well, as you continue to forge ahead with the committee's activities.

*Best Wishes,
OJ Douglas Igwe*

Second Committee Meeting, April 30, 2006

The committee convened and held its second teleconference on April 30, 2006, almost 6 months following the first and the resignation of Mr. Igwe. As anticipated, the first order of business was the issue of the apparent vacuum left by the sudden resignation of the committee Chairman. As detailed in the minutes of the April 30 2006 meeting, essentially two motions were moved: the first was to accept Mr. Igwe's resignation; the second was to allow a little more time for "tempers to cool", and to see if Mr. Igwe would reconsider his resignation. At the risk of appearing self-serving, I hesitate to disclose that I moved the second motion seeking to allow Mr. Igwe additional time to reconsider his resignation. I suggested that the committee rotate interim chairs for the April 30, 2006 and a few more future deliberations in the hope that Mr. Igwe would reconsider his position. The irony of this sincere position and a couple of others I took defending Mr. Igwe and some of his perceived interests would hardly be lost on any one after reading the rest of this report. As the minutes of the April 30 meeting would indicate, the motion to elect a new chair passed, while my motion was defeated. The committee went on to elect me as the chairman of the caretaker committee. My first action conducting the committee's business was to instruct the secretary of the committee, Mr. Peter Imaa, to continue to extend notices for the committee's meetings and deliberations to Mr. Igwe. I had felt that we ought to apply the same argument that, even if we could accept Mr. Igwe's resignation as chairman because we elected him to that position, he should be at liberty to attend and participate fully in committee deliberations if he so desires because he was appointed to committee membership by the Igbere Delegates in Houston.

Request for Convention Preparation Update, May 23, 2007

Between April 30, 2006 and May 23, 2007, the committee held several sessions largely devoted to hammering out the details of the IPAI draft constitution, and had finally put together a debatable document. Attention therefore began to focus on preparations for the 2nd IPAI convention in Los Angeles, California. In exercise of its *oversight* responsibility, the committee directed me to formally request an update from the California chapter on progress made on the infrastructural procurement and other logistical issues involved in the planning of the convention. I have also attached a copy of my May 23, 2007 letter to Mr. Emmanuel Ollawa, then President

of IPA California requesting this update ([Appendix 2](#)). This letter was not responded to, prompting a reminder from me dated June 8, 2007 ([Appendix 3](#)) and stressing the importance of this update in assessing the preparedness of the California Chapter to host the 2007 convention. In apparent reaction to this *reminder*, Mr. Ollawa issued a mass email (neither addressed to the committee nor in response to the chairman's request) conveying the unmistakable impression that, with respect to the 2nd IPAI convention planning and preparations, the California Chapter was neither answerable nor accountable to the Caretaker committee appointed by Igbere people ([Appendix 4](#)). This obviously was disappointing but more significantly turned out to be a primer to subsequent challenges to other assignments implicit in the mandate to the committee. In a modestly robust email response dated June 14 2007, I sought to remind Igbere people of their assignment to us and to alert them to some effort to frustrate and negate gains already made by the committee ([Appendix 5](#)).

Emergency Meeting of June 17, 2007

As events continued to indicate that the oversight responsibility of the Caretaker committee is being challenged by IPA California leadership, concerns about the atmosphere for a convention in California and the readiness of that chapter to reasonably assure a hitch-free celebration began to mount. As a result, an emergency meeting of the committee was convened on June 17, 2007 to reassess the situation. During this landmark and historic meeting, the committee voted on a motion to strip California of the hosting privilege extended to it by the committee. Nine members of the committee, including me as the chairman, were in attendance for the June 17 meeting. With the initial voting (from which I had refrained as the Chairman) resulting in a stalemate: 4 for and 4 against, the onus fell on me to break the tie. Two of the 3 members of the committee from California voted in favor of allowing California a grace period of one week to respond to the committee's requests; one member voted against. I broke the tie by voting in favor of allowing a one-week grace (*goodwill*) period. The committee unanimously agreed that failure on the part of the chapter to comply would automatically trigger an alternative plan that came to be designated "*Plan B*." Essentially, Plan B indicated that the committee will divest California chapter of her hosting privilege for the 2007 Ezumezu in Diaspora should the chapter president again fail to respond to a clearly spelt out *Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU) at the expiration of a *goodwill* period. Such divestment will allow the committee to proceed with consideration of alternative venue.

The Request for Memorandum of Understanding (MOU; [Appendix 6](#))

Following the committee's emergency meeting of June 18, 2007, I sent an urgent letter to Mr. Emmanuel Ollawa, President, IPA California Chapter under the subject heading: **Second IPAI Convention: Memorandum of Understanding**. The essence of this letter was to convey to Mr. Ollawa the committee's dissatisfaction and mounting anxiety on the level of preparedness of California chapter and their cooperation with the committee after assessing two cardinal benchmarks:

1. Completed arrangement for *infrastructural and logistical* elements required at the convention venue in Los Angeles; and
2. The extent to which the California Chapter has cooperated with the Caretaker committee in fostering an *atmosphere* that ensures that delegates and their visitors have a good convention justifying the delegates' choice of opportunity cost.

I emphasized that the committee is perplexed at the defiant and evasive posture of the California Chapter president, and viewed these as disruptive, divisive, and retrogressive. I conveyed the committee's legitimate concern that delegates may arrive in Los Angeles in September to a rowdy, disorderly, rancorous, and polarizing atmosphere. In addition, I detailed the essential

elements of *Plan B*, including the attachment of a one-page MOU to be signed by the California chapter president. At the expiration of the one-week goodwill period, the president again chose to ignore the requests of the committee made in the June 18 letter and, of course, this choice not to comply with the MOU requirements triggered *Plan B*.

