

WEBINAR SERIES REPORT

APRIL 2026



NIGERIA YESTERDAY, TODAY, & TOMORROW

Examining A Nation's Trajectory

The Think Tank for Sustainable Development launched its first public webinar examining Nigeria's historical roots, current crises, and prospects. The keynote speaker, Dr. Sam Amadi argued that Nigeria's dysfunction stems from unresolved colonial legacies, weak institutions, and failed governance structures. At the same time, Dr. Chichi Aniagolu-Okoye emphasized resilience, civic integrity, and the transformative power of ordinary citizens.

Main Presentation Highlights



Historical & Structural Challenges

Dr. Amadi argued that the 1914 amalgamation created only an administrative arrangement rather than true national integration, leaving weak institutions and unresolved crises of nationality, religion, and values. Nigeria's independence without a strong nationalist struggle also limited the development of civic consciousness and a shared development ideology.

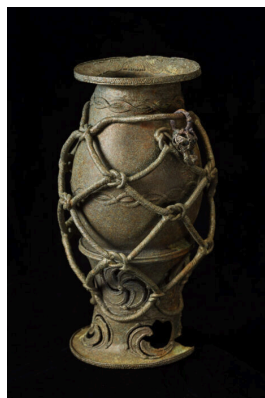
He described Nigeria today as an “electoral autocracy,” where corruption and criminalized politics undermine democracy. Constitutional contradictions further weaken citizenship rights: democratic guarantees in Chapter 2 are not legally enforceable, while citizenship provisions reinforce ethnic identity over national identity. The Land Use Act was cited as enabling arbitrary land seizures and economic injustice.

Current Crisis Indicators

Nigeria faces worsening poverty, youth unemployment, insecurity, and state fragility. Educated but unemployed youth were described as a major destabilizing force. Dr. Amadi also warned that shifting global politics and the decline of liberal internationalism leave Nigeria with fewer external support systems.

Comparative & Regional Lessons

Examples from Tanzania, China, and Abia State were presented as evidence that effective leadership and strategic institution-building can produce national integration and economic transformation. Governor Alex Oti's reforms in Abia State were highlighted as proof that rapid progress is possible with decisive governance.



Proposed Pathways Forward

Institutional Reforms

Key recommendations included:

- Establishing a Commission on Religious Freedom with independent prosecutorial authority.
- Creating an Electoral Observatory to monitor INEC processes and reduce manipulation.
- Activating Chapter 2 constitutional provisions through an Equal Opportunity Commission.
- Using strategic litigation to enforce constitutional rights and accountability.

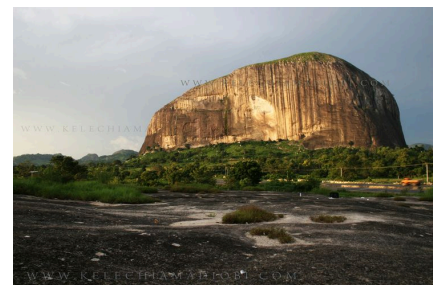
Social Contract & Diversity

Dr. Amadi proposed a new Nigerian Social Contract focused on justice, citizenship, economic inclusion, and ethical governance. Diversity, he argued, should be treated not only as a conflict-management issue but also as an economic asset that can drive regional specialization and growth.

Q&A Highlights

Participants discussed the role of the diaspora, national unity, grassroots initiatives, and youth empowerment. Dr. Charles Okigbo stressed that technology enables diaspora engagement and that the government must intentionally elevate shared Nigerian identity above ethnic divisions. Dr Amadi also noted that many grassroots efforts promoting cohesion already exist but require funding, visibility, and support for scaling.

On youth unemployment, he emphasized the need for a new economic model centered on job creation, entrepreneurship, and welfare protections to preserve dignity and prevent further criminalization of young people.



Pending Issues

Questions remain about the credibility of the 2027 elections, the effectiveness of INEC leadership, and whether Nigeria can achieve broad reform before institutional decline deepens further.

Meet The Presenters



Gen Chris A Garuba [Rtd]

Major General Chris Abutu Garuba is a retired Nigerian Army officer, former Military Governor of Bauchi State, and seasoned public administrator. Born in Benue State, he served in senior military, diplomatic, and peacekeeping roles, including United Nations missions in Angola. Garuba later chaired strategic policy initiatives and national development programs.

He is the Chairman of The Think Tank for Sustainable Development.



Dr. Sam Amadi

Dr. Sam Amadi is a Nigerian legal scholar, public intellectual, and governance expert. He served as Chairman of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) and is Director of the Abuja School of Social and Political Thoughts. His work focuses on constitutional democracy, public policy, institutional reform, and sustainable national development. Dr. Amadi was the keynote speaker.



Dr ChiChi Aniagolu-Okoye

Dr. Chi-Chi Aniagolu-Okoye is a Nigerian development expert, public health strategist, and civic leader. She serves as Regional Director for West Africa at the Ford Foundation, leading initiatives on social justice, governance, and inclusion. Her career spans public health, philanthropy, gender equity, and sustainable development across Africa.

About Us

[The Think Tank for Sustainable Development](https://www.thethinktanksd.com) is a Nigerian policy and civic platform dedicated to advancing sustainable development, democratic governance, social justice, and national transformation through research, dialogue, and public engagement. The organization convenes thought leaders, professionals, and citizens to address pressing national issues, promote evidence-based solutions, and foster inclusive conversations that strengthen institutions, civic participation, and long-term development across Nigeria and Africa.

If you have any questions or suggestions for future topics, please contact us at: webadmin@thethinktanksd.com