

Address by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari delivered by the Chief of Staff to the President at the Nigeria Governors' Forum Induction for Governors.

Protocols

- 1.0 I welcome you all to this induction programme for Governors organized by the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF). The NGF Induction as we have come to know it is a programme meant to prepare new and returning governors for the task of governance, leadership and stewardship. This has become a tradition and practice one that is indeed remarkable and places each of you along the path of success.
- 2.0 In March 2023, Nigeria consolidated and reinforced its democratic process with a general election which saw the election of a new President and about 18 newly elected/incoming governors. I am happy to note that democracy is alive, vibrant and thriving in Nigeria. With the elections now over, it is time for us to deliver the promises we made during the campaigns.
- 3.0 I have always maintained that democracy is not an end state nor is it a static event. It is an evolutionary process that takes its participants on a journey of self-actualization. The process forces us to hold a mirror to ourselves, and by doing so we are made to constantly

review and improve its critical elements to ensure that we have an inclusive democratic practice that gives faith to voters.

4.0 We must therefore be patient, tolerant and use the appropriate channels to seek redress if we believe there have been unfair practices along the way. As you can tell, am speaking as a veteran of the process, with the scars to show for it.

5.0 On May 29, you will be called upon to steer the affairs of your States for the next four years. From this day you become wholly responsible for the state as an enterprise. You as the Governor or State Chief Executive inherit all its assets and liabilities. The assumption of office is a constitutional process that we must take with utmost dedication, in the light of the trust bestowed on you by those who elected you into office.

6.0 One interesting development that we all saw from the last election is that the electorate is maturing, and people are increasingly finding their voices. Any public officer who fails to either meet up with the expectations of the people or deliver on his campaign promises would be voted out in the next election. That is what democracy is about. Deliver or get shown the door out.

7.0 I enjoin the Forum to promote ideals that will address the challenges of democracy and governance in our country today. The role of the Sub-nationals is critical in our Socio-Economic development as a nation. Your proximity to the people, gives you the privilege to have an instant pulse on their needs and challenges and yours is to device creative and judicious means of addressing the myriad of issues that confront them daily.

8.0 As returning or incoming State Executives you also must be cognizant of the comparative advantages inherent in each of your states, and how you can form partnerships with each other, by leveraging your various strengths while recognizing that there is no one size fits all solutions.

9.0 I also bid you to take this opportunity to unite across party divides to put the country first. Nigerians desire peace, progress and security. A country where they have access to quality education, health and social services. Your ability to champion these values significantly impacts the atmosphere where in the delivery of social goods and services will be conducted efficiently and harmoniously.

10.0 We have made steady progress since we took office in 2015. The road has been bumpy due to a challenging fiscal climate, but I am proud to state as we leave office in about two weeks that we have built a firm foundation for a prosperous Nigeria. We could not have done everything,

but we focused on a number of areas: Infrastructure, Agriculture and strengthening our Armed Forces.

11.0 Despite the difficult fiscal conditions, we remained committed to our promises. These key areas were strategically targeted. Our focus on Infrastructure was to improve access to markets, improved linkages and to reduce overall supply chain costs. This singular commitment to infrastructure development for roads, rails, airports, ports and affordable housing were designed to create better means of livelihood for our people and facilitate access to jobs. I am happy that we are succeeding in investing the nation's wealth in every State of the federation and a clear path for sustainable development has been set.

12.0 Our various interventions in agriculture ensured that we reduced our food import bill while increasing domestic production and even expansion of critical export crops. This deliberate policy was especially necessary as Covid-forced shutdown led to increase in global food prices, and whilst we experienced some spike, we nonetheless were better able to contend with the food crises.

13.0 Our Men and Women of the Armed Forces have through their gallant actions and sacrifices ensured that our territorial integrity remains intact; and they continue with laser focus to combat what remains of a significantly degraded enemies of state, and there shall be no letting on until peace and stability returns to our nation. As found

in the oath I took, I shall continue to support their efforts with improved resources and modern warfare equipment to enhance their abilities.

14.0 I believe that the outgoing governors have left a legacy that will ensure that incoming governors are able to transit into office with minimal interruption in governance. This will ensure that new governments are able to make significant mileage as they step in, including identifying key operational and policy issues that require early action.

15.0 I am very confident that from the foundation we have laid, the incoming federal government will build on our legacies in ensuring that we continue to build the country of our dreams. Congratulations to all of you and good luck in the days and years ahead.

16.0 On this note, I formally declare this induction open.

17.0 I wish you all a fruitful induction programme.

18.0 God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.