Plan B Activation and the Active Search for Alternative Venue

Following the activation of Plan B, the committee actively began consideration and solicitation for an alternative venue for the 2007 convention. The committee was mindful of the potential burden (logistically and financially) of a change of venue at that juncture on members who would have taken the otherwise prudent step of making early arrangements for a “vacation” in California. However, because indications were rife that the odds were stacking up against a peaceful atmosphere for a convention in California, the board thought it necessary to be “safe than sorry.” In consequence, in my letter of June 26, 2007 ([Appendix 7](#)), I undertook a most difficult and painful task of informing Igbere people that California will no longer be hosting the IPAI 2007 convention, articulating the reasons for this regrettable but necessary step. The Southeast Chapter responded to the committee’s solicitation for alternative venue with indications of her willingness to host the convention in Atlanta. In the short amount of time available, the Southeast chapter was able to meet the formal requirements of the committee, including the signing of an MOU identical to the one previously presented to the California Chapter. This significant development heralded the earnest preparation and subsequent successful Ezumezu in Diaspora 2007 in Atlanta hosted by the Southeast chapter on the Labor Day weekend of September 2007.

2. THE OLIVE BRANCH COMMISSION

In March 2008, the foundation President of the Igbere Progressive Association International (IPAI) Inc, Chief Michael Awa, asked me if I was willing to assemble a delegate of two or three members of the association to open up dialogue and extend an Olive Branch to our California brothers and sisters aggrieved by the change of venue for the 2nd IPAI 2007 convention. This initiative was informed by understandable sentiments expressed at the Atlanta convention. Generally, these sentiments underscored the desire to get every Igbere son and daughter in Diaspora back *onboard* for the greater goal toward unity. The President (who was a member of the defunct caretaker committee) indicated that his confidence in choosing me to head this commission was based on the following reasons:

1. As the erstwhile chairman of the defunct caretaker committee, I have a complete knowledge of the facts and circumstance of the issues involved;
2. During the period, I managed the crisis without allowing personal differences to influence critical decisions of the committee;
3. (In the President’s opinion) I generally would be viewed as objective, fair, credible, and without personal axe to grind even by those aggrieved.

I accepted the president’s appointment. The President charged me with the task of assembling a team of two or three IPAI members, preferably from our pool of distinguished elders, with whom to work out both the contact person(s) on the aggrieved side and the strategy for negotiation. The President intended this initiative as an outreach of goodwill to the aggrieved individuals, and to complement a Delegates’ resolution at the Atlanta convention directing the President to send out a letter of invitation to IPAI membership *without conditions*, to every Igbere son and daughter in Diaspora. I proceeded to contact two distinguished elder, Chief Peter Agwu Uche and Mazi Agbai Ekperi to request their membership of this commission. I chose these elders precisely after applying the same *litmus tests* that Mr. Awa seemed to have applied in appointing me. Incidentally, Chief Uche could not be available for any of our deliberation; therefore, the

deliberations of the Olive Branch commission representing the President's commission were carried out by Mazi Ekperi and me.

Choice of Mr. Orji Igwe as Contact for the Aggrieved

An essential detail that has been spared in this report so far is the role of Mr. Orji Igwe in the Caretaker Committee-California Chapter saga. Those of you who closely followed events pre-(and to some extent post-) 2007 convention would have no difficulty recognizing Mr. Igwe's unflattering role ((quite frankly!)) as the amber that continuously fanned the flame of confusion and distrust between the Caretaker Committee and the California chapter. Shortly after his "resignation" from the committee, Mr. Igwe (who lives in Texas) continued "consultations" with some elders and certain chapter officials in a capacity that was difficult to fathom but which nonetheless created numerous confusions, and occasional embarrassment to the association. On occasions, he issued "press" releases purporting to represent a particular IPAI development but which contradicted the facts on the ground. These activities, largely malicious in style, misinformed and probably misguided unwary member. Even more profoundly, Mr. Igwe's activities may have escalated some personal differences between members based on issues that "hitherto" had no relevance to IPAI as an organization. His success with this scheme and consequent influence on the California Chapter leadership became all too evident quite early in the period between 2005 and 2007. Paradoxically, it is for this reason that we chose Mr. Igwe as the *de facto* leader and contact person on the aggrieved side. In consequence, I called Mr. Igwe to inform him that Mr. Ekperi and I, commissioned by the IPAI president, would like to dialogue with him, and I proceeded to provided him with an overview of the subject matter of our commission. Thereafter, we agreed on an initial teleconference date.

Commission's 1st and 2nd Meeting with Mr. Igwe and his Team

In all, Mr. Agbai Ekperi and I met with Mr. Igwe (and his team) 3 times. All discussions were via teleconferences and, of course, were without the benefit of recorded minutes. We were quite mindful of the hazards of not being able to formally record our proceedings; but we also reasoned that the risk was worth taking given the extent to which a gesture of trust might positively enhance the realization of our desired goal. Our goal for the first meeting held some time between May and June 2008, essentially was to feel the pulse of the other, and to determine whether there was an express will to have a constructive discussion coupled with optimism to achieve reconciliation. It would appear that this latter aspect of our aim was "realized" because we adjourned this first conference with Mr. Igwe agreeing with us on the need to bring back everybody (now a few of the aggrieved California chapter members) under the IPAI tent. Prior to our second scheduled teleconference, Mr. Igwe called to inform me that he would like the president of IPA California (not to be confused with IPA Pacific chapter also in California) to partner with him in subsequent discussions. While that was okay with us, I nonetheless cautioned that we should guard against sensationalism and a potential circus situation inherent in a crowded discourse of a sensitive subject.

