

# Nina' Mba's Insider / Outsider's Account



## My wish list for Nigeria 2002

This list is not exhaustive, in random order and tries to avoid conventional platitudes.

1. That effective medication to control and cure malaria, sickle cell anaemia, T.B. and HIV/AIDS be produced and sold cheaply.
2. That the Lagos state government build a bridge from Ikoyi to Lekki Peninsula to relieve the traffic paralysis in Victoria Island.
3. That universities and polytechnics be provided with current technology for teaching science, engineering and computer studies.
4. That the title, office and budget of the first lady (and, in future, first gentleman) at the federal, state and local levels be abolished.
5. That professionals in the public sector be paid salaries competitive with the private sector to encourage them to serve the public.
6. That Safiya's appeal be upheld, and no such punishment ever be permitted in the democratic, secular Republic of Nigeria.
7. That criteria for admission to all government educational institutions be on merit only. Since 'federal character' criteria have not succeeded in their well-intentioned objectives, they should be scrapped.
8. That the money paid for media advertisements of congratulations for birthdays and achievements of public officers be donated to charity and the donation acknowledged in a weekly paid listing in the media.
9. That federal and state legislatures pass laws that criminalize female genital mutilation and the marriage of girls below the age of 17.
10. That the pensions of retired public officials (including the armed forces) be paid on time.
11. That the archaeological site, Muson in Onikan, Lagos be restored to its original function as the extension in the progress of the National Museum.
12. That public officials whose looting of public funds in public knowledge be brought to public trial and if convicted, be sentenced.
13. That the minimum qualification for recruits to the police force be the senior school certificate, regardless of their state of origin.
14. That a special training college for university/polytechnic graduates be set up to produce an elite corps of detectives.

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15. That the Lagos domestic airport terminal be reconstructed so that the temporary "barn" can revert to its intended function of serving one airline, not one dozen.
16. That the intelligence services fulfil their mandate and monitor intelligent persons and places that are sources of religious and communal disturbances.
17. That the federal and state governments set up effective conflict resolution bodies which preempt conflict, not just carry out post-mortems.
18. That foreign proselytizers – whether Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jewish or whatever – be properly screened and monitored.
19. That all unpublished white papers of enquiries, commissions etc. be published.
20. That no person should agree to serve on such commissions, or panels without a guarantee of publication, failing which the members should 'deep throat' their findings.
21. That the report of the constitution review panel be released and distributed not least so that the Ford Foundation's \$2 million grant can be accounted for.
22. That federal and state legislators come to appreciate that they can learn more about the working of democracy in other countries by surfing the net or reading books than by travelling to those countries at public expense.
23. That the use of sirens be strictly limited to bonafide emergency services, state governors and the president.
24. That all my readers enjoy the holiday season and that the new year fulfills their dreams.