

SECURITY AWARENESS PRESENTATION AT THE  
GOVERNORS' SPOUSE' SUMMIT HELD  
ON 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2023

Protocol

Introduction

Security challenges in any nation constitute threat to lives and properties, hinders business activities and discourage local and foreign investments, which invariably slows down economic growth and development of a country.

Nigeria in recent times has recorded serious security challenges such as terrorism/insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, vandalism, armed robbery, farmers-herders clashes, ethno-religious crisis, separatist agitation, cultism among other prevailing social vices. More worrisome is the involvement of youths, a key segment of the society, taking to illicit consumption of hard drugs, political thuggery, online or internet scam (yahoo yahoo) and other illegal activities that constitute threats to National Security.

Therefore, the protection of VIPs against this threat is critical and remains, part of the constitutionally assigned

mandate of the Department of State Services (DSS), statutorily responsible for the provision of protective Security Details to protect top government functionaries. This is to insulate them from all forms of threats that may likely arise and to enable them discharge their duties without hitches. It is important to state that the Government functionaries and their spouses have both admirers and adversaries even from amongst family and friends, whose request or expectations may be at variance or in conflict with the VIP, especially those with high sense of entitlements.

### Aim

As the spouse of a newly elected Governor, you will assume an important role in the State, and as such, you need to take measures to ensure your safety and that of your family. The transition to the role of a first lady comes with significant exposure and attendant security implications, and this presentation will attempt to cover some pertinent measures you may undertake to ensure safety.

### Understanding the security situation in the State

The first step in ensuring your safety as a First Lady is to understand the security situation in the State. Every State is

faced with security challenges, some of which are peculiar while others are recurrent or related across the States in a particular region. Some of these challenges include violent crimes like Terrorism, Insurgency, Banditry, Kidnapping and Hostage Taking, Herdsmen/Farmers Clashes, Cattle Rustling, Cultism, Armed Robbery, etc. Other non-violent security challenges include activities of Fraudsters prominent amongst which is the Yahoo-Yahoo or Internet-based Fraud, Human Trafficking, Drugs or Narcotics distribution and usage etc. Your familiarity with the security situation will form the basis for requiring information from security agencies in your state. Security agencies are required to furnish the Governor with reports of the crime rate, the areas with the highest incidence of crime, and the types of crimes that are most prevalent. This information will help your security details to develop an effective security plan to ensure the safety of you and your family.

#### Identifying potential threats and how to mitigate them

The transition to the role of a first lady may come with potential threats such as political opponents, criminal groups, or even disgruntled relatives, associates or staff members. To

mitigate these threats, you need to take precautions such as limiting your exposure in public, and being mindful of the people you associate with.

You may already have persons who form members of your staff, however following your transition to your new role. It is necessary for **all** staff members to undergo security vetting. The vetting will uncover the antecedents of the vetted subjects, and will help to identify those who could be leveraged by malicious persons to serve as insider threats and compromise your security.

There are varieties of potential threats to VIPs and these may vary based on the individual's specific circumstances and level of public exposures. This is notwithstanding threats that can emanate from terrorists/insurgents, Hostile Intelligence Services, rival political parties, among others. Therefore, some of the common threats to VIPs are categorized into;

- i. **Physical Threats:** This may includes threats from individual, or groups who may wish to harm the VIP, such as terrorists, political extremists or disgruntled individuals seeking one form of revenge or the other.

- ii. **Cyber Threats:** VIPs may be targeted by hackers, who seek to access sensitive information or disrupt their digital systems. This includes threats such as phishing attacks, malware and hacking attempts.
- iii. **Reputation threats:** These are attacks designed to damage the reputation or credibility, these attacks includes false accusations, propaganda's or leaks of personal information.
- iv. **Kidnapping and Ransom:** VIPs or their family members may be at risk of kidnapping and ransom demands, particularly, due to their high profile status with expectedly significant financial resources.
- v. **Insiders' threats:** VIPs may be vulnerable to threats from insiders such as employees or contractors, who have access to sensitive information. VIPs and their family members has a duty to cooperate with Protective Security Details in order to derived the maximum benefit from the Protective Details.

3. **The Main Focus Areas for the Protection of VIPs includes:**
- i. **Personal Security:** This is an important aspect of our daily lives. Here are some of the tips on how to improve your personal security;
- Be aware of your environment. Avoid a set pattern or routine, in order to be less predictable criminal elements.
  - Be careful with your personal information, such as full names, address and date of birth. Information on personal issues should be shared to only those who have the need-to-know.
  - All staff must undergo vetting (background checks) to eliminate persons of questionable characters prior to their employment, as well as continuous vetting to detect character defects of staff.
  - To conduct security survey (Vulnerability Assessment) of the residence and office in order to address the observed lapses.