At the second teleconference held several weeks later, Mr. Igwe called in with 2 other members of the California chapter, Mr. Emmanuel Anyaogu and Mr. Emmanuel Ollawa. Although this was a departure from his initial request that he be allowed to invite a member (not two) to join him, I thought that this departure was insignificant to our whole purpose and so had no difficulty accommodating the additional member of his team. However, prior to commencement of deliberation, I repeated my caution that we resist any urge to sensationalize or perpetuate a circus atmosphere. I also emphasized the need for us to maintain civility in our choice of language and words while expressing our position and any attendant sentiments. In other words, we should continue to respect each other even on our points of disagreement. This caution was hardly heeded by Mr. Ollawa throughout the conference and, on several occasions, threatened the

continuation of dialogue. In spite of this, we were able to agree that both sides should retreat into consultation with their respective interests and convene again. More significantly, it became clear as this second teleconference progressed, that Mr. Igwe and his team were in a *bargaining* mood and were seeking accommodation. I interpreted this as a *good* sign and went back to the President and the IPAI Board of Directors for consultations, and to request suggestions for reasonable accommodation that could be focal points for further discussions with Mr. Igwe and his team.

After consultations with the president and the Board, the following accommodations were proposed:

1. That the California chapter be allowed to register with IPAI as a *bona fide* chapter separate from the Pacific chapter without prior conditions. This would automatically empower the President of the California chapter as a member of IPAI executive committee as presently stipulated in the IPAI constitution. The significance of this proposed accommodation lies in the fact that, following the recalcitrance of the IPA California leadership in 2007, a sizable number of its membership left the chapter to form the IPA Pacific Chapter, and duly registered with IPAI. Thus, the alternative would be the more difficult task of insisting that individual members of IPA California as currently constituted register with IPA Pacific chapter: a *bona fide* IPAI chapter. The proposed arrangement whereby two IPAI chapters exist in a single state, as anomalous as it would appear on its face, was one that had the potential for self-correction as the personal wounds occasioning it in the first place begin to heal with time;
2. That IPAI make it a priority in coming years to assiduously work toward a quick *reconciliation* and *reconsolidation* of the Pacific and California chapters as presently constituted, into one vibrant IPAI chapter in California. It is envisaged that the anticipated reunion will make such a west coast chapter a natural choice for IPAI convention in the foreseeable future;
3. All members of the California chapter and all other aggrieved Igberians who yield to this reconciliation effort and register with IPAI automatically be entitled to all IPAI membership rights, privileges and benefits *without conditions*, including the right *to vote and be voted for* during this and subsequent conventions.

Commissions 3rd Meeting with Mr. Igwe and his Team

The commission presented IPAI's points of accommodation to the Mr. Igwe and his team at its 3rd teleconference. Mr. Igwe who pointedly rejected all proposals from IPAI instead proposed the following:

1. That IPAI executive Council be dissolved and its constitution suspended;
2. That the Association be further managed by a caretaker committee on dissolution;
3. That a "peace and reconciliation commission" be appointed to resolve pending grievances;
4. That the Labor Day weekend convention date tradition changed by Delegate Resolution in Atlanta in 2007 be reversed;
5. That IPAI cancel its 3rd biennial convention scheduled to hold in Washington DC, metropolis in July 2009, and a "neutral" convention venue "jointly" determined (presumably) by his team and others.

We rejected all the above proposals by Mr. Igwe on the ground that they made little sense, are no pointers to any genuine effort at reconciliation, were retrogressive, and were untenable. Our reasoning for rejecting these proposals is further catalogued under the respective (itemized) proposals below:

1. That IPAI executive Council be dissolved and its constitution suspended

The IPAI constitution is a product of two years of dedication, hard work, and commitment by Igbere sons and daughters who approached their responsibility with sobriety, dictates of conscience and honesty of purpose, and who were appointed by Igbere people in Diaspora (Houston 2005). This constitution was vigorously debated by IPAI delegates from all across the globe at the Atlanta convention in 2007 before its adoption and ratification. Following adoption and ratification of the IPAI constitution, members of the first Executive Council (2007 – 2009) were duly elected and constituted through painstaking organizational and transparently democratic processes at the 2007 convention in Atlanta. Therefore, for individuals who made a deliberate choice to stay out of the process to now propose the dissolution of IPAI in a bid to accommodate certain leadership ambition or undemocratic-style preferences is simply preposterous and absurd. Tearing down a foundation simply because one failed to be part of the cornerstone has never been prudent. It is at best retrogressive since, were it to become an accepted norm, those who decide to miss an *on-time train* at the station will *always* reserve the right to order *back* the train to pick them up. Destinations will hardly be reached under such *recall rights*.

2. That the Association be further managed by a caretaker committee on dissolution

The 13-member Caretaker Committee appointed by the Houston delegates in 2005 discharged their responsibility creditably and successfully “*midwifed*” the drafting, debating, and adoption of the first IPAI constitution. Suspension of the constitution, dissolution of the executive council, or the formation another “*caretaker committee*” is akin to a circus of failure. Such a step lacks seriousness of purpose, and certainly is no way forward as adduced above.

3. That a “peace and reconciliation commission” be appointed to resolve pending grievances

The duly elected IPAI President extended an Olive Branch to aggrieved members offering path to IPAI membership without conditions and with full rights. Prior, to this gesture, IPAI registered membership was over 90.

4. That the Labor Day weekend convention date tradition changed by Delegate Resolution in Atlanta in 2007 be reversed

Paradoxically, this proposal presumes the “*legitimacy*” of IPAI on the part of those who had earlier questioned it. In any case, it would appear that IPAI structure will accommodate points of views on this subject consistent with its style of open debate, and ultimately respecting a majority or consensus opinion reached by members. However, membership to IPAI would seem to be a precondition to expressing point of counter views and debating issues in order to influence IPAI policies and decisions.

5. That IPAI cancel its 3rd biennial convention scheduled to hold in Washington DC, metropolis in July 2009, and a “neutral” convention venue “jointly” determined (presumably) by his team and others

It is hard imagine what was intended to be accomplished in the event that this proposal is granted. All IPAI members are from Igbere and convention venues chosen by clearly defined procedure are bound to be “*neutral*.” It is still difficult to imagine under what circumstances “*neutrality*” of venue comes into contention as a factor for consideration.

All five proposal share a common trait: they smack of unbridled arrogance by ascribing to one’s self the title of the custodian of leadership and the sole repertoire of governance ideas. More importantly, it became apparent that Mr. Igwe had one motive and one goal blended together: that

he somehow becomes “*in-charge*” again. Although we managed to adjourn on a cordial note, it was clear at that point that, unless some unforeseen events or voices of reason prevail on Mr. Igwe to look beyond himself on this issue, further meetings may not be necessary. True to this prediction, when I called Mr. Igwe to find out if further conferences were necessary, we both spontaneously indicated that, for all intents and purpose, the answer was No.

Tirade by Mr. Orji Igwe

Throughout these challenges, I have managed to refrain from responding in *kind* to attacks on my person and the deliberate falsehood against me. I acknowledge that we all do not have the same ability to stick to issues during disagreements. My view is that personalization often is a tactic employed to digress and divert attention from issues at hand when those who take to this tactics are bereft of ideas and arguments that support and sustain their position. Between 2005 and present, Mr. Igwe and others have employed this cheap and disgusting tool, mainly via email releases, in the course of discourse on the future of our association and our community. I personally doubt that this tactics have been particularly helpful to him or his associates in any tangible or meaningful way. My estimate is that his penchant for distortion and outright falsehood, continue to erode his credibility with the Igbere people in dimensions that may turn out to be significant. Just in the past few weeks he issued another of his all too familiar periodic tirades ostensibly to address the issue of “peace” but in reality to disparage me and others who have respectfully disagreed with him on matters of community interest. I am also attaching this latest piece as an appendix to this report ([Appendix 8](#)). Mr. Igwe’s passion for Igbere *cause* has never been in doubt; what has is his willingness to look beyond *self* and his possession of the right temperament and humility to accommodate (or even entertain) views or ideas at variance with his for the greater and common good.

3. CONCLUSION

As indicated in the Preface, this report aims to put into perspective the effort and results of the commission appointed by IPAI President to extend an Olive Branch to members still unhappy with the change of venue for the 2007 Ezumezu in Diaspora. The commission approached its assignment with diligence and attempted to negotiate with representatives of the aggrieved Igberians in good faith. However, it is the conclusion in this report that Mr. Igwe who represented the aggrieved during this effort craves a *kingdom* at all cost and, therefore, had only one outcome in mind: to once more become in-charge.

I wish to you all a Happy 3rd biennial convention, and thank you all again for your attention and for your time.

 Ugwa Ogbureke, *BDS (Ibadan), MSc (Glasgow), PhD (Harvard), JD (Suffolk), FDSRCS (England)*

APPENDIX

1. Email attachment dated

-----OJ Douglas Igwe

Dear Committee Members:

Effective with this correspondence, I wish to inform you of my intent to withdraw from involvement in the committee. Due to increased responsibility at work, in conjunction with personal undertakings I am presently pursuing, it has become extremely difficult for me to devote the amount of time necessary to be an effective and efficient contributor in the committee affairs. I regret the decision. I wish you all well, as you continue to forge ahead with the committee's activities.

Best Wishes,

OJ Douglas Igwe

2.

May 23, 2007

Mr. Emmanuel Ollawa
President
Igbere Progressive Association, California Chapter

Dear Mr. Ollawa,

I trust that this letter meets you and your family well.

As the chairman of the Igbere Progressive Association International (IPAI) caretaker committee, I have obtained periodic update from Mr. Peter Imaa, the secretary of the committee, who I understand also is the chairman of the local California Chapter organizing committee for the next IPAI convention in Los Angeles. The caretaker committee is impressed with your effort, and that of the entire California branch, at securing the necessary facilities and assembling the logistics required for a successful convention. On behalf of the committee I commend the sacrifice, diligence, and devotion of the entire California membership.

The caretaker committee plans her final meeting for sometime before the end of June 2007, prior to the IPAI convention in September. As implicit in her 2005 Houston mandate, the committee intends to assemble, review, collate, and *finalize* all aspects of the convention planning. This, of course, includes the production of a *final* Program for the convention. In this regards, I wish to request that you provide me with a summary of the local arrangements so far, including any issues or logistics that might still be outstanding at this time. In addition, let me know if there are areas the committee might be able to assist the host branch in concluding its infrastructure procurement (or other local logistical issues).

We are all anticipating a great convention and reunion and, no less, the IPAI California Branch hospitality.

I look forward to your response to this request at your earliest convenience. Please extend my regards to your family. Thank you again.

Your brother,
Ugwa Kalu Ogbureke
Chairman, IPAI Caretaker Committee
Tel. 706 755-6351 (cell)
Email: kogbureke@netscape.net

3.

June 8, 2007

Mr. Emmanuel Ollawa
President
Igbere Progressive Association, California Chapter

RE: Upcoming IPAI convention. Request for Update on Local Arrangement

Dear Mr. Ollawa,

This is a follow up to my email of May 23, 2007 (forwarded) on the above subject. As I indicated to you, IPAI caretaker committee will be holding an update and assessment session on June 17, 2007 to review and evaluate all aspects of the convention planning. This, of course, must include an assessment of the host (California) chapter's *state of preparedness* for this very important and potentially historic occasion. Following the committee's session on June 17, and in the event that the committee is satisfied with all aspects of the planning and arrangements, we will proceed immediately with arrangement for the production of a *final* Program for the convention.

In order to assist the committee in completing this assessment of the chapter's preparedness, it is imperative that I receive your response to my earlier request. This includes details on infrastructural (accommodation for delegates, venue of Town Hall meeting, recreation/amusement, etc) facilities already secured. Please include a summary of the state of all logistical arrangement of the like that would ordinarily be expected to be in place for Igbere people and our other guests. Again, let me know if there are outstanding issues and how the committee might be able to assist the host chapter in concluding all required arrangements as soon as possible.

