

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NIGERIA
GOVERNORS' FORUM**

HELD ON

11th January, 2010

AT THE

KWARA STATE GOVERNOR'S LODGE, ASOKORO

ATTENDANCE

S/N	NAME	STATE	DESIGNATION
1	Dr. A.B. Saraki	Kwara	Governor/Chairman
2	Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola	Osun	Governor
3	Saidu N. Dakingari	Kebbi	Governor
4	Murtala H. Nyako	Adamawa	Governor
5	Gabriel Torwua Suswam	Benue	Governor
6	Ibrahim S. Shema	Katsina	Governor
7	Peter Obi	Anambra	Governor
8	Orji, T.A	Abia	Governor
9	Oshiomhole, Adams Aliyu	Edo	Governor
10	Ibrahim Shekarau	Kano	Governor
11	Mahmud Aliyu Shinkafi	Zamfara	Governor
12	Isa Yuguda	Bauchi	Governor
13	Sullivan I. Chime	Enugu	Governor
14	Martin N. Elechi, MFR	Ebonyi	Governor
15	Dr. Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu, OON	Niger	Governor
16	Liyel Imoke	Cross River	Governor
17	Arc. M.N. Sambo	Kaduna	Governor
18	Chief Timipre Sylva	Bayelsa	Governor
19	Dr. Emmanuel E. Uduaghan	Delta	Governor
20	Engr. Segun Oni	Ekiti	Governor
21	Babatunde Raji Fashola (SAN)	Lagos	Governor
22	Jonah D. Jang	Plateau	Governor
23	Sule Lamido	Jigawa	Governor
24	Aliyu Akwe Doma	Nasarawa	Governor
25	Lady Dr. Ada Okwuonu	Imo	Deputy Governor
26	Alhaji Ali Olanusi	Ondo	Deputy Governor
27	Engr. Abubakar B. Aliyu	Yobe	Deputy Governor
28	Alhaji Taofeek Oladejo Arapaja	Oyo	Deputy Governor
29	Engr Tele Ikuru	Rivers	Deputy Governor

S/N	NOTES/OBSERVATIONS	ACTION BY
A	<p>COMMENCEMENT</p> <p>The meeting started at 8.59 pm with opening prayers said by the Governor of Jigawa State State, His Excellency, Alhaji Sule Lamido.</p>	
B	<p>CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed members to the first meeting of the year and expressed the hope that 2010 would be a year of fulfillment. He once again conveyed the appreciation of the Forum to the Governor of Bayelsa State for hosting the November 2009 meeting of the Forum in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State and urged other members who desired to host the Forum's meetings to indicate their interest.</p>	
C	<p>ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA</p> <p>The Agenda was unanimously adopted after the following amendments:</p> <p>i) Item 6 on the Agenda-<i>Briefing by the MD, FERMA</i> was stepped down.</p>	
D	<p>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 11th November, 2009 was read and the following amendments were made:</p> <p>i) His Excellency, Adams Aliyu Oshiomhole, the Executive Governor of Edo State's name was spelt wrongly on the Attendance List on Page 2;</p> <p>ii) Also on Page 2, the name of the Chief Servant of Niger State was corrected to read thus, Dr. Muazu Babangida Aliyu, OON;</p> <p>iii) On page 4, the Forum's directive to the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on the Permanent Secretariat Project, to meet with the management of the Secretariat and other stakeholders on the way forward for the project was not captured in the minutes.</p> <p>In the absence of any further amendment or observation, the minutes were adopted by a motion moved by the Governor of Katsina State and seconded by the Deputy Governor of Rivers State.</p>	

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MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

i. Management of Excess Crude Account

The meeting was reminded of the memo titled, '**Application of Part of Excess Crude Special Reserve towards a developmental Revolving Loan Scheme for Execution of Capital Projects in the States**' that was before the National Economic Council (NEC). Following deliberations by members on the use of the Excess Crude funds, it was agreed that the funds belonged to both the States and the Federal Government (FG) and the FG alone had no discretion over the funds.

ii. Update on the Permanent Secretariat

The Director General of the Secretariat updated the Forum on the Permanent Secretariat. The leadership of the Secretariat met with the Chairman of the Permanent Secretariat Sub-Committee as directed at the last meeting of the Forum. Similarly, following directives given at the last meeting, the project accounts had been audited and the detailed accounts were presented to the Forum. The Secretariat Budget for 2010 was equally presented to the meeting for consideration.

The meeting was further informed that the project had been scaled down to 6 floors and the cost reduced to about N4.2 billion. The opinions of independent Consultants were sought on possibilities of further cost saving and the Consultants had shown areas of possible cost-saving to the tune of N1 billion.

