

**MINUTES OF MEETING WITH THE CONSULTANTS OF THE NIGERIA GOVERNORS FORUM
SECRETARIAT HELD AT THE NGF SECRETARIAT ON FRIDAY, 9th APRIL, 2010**

S/N	NOTES/RESOLUTIONS	ACTION BY
	<p>ATTENDANCE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A.B.Okauru – Director General, NGF 2. M.A. Jibia – Executive Director (Finance & Administration), NGF 3. Chuku, C.C – Head, Legal, NGF 4. Dr. Olu Ayewoh – NGF Policy Consultant (Education) 5. Dr. G.U. Owoh – NGF Policy Consultant (Infrastructure) 6. Iliyasu Gashinbaki – NGF Policy Consultant (IGR) <p>The meeting started at about 1.47pm with the Director General (DG) presiding. The DG informed the consultants that he received a text message early that morning from Dr. Owoh (Consultant on Infrastructure) stating his intention to quit the Peer Review assignment because of what he describes as the Secretariat's inability 'to attach due remuneration to same'. The DG further informed the meeting that Dr. Philip Olomola (Consultant on Economy and Budget) and Dr. Olu Ayewoh (Consultant on Education) had also sent a text more or less along similar lines. He felt it was time to address what was assuming a worrisome issue but sensed that it was better to first hear from the consultants who were present.</p> <p>Dr. Ayewoh in his remarks stated that the texts sent to the DG reflected the sentiments and concerns of all the Consultants on the nature of their consultancy, particularly as it affected their remuneration. He reminded the meeting that he had mooted this concern at an earlier meeting during one of the tours when he expressed his worry over the vague letter of engagement that was given to consultants and felt that there were terms in the said letter that needed further clarifications and definitions. He also recalled that they had forwarded (through Mr. Iliyasu Gashinbaki [IGR]) a written idea of their expectations from the NGF but was surprised that the Letter of Engagement did not reflect any of these expectations. He reiterated the need for some form of remuneration and stated that it would not matter if the payment was deferred. He urged the DG to look into these concerns so as to stem the tide of disaffection brewing among the Consultants.</p> <p>Mr. Gashinbaki on his part stated that were this to be the DG's personal assignment, he was sure that all the consultants (without exception) would gladly take part in it without expecting much by way of pecuniary benefits. This he said was a demonstration of their faith in the DG as a person. However, the extant assignment was given to them by an assignment and the least they deserved was proper and specific terms of engagement as well as proper remuneration. In his view, the present ad-hoc arrangement would not suffice. He expressed the belief that the way to go was to articulate and prepare a Project Document that would form the basis for the assignment and bind every consultant involved in the peer review assignment. He also recalled that he had sent a mail to the DG detailing (as stated above) some of the expectations of the</p>	

consultants and added that the document had the input of all the consultants.

The DG in his response thanked the consultants for their frankness in putting their grouse on the table. He re-stated that the financial difficulties being encountered on the tour was in most part due to the lack of budget for the exercise. He further stated that the project would not have seen the light of day if he had waited for proper funding. Against all odds, he had pressed on with the assignment because of his belief that the funds would come albeit late. He was positive that the next phase of the exercise would more than make up for all the inconveniences of the first phase. He expressed satisfaction that the peer review efforts of the Secretariat were beginning to catch the attention and interest of the governors which was his aim in the first place.

He informed the meeting that it was usually difficult to get things rolling in the Forum because of the very busy nature of the governors but his objective from the day of assuming office was to devise a way of achieving positive results in the face of obstacles and the challenges of working for public figures. He gave an example of the NGF Strategic Document 2010-2012 and the difficulties encountered in the course of getting an approval for the document. He recalled that he had on one or two occasions discussed with some consultants on some of these challenges and urged everybody to be patient. In relation to the potential risks involved in travelling round the country, he sincerely felt that the risk was shared among every member of the team, without exception.

Dr. Owoh who joined the meeting about 45 minutes after it started, reiterated most of the concerns already addressed and felt that there was a need to clarify the terms of engagement and most importantly the aspect that had to do with remuneration. For instance, he felt that the Secretariat needed to define 'Case by Case' so as to put it in proper perspective.

The document earlier submitted by Mr. Gashinbaki was printed and the DG stated that whilst the issue of daily payment of N35, 000 (for out of station) assignment was workable, he insisted that the Organisation could not at the moment afford a fixed monthly retainership. It was then agreed that Mr. Gashinbaki should put together the Project Document for consideration and adoption.

Finally, the management of the Secretariat implored the consultants to continue to exercise patience with the NGF and assured them that there was no way they would not gain from their relationship with the NGF.

The meeting came to an end by 4.12pm

Chuku, C.C, Esq
Secretary