Given that the convention is barely two months away from today, delegates must be accorded the courtesy of receiving a *final* program announcement as soon as possible to enable individuals and families plan their trips in a most frugal manner. Furthermore, we all are mindful that Igbere Sons and Daughters, and their distinguished guests will be converging from across the globe, and we therefore have a collective responsibility to work towards ensuring that all delegates leave with a good and lasting *aftertaste* at the end of the convention.

Needless to say, a response to my request will facilitate the completion of the caretaker committee's task scheduled for Sunday, June 17. Time is of the essence. In the event that the requested information is not made available to the committee, the committee must then entertain a logical reservation regarding the preparedness of the California chapter to host this very important occasion. Because the committee assumes a final oversight responsibility to ensure that the modest expectations of delegates for the convention are met (or at least not jeopardized), the committee must reach a clear conclusion, as a matter of urgency, on feasible options it must explore, and adjustments it must make, to ensure a successful convention. Under this scenario, the committee would not keep delegates in the dark but must sincerely and fully brief all on its findings and assessment on the

California chapter's preparedness. Finally, we must assume the responsibility to advise the delegates accordingly. In this context, it behooves us all to do our best to ensure a hitch-free and successful convention.

It is certainly my hope that we will all appreciate the urgency of this matter and that *time is of the essence*. It is also my hope that we will all work very hard *together* with the common goal of achieving a successful convention as proposed, and with an aspiration to ultimately begin to lead our community by stellar examples of our communal sense of oneness and sacrifice.

Should you have any question regarding the subject of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me on 706 755 6351; email: kogbureke@netscape.net.

Thank you again, and God bless.

Yours in the service of IPAI
Ugwa Kalu Ogbureke
Chairman, IPAI Caretaker Committee

4. Email attachment: Letter from Mr. Ollawa to Igbere people

Igbere Kwenu!, Igbere Kwenu!, Kwezue nu!; Ebiri Kwenu!, Umu-
Ebiri Kwenu!; Ndewo nu!.

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

It gives me great pleasure to write you all. On behalf of Igbere
Progressive
Association,
California Chapter, I am delighted to send this correspondence to you.
I am very

pleased to inform you all plans towards the actualization of our 2007
IPA
Convention
here in California is going smoothly as planned. Please be informed
that your
brothers
and sisters are all fully prepared, ready and are awaiting your arrival
to
California for our
2nd Convention (Ezumezu) in the Diaspora, come September 2007. As a
result of
the
team effort of our members here in California, along with the moral
support of
most of
you, I am pleased to say that we are almost done with all necessary
itinerary
required to
ensure and execute a well-coordinated and formidable convention of the
IPA.
Having
said these, may I seize this opportunity to update each and every one
of you
with
information regarding our upcoming convention. Here we go:

IPA Convention Town Hall Meeting Date / Time: September 1, 2007 at 2:00
PM

IPA Convention (Open to the Public) Date: September 2, 2007 at 7:00 PM

Town Hall Meeting and Convention Event Venue:

Courtyard by Marriott - Los Angeles Westside
6333 Bristol Parkway, Culver City California, 90230
(310) 484 - 7000 / (800) 321 - 5575

*(The airport is approximately 3 miles to the hotel)

Group Rate for Hotel Room: \$109.00

Airport: Los Angeles International Airport (LAX)

*(The airport is approximately 3 miles to the hotel)

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If you have not already sent in your convention advert, please do so now. Advert costs are as follows:

Full Page - \$100.00

Half Page - \$50.00

(Front, inner front, back and inner back pages are special price. The price begins at \$150.00 and goes to the highest bidder).

We expect that one of the first and major order of business and highlights of the town hall meeting agenda shall be: Election of IPA - International Executives. We therefore encourage you all to endeavor to arrive to California and at the meeting on time.

We are also requesting that you assist us in ensuring wide disseminating of this

correspondence to Igbere citizens all over the world. Let us join hands to ensure the advancement of this our newly found worthy cause and endeavor, in the Diaspora.

Furthermore, let me utilize this opportunity to inform you all that we have secured our 501 (c) 3. We therefore humbly request that you encourage the companies you work or do business with, your business associates, organizations, bankers, friends, etc., to donate to us, for a worthy cause. Please ensure to remind them that all donations are tax deductible.

As you all may already know, we now also have a website. The website address is:

www.ipacalifornia.org. Should you need additional information regarding the convention, we request that you refer to the website.

It is my earnest hope and prayers that our good Lord will be with you and your family and ensure you have a safe trip to & fro to California.

Yours Sincerely,

Emmanuel Ollawa, President

IPA - California Chapter

(301) 714 - 0439

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P/s: You may contact any of the individuals listed below or myself for more information.

.. Okorie Ezieme (213) 610 - 3807

.. Emmanuel Anyaogu, Social Secretary (909) 578 - 2554

.. Samuel Udogu Eke (818) 823 - 7418

.. Ruth Chidinma Eke (818) 823 - 6393

.. Iheoma Akinnusi (909) 559 - 7573

(In case you are wondering, the women's uniform will be the same as the one used, during the 2005 IPA Convention in Houston).

5.

June 14, 2007

Ugwa Kalu Ogbureke
Chairman, Caretaker Committee, IPAI Inc.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

RE: "CONENTION UPDATE" - Urgent Alert

My attention has been drawn to a mass email sent yesterday by Mr. Emmanuel Ollawa, President of the California Chapter of the IPAI, with the Subject Heading: CONVENTION UPDATE. As the Chairman of the IPAI Caretaker Committee, I am constrained to issue this alert, and urge us all to disregard the mail and not act based on any aspect of its content. This is because the issues, positions, and impressions conveyed in the mass mail do not represent any aspect of the committee's deliberations or final decisions regarding the planning, and final agenda and program for the convention.