The matter was deliberated intensely and the Forum expressed dismay at the delay in executing the project. Members were of the view that the independent Consultants should be invited to a meeting to discuss the possibilities of realising the project at N3.5 billion or alternatively canceling the project. Different suggestions were made as follows:

- a) Re-tender the project;
- b) Return the land to the FCT and procure another land where the cost of development would be significantly

- lower;
- c) Buy a building (in the region of between N150m and N200m) that would serve the needs of the Secretariat pending the completion of the Permanent Secretariat Project. The building so procured could then be converted to the official residence of the Director General,
 - d) Seek major private developers who could lease the property for 20-30 years;
 - e) Break the project in phases and develop along those lines;
 - f) Re-design structure substantially and get contractors who can do a 6-floor building for N2.5 billion;
 - g) Members urged to make 100% payment towards realising the project.

The Forum then agreed as follows:

- i) That the budget for the project be capped at N2.5 billion;
- ii) That the drawings be re-designed to reflect the present realities;
- iii) That all States should endeavour to pay up the outstanding amounts;
- iv) That the Sub-Committee Chairman should meet with the leadership of the Secretariat, the Project Consultants and the independent Consultants to seek ways of reconciling the differences.

F UPDATE ON WELFARE FOR LATE SENATOR MAMMAN ALI, FORMER GOVERNOR OF YOBE STATE

The Chairman reiterated his disappointment that some States were yet to pay for Senator Mamman Ali's welfare. He read out the list of the eleven (11) States that were yet to pay. The States were asked to pay up as the situation had become rather embarrassing.

G UPDATE ON THE N200 BILLION AGRICULTURE LOAN

The Chairman updated members on developments regarding the N200 billion Agriculture loan. He informed members that he met with the Minister of Agriculture and the CBN Governor to find out the reason for the seeming inaction in respect of the loan. Some decisions had as a result been reached:

- The N100 billion (1st tranche) would now be more open to the participating banks;
- The participating banks would now be more flexible as regards the aspects of agriculture to be covered;
- Regarding the N40 billion meant for the States, the States would have to agree on the disbursement.

The Chairman further informed members that there were indications that an agreement had been reached between the

banks and CBN. The only problem had to do with the disbursement of the N60 billion towards the procurement of fertiliser. The Governor of CBN would present a Report at the NEC meeting scheduled for 12th January, 2010.

H DIRECTOR GENERAL'S PROGRESS REPORT

Following the Director General's (DG) presentation of the Secretariat's Progress Report to members, the Forum commended the Secretariat for its innovations and it was agreed that the Secretariat was beginning to earn its pay.

Members were urged to take attendance at meetings more seriously in view of the central role the Forum was beginning to play in the country.

Concerning the Budget for 2010 presented by the Secretariat, members resolved to step down discussions on it till the next meeting for discussion and possible adoption.

I LISTING OF NIGERIA BY THE US

The Chairman drew the attention of the Forum to the recent listing of Nigeria as a "Country of Interest" alongside such countries as Afghanistan, Algeria, Yemen, Pakistan etc This listing had come in the wake of the bombing incident involving a Nigerian national accused of attempting to bomb a US bound flight. Members deliberated extensively on this and were informed that the director --nominee for the US Transport Security Administration (TSA) was still awaiting confirmation by the US Congress and that the Deputy Secretary of the US Homeland Security Department was expected in the country on 12th January, 2010.

While noting that the reactions of Nigerians condemning the incident of December 25, 2010 and terrorism generally were now coming to the fore, the Forum agreed to publish a Press Release condemning terrorism and terrorists in totality. Consequently, a draft press release by the Secretariat was unanimously adopted by the Forum for publication in every daily and carried as a news item on CNN. The Secretariat was directed to see to these.

It was also agreed that an Image Laundering Lobby Group be engaged to help in portraying a positive image for the country.

J BRIEFING BY THE SENIOR SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT (SSAP) ON MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL (MDG).

The SSA updated the Forum on the 2009 conditional grants. Members learnt that 31 States were awarded the grant in 2009 and 5 States including Edo, Ekiti, Lagos, Nasarawa and Ogun did not receive funding under the 2009 CGS. The SSAP distributed a

write-up on the Update for 2009 Conditional Grants Scheme which broke down all the aspects of the scheme on a need-to-know basis. The Forum thanked the SSAP for an incisive presentation and resolved to continue to partner with the Federal Government in achieving the MDGs.

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CONCLUSION

The Governor of Lagos State moved the motion for adjournment and the motion was seconded by the deputy Governor of Rivers State.

The meeting came to an end at 12.04 am with closing prayers said by the Governor of Delta State.

Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki
Executive Governor, Kwara State
Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum