



**MINUTES OF THE 1ST MEETING OF NIGERIA
GOVERNORS' FORUM IN 2020**

HELD ON

WEDNESDAY, 22ND JANUARY 2020

AT THE

NGF SECRETARIAT MAITAMA, ABUJA

ATTENDANCE

S/N	NAME	STATE	DESIGNATION
1	Dr. Kayode Fayemi	Ekiti	Governor & Chairman NGF
2	Aminu Waziri Tambuwal	Sokoto	Governor & Vice Chairman, NGF
3	Sen. Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa	Delta	Governor
4	Mohammed Badaru Abubakar	Jigawa	Governor
5	Nasir A. El-Rufai	Kaduna	Governor
6	Abubakar Atiku Bagudu	Kebbi	Governor
7	Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq	Kwara	Governor
8	Abdullahi Sule	Nasarawa	Governor
9	Abubakar Sani Bello	Niger	Governor
10	Arakunrin Oluwarituimi Akeredolu, SAN	Ondo	Governor
11	Adegboyega Oyetola	Osun	Governor
12	Simon Lalong	Plateau	Governor
13	Mai Bala Buni	Yobe	Governor
14	Rt. Hon. Ude Oko Chukwu	Abia	Deputy Governor
15	Nkem Okeke, Ph.D	Anambra	Deputy Governor
16	Umar Kadafur Usman	Borno	Deputy Governor
17	M.D. Jatau, Ph.D	Gombe	Deputy Governor
18	Nasiru Yusuf Gawuna	Kano	Deputy Governor
19	Onoja Edward David	Kogi	Deputy Governor
20	Dr. Kadri Obafemi Hamzat	Lagos	Deputy Governor
21	Engr. Raufu Olaniyan	Oyo	Deputy Governor

S/N	NOTES	ACTION BY
1.0	COMMENCEMENT	
	The meeting commenced at 8:20pm with opening prayers by the Governor of Delta State.	
2.0	ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING	
	The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. The Governor of Jigawa State moved for the adoption of the minutes and was seconded by the Governor of Kebbi State.	
3.0	CHAIRMAN'S BRIEF	
	<p>The Chairman welcomed members to the first meeting of the year and prayed for a successful year for all States. He updated the Forum on the status of the following:</p> <p>i. <u>2nd Disbursement of PAYE:</u> The Chairman updated the Forum on the outcome of the meeting of Stakeholders of States on PAYE refunds. Verification of the second phase of the funds would commence the following week and the Consultants would visit States for the Exercise. It was hoped that the Verification Exercise would be concluded in two weeks.</p> <p>Members revisited the issue of the Consultancy fees and expressed concern over the high fees. The Forum agreed to downwardly review the fees to single digits, preferably 9%.</p> <p>ii. <u>Budget Support Facility:</u> The meeting learnt that the deductions were still on the high side despite the meetings held to bring down the amount deductible to manageable levels.</p> <p>The Chairman of the NEC Committee on Budget Support and Governor of Kaduna State noted that in view of the Federal Government delay, States should begin to implement the recommendations in the Report presented by the Committee and that KPMG be re-engaged to continue the audit.</p> <p>iii. <u>Deductions from VAT ACCOUNT:</u> on the 3% deductions from VAT to fund the North East, the Chairman informed the meeting that pursuant to a Resolution of the National Economic Council (NEC), he met with Mr. President on the 3% deductions from the VAT account to fund the North East Development Commission (NEDC). Mr. President had given assurances that the matter would be looked into and addressed.</p> <p>Members noted that the deductions commenced in January and condemned this as unconstitutional. The meeting resolved that</p>	

