

powers were defined but residual control rested with the Central Government; in 1954 greater regional autonomy was provided and the Central Government was deprived of certain powers of intervention in regional affairs. The 1951 Constitution provided for a Council of Ministers to replace the Executive Council as the principal instrument of policy. It consisted of 18 members (12 Africans and 6 officials). A House of Representatives replaced the Legislative Council and was composed of 136 Africans and 6 officials. The Africans were elected by each regional House of Assembly, the officials appointed. By the Constitution of 1954 the country became known as the Federation of Nigeria under a Governor-General, with Governors for each Region — Eastern, Western and Northern — and, in the drafting, nationalist leaders played a principal role for the first time. This Constitution was also noteworthy in that it gave responsibilities to Nigerian Ministers in the formation and execution of policy. The House of Representatives was enlarged from 142 to 184 members, who were now directly elected. The Council of Ministers was also increased in size to consist of 10 African Ministers and 3 *ex-officio* Ministers. The African Ministers were nominated by the party having a majority of seats in each Regional House of Assembly.

In 1957 and 1958 a Constitutional Conference took place in London that added some of the final touches to the progress of Nigeria toward independence. It was decided to create the office of Federal Prime Minister and in August 1957 Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was appointed. As a result of decisions taken at the Conference, the Eastern and Western Regions became internally self-governing. When the Conference sessions were resumed in 1958 it was agreed that the Northern Region should become self-governing in March 1959. In addition, the United Kingdom agreed to grant independence to the Federation on October 1, 1960, if the Federal House of Representatives so requested. The House assembled in January 1960 following Federal elections held the previous month. One of its first acts was to pass unanimously a resolution authorizing the Government to request the Government of the United Kingdom to introduce, as soon as practicable, legislation in the UK Parliament providing for the establishment of the Federation of Nigeria on October 1, 1960, as an independent sovereign state, and to request the United Kingdom to support its desire to become a member of the Commonwealth.

The Federal Government in Lagos, headed by the Governor-General, consists of a bicameral legislature. The House of Representatives has 174 members elected in constituencies of the Northern Region, 73 from the Eastern Region, 62 from the Western Region, 8 from the Southern Cameroons, and 3 from the federal capital. The Senate is the second chamber. A Cabinet of 17 members is selected from the group controlling the House. Suffrage is universal except in the Northern Region, where only men have the vote. Each of the three regions has its own Governor and House of Assembly. Each has an Executive Council presided over by the Governor, consisting of the Premier of the Region and his