We all are able to recall that the IPAI Caretaker Committee was formed during the first international convention of Igbere sons and daughters in diaspora held in Houston in September 2005. The committee was charged with the responsibility of assembling a frame work that will produce our first constitution, convey recognition, and command respectability and prestige for the association, and no less to all IPAI members as individuals. Other than the production of a draft constitution, implicit in the committee's Houston mandate is to exercise and address interim responsibilities of the association as may challenge the association before its first inauguration of elected officials. This clearly includes a mandate to exercise the required oversight responsibilities towards all aspects of the second IPAI convention planning. Notable among these responsibilities include the selection of the host chapter for the 2nd IPA convention, fashioning out a structure and procedure for the election of the foundation IPAI executive committee, and articulating the final program and program announcement to all delegates and our visitors.

From its inception, the committee has kept in focus the challenge and goal of providing not just the *paper documents* but also the "atmospheric" foundation germane to assembling a leadership core that will work towards the cohesiveness, unity, and common goal that appeared to have eluded us so far.

The Caretaker committee approached this responsibility and task with utmost seriousness and has worked tirelessly this past one and half years to actualize the stated mandates and its far-reaching and desired goals. For example, we unanimously selected the California Chapter to host the second IPAI convention during our second meeting. There is now a draft constitution, which I am sure, has been circulated and ready for debate and adoption at the next convention. The committee is finalizing modalities for the assembling of an electoral subcommittee to conduct our elections at the convention, and we are in the process of putting together the final agenda and program for the convention.

6.

June 18, 2007

Mr. Emmanuel Ollawa,
President, IPAI, California Chapter

Dear Mr. Ollawa,

Second IPAI Convention: Memorandum of Understanding

During the emergency meeting of IPAI Caretaker committee on Sunday, June 17, 2007, the committee completed her assessment of the readiness of the California Chapter to host the Second IPAI convention in September 2007. Two cardinal benchmarks for this assessment are:

3. Completed arrangement for *infrastructural and logistical* elements required at the convention venue in Los Angeles.
4. The extent to which the California Chapter has cooperated with the Caretaker committee in fostering an *atmosphere* that ensures that delegates and their visitors have a good convention justifying the delegates' choice of opportunity cost.

The elements of the first benchmark received limited focus during this emergency meeting because of mounting anxiety regarding the Chapter's shortfall on the second benchmark. Particularly, it came to the attention of the committee that the President of the California Chapter had, at various times, questioned the *legitimacy* and *scope of activity* of the Caretaker committee. Although the committee unanimously was in no doubt as to her legitimacy, and continue to have total confidence that it is operating within the ambits of the given mandate, there was enormous anxiety and frustration regarding this expressed counter position by the very core of the California Chapter leadership. The committee continues to view this defiant posture from the California Chapter president as disruptive, divisive, and retrogressive. Specifically, there is a legitimate concern that delegates may arrive in Los Angeles in September to a rowdy, disorderly, rancorous, and polarizing atmosphere.

As I alluded in my earlier email to you and that to the Igbere people, the committee views the Second IPAI convention as most critical and of immense historical import because of its potential to clearly define us and lay down guideposts to our future as an organization. To this end, the Caretaker committee, having being charged with the various *foundation* responsibilities, is determined not to fail in this assignment. As the Chairman of the Caretaker committee, I am very fortunate to be working with one of the brightest, dedicated, and finest collection of Igbere sons and daughter who are determined to successfully discharge this limited responsibility assigned to us. We have no other motivation other than to be part of a worthy legacy for our community; this committee intends to offer a modest template of our idea of orderliness as an alternative to some of the chaos, randomness, and confusion that have frustrated most of us in the past.

Because the committee is determined to forestall a chaotic atmosphere in Los Angeles, an option now available is that of a change of venue for the second IPAI. This option (Plan B) is in *suspension* for one week from the *day and time* of delivery of this email to you as the president of IPAI California Chapter. The status of Plan B at the expiration of this *goodwill* period will depend on your response to a clearly spelt out *Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU) that will follow as a *PDF* attachment. The *MOU* is a one-page document. Please let me know immediately if you encounter any difficulty opening the attachment. I will be glad to promptly fax to you a copy of the *MOU* at your request.

In the event that you decide to ignore or reject any of the items on the *MOU*, Plan B will *activate automatically* at the expiration of this one week of *goodwill*. However, we certainly hope that you will choose to reciprocate the committee's goodwill gesture by unequivocally acceding to all items of the *MOU*. Such effort on your part will go a long way to begin to allay the misgivings and frustration now being expressed, not only by the committee members, but by numerous Igbere sons and daughters. Furthermore, your acceptance would prepare the ground for the committee to begin to work with you as a team to fashion out the fine details of the convention program. In the interest of consistency and fairness, the committee will require the officers of any Chapter with an alternative venue in consideration to accede to the same (exact) *MOU* for hosting, in the event that Plan B activates.

It is imperative that you as the president of the California Chapter personally accede to *all* the enumerated elements of the **MOU** with your signature. *Proxy or delegated* signatories will not be acceptable to the committee and may be treated as non responsive on your part and therefore rejected. I have prepared the *MOU* as *Line Items*, with space for *your signature*, to obviate the extra burden on you of writing a detailed response; I am mindful that you are a very busy gentleman. Please fax the completely signed copies to me at the following fax number: 706 721-3392 on or before June 25, 2007. In addition, please return the original by a prepaid FEDEX envelope, also to reach me no later than the same date, June 25, 2007. The FEDEX return address is:

Ugwa Kalu Ogbureke
1391 Aylesbury Drive
Evans, GA 30809
Tel. # 706 755 6351

Out of courtesy that you receive this email *first*, and consistent with the committee's commitment and pledge to keep Igbere closely updated on the state of affairs at this critical stage, I shall forward a copy of this email to all after allowing a lapse period of 24 hours.

Thank you in advance of your anticipated cooperation

Yours in the service of the Igbere community
Ugwa Kalu Ogbureke
Chairman, IPAI Caretaker Committee

8. Email attachment dated June 28, 2009*World Igbere Progressive Association**“An Association of People United in Love and Oneness to Serve Mankind”*

“Are there people who simply thrive on divisiveness and discord? I have had enough, since it appears that while some of us are hell bent on uniting Igbere people, some simply don’t give a damn”. By Chidi Ogbonnaya.

What a statement? My Igbere people, you will note that I made specifically underlined some of Mr. Chidi Ogbonnaya’s flowing and flagrant statement above. Nevertheless, I am exceedingly glad that Mr. Chidi Ogbonnaya was bold enough to bring up the comment on uniting Igbere people. This gives me the opportunity to address the issue. Hopefully, upon completion of my missive here, Chidi Ogbonnaya may be in a better position to explain to Igbere people, were he was, uniting them. Note I stated earlier that I am exceedingly glad that Chidi Ogbonnaya brought up this topic. I said that because his topic is an opportunity to tell Igbere people the whole truth and nothing but the truth, regarding our meetings to make peace and reconcile us. The meetings which first began with me OJ Douglas Igwe representing the World Igbere Progressive Association (WIPA) and Mazi Agbai Ekperi and Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke representing Igbere Progressive Association International (IPAI) where held in summer of 2008. Chief Peter Uche supposedly from IPAI according to Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke, was unable to attend the meetings due to some personal conflict. (For those who do not know the history, I, OJ Douglas Igwe was the pioneer and brainchild of IPAI.) As the meetings progressed, I brought in Mazi Emmanuel Ollawa and Mazi Emmanuel Anyaogu, both from WIPA. Note that Mr. Chidi Ogbonnaya was never in any of the meetings held, neither was he ever mentioned as a participant. How and where he became “... some of us hell bent on uniting Igbere people”, I do not know. It should also be noted that I kept all members of WIPA abreast of all discussions we held during the peace talks. I, on several occasions urged Dr. Ogbureke to ensure to keep members of IPAI abreast of the meetings discussions. Mazi Ekpere is my witness. Whether that was done, I do not know.

Now brothers and sisters, here are the whole story below. If I leave anything out or comment untruthfully, please Mazi Agbai Ekpere and Ugwa Ogbureke correct me and re-state the truth for Umu – Igbere to read and regurgitate.

My fellow Igbere people, I urge you to thoroughly and personally read below commentary yourselves and then draw personal inferences. Do not rely on oral history. The story below will help each and everyone one of you make informed determination as to which party was conscientiously, honestly and truly sincere at ensuring peace and reconciliation between WIPA and IPAI.

(Please pardon the lack of dates. I could not immediately dig out my diary. But if you are so minded about dates, I will not hesitate to dig out my diary).

On a given evening, Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke called me OJ Douglas Igwe to arrange a meeting between WIPA and IPAI representatives. A date was negotiated and agreed between two of us. Dr. Ogbureke stated that participants in the meeting shall comprise himself, Mazi Agbai Ekperi and Chief Peter Uche, representing IPAI and myself – OJ Douglas Igwe alone representing WIPA. I questioned why I should not have one or two members from WIPA in attendance. Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke stated they would likely be confrontational and disruptive of the process. Though I was not happy with the adjectives used in describing other Igbere people he is wishing to have reconciliation with, I remained calm for sake of peace. Following a brief debate regarding

my involving others from WIPA, I reluctantly accepted to participate in the peace conference call alone. Mazi Ugwa then stated he will call me prior to the date of the conference with information on the phone conference number; and he did. On the scheduled date of the conference, I called in two (2) minutes early. I waited another twenty (20) minutes and no IPAI representative called. I began calling them one after another. I was able to assemble Dr. Ogbureke and Mazi Ekperi. Though I spoke with Chief Peter Uche, he was not able to be involved in the meeting and his conflict was understandable and excusable. Chief Uche however requested that he be kept abreast of the proceedings. During the meeting, we unanimously agreed that Igbere people (WIPA & IPAI) should be untied.

However, I posed the question on how the unification should be carried out since either party have executives. The question was not answered. The question instead stalled the meeting for ten (10) to fifteen (15) minutes. At that time, I broke the ice by asking Mazi Ogbureke how he thinks the unification should be carried out. He responded that they were merely messengers. That he does not know at the present time. He requested that I hold a one-on-one meeting with Mr. Michael Awa (IPAI President). I questioned why I should hold a one-on-one meeting with Michael Awa. I also questioned what the topic of my discussion with Mr. Awa should be. Dr. Ogbureke stated he does not know, but beckoned that I accept the meeting first. He offered to coordinate and moderate the meeting. Following appeals from Mazi Ekperi, I reluctantly accepted to meet with Mr. Michael Awa.

As usual, Dr. Ogbureke called me to negotiate a date and schedule the one-on-one meeting with Mr. Michael Awa. On the date of the scheduled meeting, I called in on time as usual. Neither Ugwa Ogbureke nor Michael Awa called in. After waiting for more than fifteen (15) minutes I called Ugwa Ogbureke's mobile phone and home several times and there was no response. I called Mazi Agbai Ekperi and narrated my experience to him. Mazi Ekperi apologized and offered to call Ugwa. Following several attempts, Mazi Ekperi was able to get Ugwa on the phone. **(Note:** I also called Chief Peter Uche to relate my experience to him. It was then that Chief Uche urged me to exercise patience. Chief Uche went on to state that before the division took place in 2007, he appealed to them to choose peace over division and they would not listen. And now, they are having difficulty dealing with the aftermath. Chief Uche concluded by saying, "...it is very easy to destroy, but very difficult to rebuild." That when they through Mazi Agbai Ekperi invited him to partake in the peace and reconciliation conference, he posed the same question I asked, to them. The question being, "How do you plan to reconcile the two parties." That he insisted unless a genuine and sincere statement on how the reconciliation will be carried out, it was not necessary to waste his time; being an elder Igbere statesman). Anyway, when Mazi Ugwa Ogbureke finally came to the conference, he feigned that he completely forgot about the meeting; which he scheduled. The meeting was cancelled. I guess Mazi Michael Awa also forgot about the meeting too.

