

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

HELD ON

6th July, 2009

AT THE

**KWARA STATE GOVERNOR'S LODGE
ASOKORO, ABUJA.**

IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

S/N	NAME	STATE	DESIGNATION
1	Dr. A.B. Saraki	Kwara	Governor/Chairman
2	Aliyu M.Wamakko	Sokoto	Governor
3	Orji, T.A	Abia	Governor
4	Ikedi Ohakim	Imo	Governor
5	Suswam, G.T	Benue	Governor
6	Ibrahim S. Shema	Katsina	Governor
7	Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN	Lagos	Governor
8	Mahmud Aliyu Shinkafi	Zamfara	Governor
9	Oshiomole, Adams Aliyu	Edo	Governor
10	Mallam Isa Yuguda	Bauchi	Governor
11	Dr. Phillips O. Salawu, FCA	Kogi	Deputy Governor
12	Dr. Sikiru T. Lawal	Ekiti	Deputy Governor
13	Alhaji Sani A. Danladi	Taraba	Deputy Governor
14	Sunday C. Onyebuchi	Enugu	Deputy Governor
15	Elder Prof Chigozie N. Ogbu, OFR	Ebonyi	Deputy Governor
16	Hon. Ahmed Musa Ibeto	Niger	Deputy Governor
17	Abdullahi T.M Gwarzo	Kano	Deputy Governor
18	Ahmed M. Gumel	Jigawa	Deputy Governor
19	Patrick I. Yakowa	Kaduna	Deputy Governor

S/N	NOTES/OBSERVATIONS	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>A</p> <p>B</p> <p>C</p>	<p>COMMENCEMENT</p> <p>The meeting started at 8.30pm.</p> <p>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on March 9th, 2009 were read and adopted by a motion moved by the Governor of Abia State and seconded by Governor of Sokoto.</p> <p>MATTERS ARISING:</p> <p>i. MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDG) COMMITTEE REPORT:</p> <p>Owing to the absence of the Chairman of the sub-committee on MDG, the Executive Governor of Rivers State, no report was presented to the meeting.</p> <p>ii. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF ATTORNEYS GENERAL (AGs) ON ILLEGAL DEDUCTIONS</p> <p>The Director General of the NGF Secretariat reported to the meeting that the Committee met on 26th March, 2009 but the Chairman of the Committee of AGs and AG Kwara State informed the Secretariat that the session of 26/03/09 was not a proper meeting and no decisions were taken.</p> <p>iii. ERADICATION OF POLIO CAMPAIGN</p> <p>The meeting was reminded that the Secretariat had at the last meeting been mandated to identify a day for the Polio eradication campaign across the States. The Secretariat had sent out letters and questionnaires to the States suggesting Saturday, July 11 as the date for the exercise.</p> <p>The meeting was of the view that July 11 was not feasible and it was resolved that a new questionnaire be circulated suggesting three</p>	

<p>new dates, out of which one would be adopted as the date for the Exercise. This questionnaire would be circulated at the National Economic Council (NEC) meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 14th July 2009.</p>	<p>Secretariat</p>
<p>iv. PLATEAU STATE CRISIS The Chairman of the Forum's Committee on the Plateau State Crisis, the Executive Governor of Adamawa State was not at the meeting and no Report was presented.</p>	
<p>The Secretariat was directed to write to all Chairmen of NGF Sub-Committees to update the Forum on their Committee's assignments.</p>	<p>Secretariat</p>
<p>v. EXCESS CRUDE ACCOUNT The Forum decried the situation in the Niger Delta which had adversely affected the production of crude oil. The meeting agreed that the situation required urgent attention and expressed support for their colleagues in the Region. Members also threw their weight behind the efforts of the Federal Government and the States in finding a lasting solution to the situation in the area. Consequently, members agreed to access the Excess Crude Account (ECA) to augment the declining resources and cushion the effects of the economic downturn on the States. It was resolved that the first step towards a draw-down would be to get an Agreement in Principle. The second step would be for the Technical Sub-Committee to liaise with the Secretariat in finding out the details and balance in the account.</p>	<p>Technical Sub-Committee/ Secretariat</p>
<p>vi. NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS (NUT) STRIKE ACTION Although the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on NUT and Governor of Kaduna State was not at the meeting, the Forum noted that this matter had been overtaken by events and members were reminded that the decision at the last meeting was that States were to handle this matter based on their peculiarities.</p>	

vii. PERMANENT SECRETARIAT PROJECT

The Chairman of the Sub-Committee on the Permanent Secretariat and Governor of Kaduna State was not at the meeting but was represented by the Deputy-Governor, who informed the meeting that the Consultants who were to present the Committee's Report were unavoidably absent.

The DG of the NGF briefed the meeting on developments affecting the Secretariat project. He emphasised the need to commence the Project and created three scenarios as follows:

- i) Construct the main building fully to only half-way (i.e 6 Storey) with full Structural provisions for a 12-Storey building plus all other proposed building works in the project, while floors 7-12 will only have the Structural provisions in place for future completion. This is estimated to cost about N5, 332, 738, 974.62.

- ii) Construct the Main-building fully to only half-way (6-Storey) along with all other proposed constructions works in the project. The 6-floor Storey Main Building will have adequate Structural provisions. Subsequent completion of floors 7-12 would come at a later stage. This option is estimated to cost about N4, 921, 494, 373.70.

