Title of Article: Nigeria’s Expensive Democracy: A Confederal Option for Development.

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Abstract: Democracy in Nigeria, rather than popularize governance and widen the sociopolitical and economic space, has succeeded in fostering elite rule, plutocracy, official corruption, and subjugation of popular wishes, politicization of ethnic diversity, and the entrenchment of an expensive governance project. Similarly, the federal government has become too centralized and powerful, pushing the constituent units that are closer to the people into oblivion. However, while federalism may be suitable for Nigeria because of its size and diversity, a weaker centre and stronger component units may turn out to surgically address the fundamental flaws in Nigeria’s democracy for the betterment of all Nigerians. The present democratic system in Nigeria favors the centre and weakens the ability of constituent units to meet the needs and yearnings of their constituencies thereby creating the present kaleidoscope of social, political and economic crises threatening to submerge the Nigerian state. Co-federalism, according to this paper, seems the better option at this juncture in Nigeria’s democratic evolution to address the myriads of challenges facing the country especially by reducing the cost of governance at the centre, and freeing resources that could be channeled into other critical projects in the state; thus guaranteeing its development. Unless and until the federal system as presently constituted is changed, development efforts may become disproportionate and belated. This study has tried to analyze the confederal system and how it can be adopted in Nigeria. It also made relevant recommendations that can be useful for policy makers, the political leadership and Nigerians.