A third meeting was scheduled and again Mazi Ugwa Ogbureke and Mazi Agbai Ekperi were "no shows". As usual, I began calling them. The meeting was cancelled, as Ugwa could not be reached.

On another given day, Mazi Ugwa Ogbureke called me and stated he was calling from the airport en route to I think Sierra Leone on a business trip. He informed me he would like us to resume the meeting upon his return. Upon his return, he called me to schedule a meeting. A fifth meeting was scheduled. Having experienced so much drama, I at this time, insisted that I would have to involve one or two individuals from WIPA to join and experience the professionalism of supposed professionals.

During this fifth meeting, Mazi Ekperi and Mazi Ogbureke were present, representing IPAI; while myself, Mazi Emmanuel Ollawa and Mazi Emmanuel Anyaogu represented WIPA. Following discussions, we all unanimously agreed that WIPA and IPAI should be united. However, the question on how to unite the factions was raised by Mazi Emmanuel Ollawa and Mazi Emmanuel Anyaogu. That question stalled all proceedings. At this time, I suggested that Mazi Ugwa and Mazi Agbai go back to its members and let them know about the peace proceedings and the

difficulty we are having deciding how the reconciliation should be worked out. I noted we would do the same. Of course we have been keeping our members abreast of every proceeding. While Mazi Agbai Ekperi hailed my recommendation as a good idea, Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke stated it was unnecessary for them to go tell their members and seek opinions. Dr. Ugwa stated they were the chosen people to speak for IPAI members and whatever they say is final. I was astounded by such utterance and arrogance. I questioned when he became Igberere, to be the person who makes the final call for them. It was during several discussions and exchanges at this particular meeting that Mazi Agbai Ekperi stated as follows: **“As an elder person, it will be improper and wrong for me to sit here and admit that the treatment meted to the IPA California group in 2007 prior to the convention was fair and just. That the action of Igberere people towards the IPA California who were to host the 2007 convention was grossly unfair, unjust and abominable.”** Mazi Agbai Ekperi however appealed for calm, peace and reconciliation. He volunteered to personally go to California and appeal to the IPA California people for forgiveness. Seeing we were getting nowhere, the meeting was ended.

About a three weeks later, Mazi Ugwa Ogbureke called me to schedule another meeting and I obliged. At this meeting, Mazi Emmanuel Anyaogu could not attend. That left myself OJ Douglas Igwe, Mazi Emmanuel Ollawa, Mazi Agbai Ekperi and Mazi Ugwa Ogbureke.

The question on reconciliation of the factions came up again and there was no answer. When Dr. Ugwa spoke, he urged that the WIPA group of IPA California come and register with IPAI. I asked Ugwa if the IPA California (i.e. IPA – Pacific) faction of IPAI should rejoin the WIPA IPA in California.

Dr. Ugwa’s response was: **“NO”**. I questioned what the IPA California – Pacific membership status should be with IPAI, and Dr. Ogbureke stated they should register separately with IPAI. It was at this point that I became infuriated for the first time and questioned Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke’s level of intelligence and judgment. I asked him why he was seeking reconciliation with WIPA when he does not expect the two Igberere IPA factions in California to be reconciled. Following some exchanges and the restoration of calm, Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke requested that I suggest how I think reconciliation and peace could be achieved.

I, OJ Douglas Igwe stated as follows: “That for the sake of peace, and I being the pioneer and brainchild of this Diaspora Igberere organization, that I am willing to give up my position with WIPA and dissolve my cabinet. I went on to state that IPAI executive and cabinet should also be dissolved. That we shall then resolve for WIPA and IPAI to each present four, five or six individuals to serve as a **Peace and Reconciliation Committee**. That said **Peace and Reconciliation Committee** shall be responsible for determining a neutral ground to host a convention. And that during said convention, an election shall then be conducted by the **Peace and Reconciliation Committee**.” Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke stated the recommendation was not acceptable. Out of anger, I made it known to Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke that if I, OJ Douglas Igwe, had not presented him to Igberere people during the 2005 convention in Houston, Texas, no Igberere person besides people from Agbo, Igberere would have ever known he existed. I questioned how many Igberere people knew he existed when he lived in Houston with his family. The meeting was abruptly brought to an end.

About a month and half later, Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke called me to schedule yet another meeting. During our discussion, I asked him if the meeting hinged on us formalizing the recommendation I made or considering a new recommendation and he stated, **“NO”**. I questioned why we should be having a meeting. I made it clear to him I had no time to wait. We both agreed there was nothing new to talk about and called off any future and further meetings.

My dear Igberere People, above is my story regarding our peace and reconciliation effort. As I stated earlier, Dr. Ogbureke or any other person is welcomed to refute any false statement or omission. And to you my Igberere people, following your thoroughly reading and comprehending the above, I want you and your God to decide which individual/s or group showed sincerity and honesty at ensuring peace. At this juncture, I will also wish to welcome our brother Mazi Chidi Ogbonnaya to tell us how he and his cohorts were **hell bent on uniting Igberere people**, while

some simply don't give a damn. Unless otherwise, he was speaking of a different Igberere people.

Signed,

OJ Douglas Igwe
Executive President, WIPA

P/s: It should be noted that on several occasions throughout the times we assembled, Dr. Ugwa Ogbureke made several derogatory, arrogant and unbecoming comments towards WIPA and members of WIPA in California. On our very first meeting, he referred to WIPA as an anomaly. It was at that juncture that I stopped him and called him to order. Realizing that he could have killed the meeting before it began, he apologized. For sake of avoidance of future provocations, I will withhold re-stating some of the choice words he used towards WIPA California members.

cc: Chief Orji Uzor Kalu (will deliver via your private email).