- iii) Construct the concrete Structural carcass only through-out for all the buildings involved. The fencing however, will be constructed fully, less the wall painting and decoration. Completion of the rest of the Buildings would follow as the funds are available. This last option would cost an estimated N2, 656, 232, 294.42

He stated that whichever option was chosen, the least amount required for the project would be N2, 656, 232, 294.42 and the amount contributed so far was less than half of this amount.

He informed the meeting that the level of States' commitment was low and appealed for a renewed commitment towards actualising the Project.

It was agreed that the Forum would commit to settling the outstanding obligations and that States that were yet to meet their obligations should do so before the next meeting.

viii. WELFARE FOR LATE SENATOR MAMMAN ALI, FORMER GOVERNOR OF YOBE STATE

Members were reminded of their resolve at the last meeting held on 9th March, 2009 to make adequate provisions for the welfare of the family of their deceased member, Senator Mamman Ali, former Governor of Yobe State leading to the agreement to contribute N2M per State.

It was reported that only 11 States had complied so far, a situation which members agreed was disappointing. Members were urged to pay up this money within one week and that the cheques should be brought to the NEC meeting of 14th July, 2009. The Forum would then determine a suitable way to present the donation to the Late Governor Ali's Family.

D NGF VISIT TO THE U.S

The DG presented the Report on the last 5-day NGF working visit to the United States.

There was emphasis on the perception problems of the Governors by the international Community, which had adverse effect on the investment potentials of the Country.

Members were urged to study the NGA document enclosed in the meeting folder so as to identify areas that the NGF could adapt or adjust.

Members were reminded that a Sub-Committee on Image Laundering was previously set up by the Forum and the Report of that Committee was since ready. There was a need to revisit

NGF Sub-Committee on Image Laundering comprising **Imo, Enugu & Sokoto States**

this matter.

Members were of the view that there was a need for the Governors to encourage and learn from each other and that ultimately, the responsibility to positively change their image lay with them.

After intense deliberations on this matter, the Forum resolved as follows:

- i. The Report of the NGF Sub-Committee on Image Laundering should be revisited and re-presented at the next meeting for immediate follow-up action.
- ii. Strengthen the NGF Peer Review Mechanism by bringing out and sharing experiences. The current exercise by the Secretariat was a step in the right direction and would serve to highlight benchmarkable practices that would be presented to the Forum at the end of the familiarisation tour of the States.
- iii. Enhance and foster sustainability of the NGF and its organs by improving capacity of the Governors and the Secretariat.
- iv. Key Professionals from within and without the Country to be brought in to liaise with the Secretariat to hold the training sessions.
- v. A second Retreat for the Governors be held. The Secretariat would work out the modalities for the Retreat for presentation at the next meeting.
- vi. Explore the desirability of retaining a Specialist Group that would assist in building a favourable image for the Forum.
- vii. Set up Standing Committees to take care of different Governance areas such as: Energy, Healthcare, Education, Security, Natural Resources & Environment and Agriculture & Water Supply. The Secretariat was directed to put together an action plan for setting up the Committees.
- viii. Concerning the rotation of NGF meetings, any State that is ready to host a meeting of the Forum should indicate this desire

and the Secretariat should be notified in time so as to ensure adequate preparedness for the meeting.

E DG'S PROGRESS REPORT

The DG presented a Progress Report of the activities of the Secretariat since the last meeting of 9th March, 2009.

F PRESENTATION BY THE CHAIRMAN, JOINT TAX BOARD ON THE UNIQUE TAX PAYMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (U-TIN)

The Chairman of the Joint Tax Board (JTB) made a presentation to the Forum on the Unique Tax Payer Identification Number (U-TIN).

The Forum learnt that UTIN was designed to identify and register tax payers in order to harmonise tax payer registration in Nigeria.

It aims among others, at closing the loopholes in the tax system in the Country, register all taxable persons or legal persons and provide a sustainable platform for revenue generation for the States and Local Government Areas.

The JTB Chairman prayed the Forum to facilitate the support and buy-in of the States in the Project.

The Forum expressed support for it and resolved to take the proposal back to their States for review before a formal position could be taken on it.

G. A.O.B

- Members expressed concern over the deteriorating relationship between the Governors and their predecessors. It was agreed that the way forward would be to meet and deliberate on the best course to adopt in stemming the tide. Members agreed to deliberate on this at the next NEC meeting.
- A member expressed dissatisfaction with

the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and its manner of disbursing Grants. The situation where the Commission insisted on 70% performance of old projects before accessing new grants was not in the interest of the States. He wondered why all the 36 States should have the same recipe for accessing the UBEC grants when these States have different peculiarities and therefore different challenges. The view was expressed that there should be flexibility in the distribution of the grants. The Secretariat was directed to hold a meeting with UBEC and obtain all the relevant information relating to the criteria for accessing the grants.

- The attention of the Forum was called to the N200 billion Agriculture Grant set aside by the Federal Government under the auspices of the Federal Government Commercial Agricultural Credit Scheme (CACS) to assist Agricultural Cooperatives, Commercial and individual farmers. It was agreed that the Minister of Agriculture would be invited to make a presentation at the next meeting, so as to throw more light on this Scheme particularly as it affects the States.

H CONCLUSION

The meeting came to an end at 11.37pm with closing prayers said by the Governor of Zamfara State.

Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki
(Turaki of Ilorin)
Executive Governor, Kwara State
Chairman,
Nigeria Governors' Forum