	<p>the NEDC Act must be made to align with the Constitution of Nigeria.</p> <p>iv. <u>Matters Before the Court at the Instance of ALGON:</u> The Chairman briefed the Forum on the different suits involving ALGON which had potential impact on the finances of States. Members expressed their displeasure at the activities of ALGON and resolved that the Forum take steps to stem this tide.. A Committee to look into this was constituted comprising the Governors of Sokoto, Ondo, Plateau and Delta States.</p> <p>v. <u>Joint SDG Projects:</u> The Forum was briefed that the UNDP in partnership with the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs will be implementing joint SDG projects on institutionalizing social protection for accelerated SDG implementation in Nigeria.</p> <p>vi. To achieve this, the joint endeavour would be conducted in the six geo-political zones and the Forum was expected to nominate the States that will host the consultative event.</p> <p>vii. <u>Governors' Spouses Summit:</u> The Forum was briefed about the apparent difficulties in convening a meeting of spouses of Governors. The Chairman assured his colleagues that he would see the first lady to resolve any misunderstanding.</p> <p>viii. <u>NEC Agenda:</u> The Forum learnt that the venue of the NEC meeting had been moved to the Banquet Hall owing to the ongoing renovation at the Chambers. Members observed that the minutes of the previous NEC meeting erroneously captured that the Committee on Niger Delta Power Holding Company was to report to NEC instead of the Forum as agreed.</p> <p>ix. <u>Seattle Declaration:</u> States have received communication on the Seattle Declaration and are working on the implementation.</p> <p>x. <u>Universal Basic Health Fund:</u> A lien has been placed on the money and States who have met the conditions are unable to access the funds. The Chairman had discussed this issue with the Minister of Finance who had agreed to brief the Forum on the reason for the delay.</p>	
4.0	DIRECTOR GENERAL'S BRIEF	

	<p>The Director General (DG) in his brief informed the Forum of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress of the SFTAS 2018 Annual Performance Assessment across States. • The Consortium engaged to carry out verification and reconciliation of amounts due to States had visited the relevant States to conduct the verification. The Secretariat was currently reviewing the draft progress report submitted by the Consortium. • The Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy, following the expiration of the National Broadband Plan (2013-2018), had set up a Committee to develop another five-year National Broadband Plan (2020-2025) and a report had been produced. • A letter from the Attorney General of the Federation calling on States to disband all Caretaker Committees and restore democratically elected representatives to man the LGAs in compliance with the Constitution. • The Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet), on 22nd January 2020, officially presented the 2020 Seasonal Rainfall Prediction and the 2019 Climate Review Bulletin. • An invitation from Governor of Akwa Ibom State for the funeral of his late father. • An invitation from former Governor of Ondo State, Governor Segun Mimiko to the funeral of his mother. <p>The DG finally appealed to members to remit their outstanding dues to the Secretariat. The Chairman urged members to pay the annual dues so that the activities of the Secretariat can be sustained.</p>	
5.0	HEALTH UPDATE	
	<p>The Chairman drew the attention of members to the recent outbreak of the coronavirus in China and Lassa Fever in Ondo State, urging that proper health measures be maintained in all States.</p> <p>The NGF Health Consultant, Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab updated the Forum on the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A major strategy for achieving the Seattle Commitment is making sure that the Commissioners of Health were carried along. Consequently, a meeting of States' Commissioners of Health had been scheduled for 6th & 7th of February 2020, to bring them up to speed with the Seattle Commitments and to strengthen collaboration for greater impact. He sought the support of Governors and appealed to them to approve the attendance of their Commissioners of Health 	

	<p>at the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the Basic Health Provision Fund, note the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 22 States have accessed the funds. o 20 States have established State Steering Committees o The disbursement of the fund has been stalled owing to the review of the BHCPF operating guidelines. • 32 States have established Social Health Insurance. Taraba, Rivers, Katsina, and Akwa Ibom States were yet to establish the SSHIA. While only 11 States have commenced enrollment, Osun, Anambra, Delta, Ondo, Kaduna and Bayelsa have released equity funds. • Polio Independence Certification team have commenced verification around States and Nigeria was on track for the certification by June 2020. • All States have created the State Primary Health Care Board (SPHCB), although only 9 States have moved key PHC programs to SPHCDA. <p>Following the above Presentation, the Forum resolved to fully operationalize the Seattle Declaration.</p>	
6.0	PRESENTATIONS	
	<p><u>The Minister of Communication and Digital Economy:</u></p> <p>The Minister of Communications and Digital Economy in his Presentation raised the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. National Digital Economy and Strategy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. He outlined the 8 pillars of the agenda and noted that its implementation will not be successful without the support of the States. He requested that States identify each of their needs based on the pillars to receive technical support from the Ministry according to the peculiarities of each States. He appealed to States to signify their interest either through the NGF or by writing directly to the Ministry. He stated that they were targeting minimum of 70% penetration across the Country by 2025. ii. He highlighted some challenges militating against broad band application. iii. He invited the Forum to recall the Resolutions reached by NEC in 2013 where it agreed to a uniform Right of Way Charge of N145 per linear meter of fiber. iv. He appealed to the Forum to look at ways to address the challenge of vandalization. 	