- Screening of all parcels, envelopes (large or small), gift items must be screened by Security Details before they are delivered to the VIP.
  - Access Control put in place by the Security Details must be strictly adhered to.
- ii. **Family Security:** This is critical because an attack on any family member of the VIP, particularly members of the nuclear family, will definitely affect the VIP. Therefore, VIPs need to be security conscious and also observe the following:
- Teach your children/wards about safety including how to recognize and avoid potentially dangerous situations, as well as how to get help, when in danger.
  - Be aware of your surroundings, observe strange behavior and stay alert. Avoid walking alone at night or in areas you are not familiar with.
  - Practice good online safety, be careful with the personal information you share online and teach your children to do

the same. Use secure passwords, and avoid clicking on suspicious links or downloading unknown files.

- Ensure your family has a plan in place in case of an emergency such as natural disaster, fire disaster and medical emergency. Have a designated meeting place and important phone numbers that can be easily accessed.
  - Keep important documents such as birth certificates, international passport and information relating to financial records in a secure location, or safety deposit box.
  - Always secure your home, make sure all doors and windows are locked accordingly, consider the installation of a security (camera) systems to deter potential intruders.
- iii. **Document Security:** This is crucial in the sense that, if a sensitive document that needs to be protected gets into wrong hands; it can embarrass the VIP and the government, or even endanger the life of the VIP.
- All documented sensitive information must be protected from unauthorized persons. Must be kept in a secured location such as locked cabinet, safe or safety deposit box.



- Be cautious about sharing personal or sensitive information with others including domestic staff, whether it is in person or online.
  - Shred any document that contain sensitive information before throwing them away to prevent them from being accessed by others, who do not have the need to know or handle.
  - Use encryption software to protect any sensitive digital document stored online or on your computer. Above all, when transferring sensitive document or files, use secure file sharing methods like password-protected files, encrypted emails or secure file transfer services.
  - Ensure to keep backup of important documents either as physical copies stored in a secured location or digital copies stored on a secured backup device.
- iv. *Communication security:* The internet and telephone are common place and unsafe for transmitting sensitive information, as the line could either be bugged or third party engages in eavesdropping. The following tips can help

*protect your communication and sensitive information from unauthorized access or interception;*

- v. Avoid discussing official/sensitive matter in vehicle while being driven, in the public places, and social gatherings to avert disclosing sensitive issues to unwitting hostile persons or to an unfriendly media agents.*
- vi. Family members must avoid making unwarranted comments on social media in response to sensitive and controversial issues in the polity.*
- vii. Be careful with public Wi-fi, Avoid accessing sensitive information or logging into your accounts on public Wifi networks, as they may not be secure.*
- viii. Use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) when accessing internet from public Wi-fi to encrypt your internet connection and protect your data.*
- ix. Enable two-factor authentication in order to have an extra layer of security to your accounts by requiring a second form of identification such as "Code" sent to your phone. Also, create strong, unique passwords for your emails, social media accounts and change them regularly.*

x. *Be wary of emails or messages requesting you to "click" on links or enter personal information, as they may be phishing attempts to access your account.*

#### 4. **Role of Protective Security Details**

*Security Details are specially trained officers and men of the Service deployed to protect, prevent or limit any action or situation that may endanger or cause embarrassment to the VIP. Their role encompasses the conduct a risk assessment by analyzing a potential threat in order to develop appropriate security plan to mitigate the threats. Depending on the risk assessment, they security plan could be result to the implementing of physical security measures, cyber security measures, personnel security measures, among others.*

5. *Meanwhile, as the threat landscape changes, it is continuously reviewed and updated to ensure that the security plan remains effective. Also, it is important to maintain open communication with the VIP to ensure that their needs and security concerns are being addressed. VIPs must therefore do the following;*

- i. Take their Security Details into full confidence and adhere to their professional advice to enable effective protective duties;
  - ii. Treat security reports with high level of seriousness and utmost confidentiality;
  - iii. Security Details must not be made to carry bags. This is to enable quick and swift response in case of any emergency situations;
  - iv. VIPs must be accessible to their Security Details for briefing on security matters at all times. Etc.
6. **Role of First Ladies:** Role of Office of the Governor's Wife serve as security support for the Government.

**Wives of Governors should:**

- ✓ Help their husbands feel the pulse of the citizenry, particularly on government policies and actions.
- ✓ You should never contradict government position on any issue.
- ✓ Engage in advocacy.
- ✓ Hold regular town hall meetings to espoused on government

- ✓ Encourage parents the grassroots on the importance of education.
- ✓ Encourage youths in the area of skills acquisition, and empowerment.
- ✓ Be charitable and accommodating, to enable them reach out to the various segments of the society.

### Conclusion

The spouses of Governors have the privilege and the unavoidable task of helping their husbands make Nigeria much better than they met it, by appreciating the fact that security can only be achieved through the combined efforts of all citizens and putting to practice issues highlighted in this lecture.

Wishing you God's guidance and direction in your onerous task of nation building at this time.