Members requested detailed information on the projects undertaken by the Ministry so as to make appropriate study to identify the areas of value addition that States can benefit from.

The Governor of Kaduna State made the following observations:

- i. Appealed to his colleagues to strategically look at the issue of right of way and possibly waive the charges, so as to help in building digital ecosystems in States, noting that States had done a lot of work to eliminate the issue of multiple taxation.
- ii. Urged the Minister to ensure that Communications companies pay their income taxes in the States where they have their workers as against paying taxes at the locations of their head offices only.
- iii. That the Minister should supervise the effective use of the Universal Service Provision Funds (USPF) meant for funding areas not usually known for commercial services. He noted that the funds were currently being used for purposes other than what they were meant for. He appealed that part of this money be used to develop infrastructure and to subsidize the private sector to provide broadband across the States.

The Minister affirmed that the Ministry would work with the NGF Secretariat to communicate to States. He promised to address the issue of non-payment of tax and to ensure compliance by communication companies. He also assured the Forum that the Ministry will work to ensure payment and compliance with the USPF, highlighting the efforts made by the Ministry so far in correcting the misappropriation of the USPF.

The Chairman thanked the Minister for the presentation and stated that:

- i. The issue of right of way will be addressed soon as the Forum takes a position.
- ii. States were interested in actively participating in the work done by the Ministry.
- iii. that the Minister's team would work with the NGF to produce a fact sheet for the States and that the NGF will work with the Ministry to achieve its target.

Federal Mortgage Bank

The Managing Director (MD) of the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria briefed the Forum on the Citizens Home Ownership project undertaken by the Bank in all States.

He solicited for partnership with the State governments, especially in the

provision of lands in the States.

The Chairman thanked the MD for the elaborate presentation and assured that States will pass the documents to the Commissioners for Housing to look at the unique points highlighted to identify how well to collaborate with the Bank.

Bank of Agriculture

The Executive Director of Wholesale Banking of the Bank of Agriculture briefed the Forum on the Sub-National Engagement Model Youth Employment in Agriculture Program anchored by the Bank. He outlined the concept behind the Program, the objectives, transaction dynamics, the Nigeria Agriculture Guarantee Growth Fund (NAGGF) program and the intending impact on both the States and Citizens.

He stated that the greater beneficiaries of an effective agricultural system are in the States and once land and labour are enabled, States will begin to enjoy increased IGR. He appealed to the Forum to support the Bank in funding the Programs.

The Chairman thanked the ED for the presentation and suggested that the Bank take their consultations on a State by State basis so that it could be addressed collectively later.

Treasury and Financial Services Ltd

The Forum was updated on the progress of the implementation of the Radio and TV license Fees Collection Project. They outlined a summary of the project including the Legal Basis for the fees, projected revenue accruable to States from the collection of the fees and the need for NGF to facilitate collection of the license fees.

They appealed to the Forum to direct the AGs and Chairmen of Boards of Internal Revenue Service to conclude execution of the Agreement before 29th February 2020 and to direct the Ministry of Justice to facilitate the passage of the Enabling Law in March to ensure commencement of the license fee collection.

The Chairman thanked the presenters and noted that majority of the Forum members were not part of the initial discussions on the Radio and TV licence initiative. of this Radio and TV license collection fees. He requested that Governors be allowed time to study the documents and arrive at a decision. He also observed that since the proposal was meant to raise funds for States,

	the States must be very careful about taxing citizens indiscriminately.	
7.0	AOB	
	<p>i. SFTAS Update: The Chairman informed the Forum that verifications had been concluded by the World Bank Group/Ministry of Finance and payments to the 24 States who met the DLIs will commence in March 2020. The exact position of each State will be made known to States on the 27th of January 2020 and members will have 2 weeks to verify the figures and give feedback to the World Bank before payments are made.</p> <p>ii. States yet to publish their budget to meet their 2019 criteria should do so on or before 31st January 2020 to benefit from the 2019 payments.</p> <p>iii. Mr. President informed the Chairman to convey to the Governors that the Conference of Speakers approached him in respect of the issue of Legislative autonomy. The President was awaiting the feedback of the Forum in order to take a decision on the matter. It was suggested that the Committee on Legislative Autonomy accelerate their discussions so that the Forum take a position on the matter.</p>	
	CONCLUSION/ADJOURNMENT	
	The meeting rose at 11.00pm.	

Dr. Kayode Fayemi
Governor, Ekiti State
Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum