**SECURITY AWARENESS LECTURE FOR VERY IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES.**

**INTRODUCTION**

The following threats to national security necessitate security awareness amongst the citizenry, and particularly Very Important Personalities (VIPs); terrorism/insurgency, militancy, kidnapping/hostage taking, vandalism, religious extremism, cattle rustling, farmers/herders clashes, armed robbery and banditary, amongst others. More worrisome is the involvement of youths, a key segment of the society and leaders of tomorrow. They are involved in drug abuse, political thuggery, cultism, especially in secondary and tertiary institutions, examination malpractice, sexual abuse, online fraud, yahoo yahoo, and others.

There is however a general lack of appreciation of the fact that security is achieved through the combined efforts of all members of the society.

Government functionaries and spouses of Government functionaries have admirers as well as adversaries, as they would likely incur the wrath of some individuals, particularly friends and family members whose requests might be at variance or in conflict with the expectations of their positions, and would ultimately be turned down.

**THREATS TO VIPs**

Threats to VIPs can emanate from terrorists/insurgents, disaffected citizens, Hostile Intelligence Services, political associates, opposition/rival political parties, corrupt individuals who are being tried and prosecuted by government, and in the third world the military.

The protection of VIPs and their families from all forms of threats is one of the statutory duties of the State Security Service. However, the VIP has to cooperate with protective details to obtain the maximum benefit from the protection process.

The main areas that need attention of VIPs include;

**PERSONAL SECURITY**

1. **Avoid a set pattern or routine**, to be less predictable.
2. **Limit information** on all issues to only those who have “the need to know”.
3. **Access Control;** Normal security procedures must be followed.
4. **Vetting:** all staff to be engaged must undergo background checks also known as vetting, to keep people of questionable character off;
5. **Security** **survey:** vulnerability assessment of the residence and office must be carried out by security personnel and observed lapses promptly attended to.
6. **Screening of Parcels:** All parcels, large envelops and gift items must be screened by security operatives before they are delivered to the VIP.

**FAMILY SECURITY**

An attack on any family member of the VIP, particularly members of the nuclear family, will definitely affect the VIP. Family members must be given security education from time to time on the need to be security conscious and do the following:

1. **Adhere strictly** to security procedures by family members;
2. **Observe strange things** around that can arouse suspicion;
3. **Avoid giving away information on the phone**, no matter how trivial;
4. **Avoid identifying themselves** until they are sure of the caller when answering phone calls;
5. **Avoid giving out telephone numbers to strangers**; and
6. **Training in safety procedures,** such as the use of fire extinguishers and other emergency response practices.

**DOCUMENT SECURITY**

If a document that needs to be protected gets into wrong hands, it can embarrass the VIP and government, or even endanger the VIPs life.

1. **All documented sensitive information must be protected** from unauthorized people.
2. **Domestic staff must not handle sensitive documents**, when taken home.
3. **Official information must not be shared with family and friends,** who do not have the need to know or handle same.

**COMMUNICATION SECURITY**

The telephone is particularly unsafe for transmitting sensitive information, as the line could either be bugged or a third party engage in eavesdropping.

1. **Use telephone for sensitive information only** in emergency situations:
2. **Do not discuss official matters in vehicles while being driven, in public places and social gatherings**, to avoid disclosing sensitive issues to hostile people and unfriendly media organizations;
3. **Be mindful of your comments in public**, especially responses to questions on sensitive and controversial issues;
4. **Family members and children must also shun unwarranted comments** and unguarded utterances;
5. Due to the emphasis that government places on national unity, **be careful not to embarrass your office and even the government by accepting invitations from questionable or controversial groups, unions, associations or fanatical clubs.**

**THE ROLE OF PROTECTIVE SECURITY DETAILS**

Security Details are specially trained to prevent or limit any action/situation that might endanger or embarrass dignitaries. VIPs must therefore;

1. **Take their security details into full confidence** and rely on their professional advice as the details are meant to protect and not to monitor or spy on them;
2. **Grant easy access to details for briefing on security matters**, even at odd places and times;
3. **Treat security reports with the level of seriousness and confidentiality** they deserve;
4. **Security Details must not carry bags.** Their hands must be free at all times, to enable quick response in emergency situations.

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR’S**

**WIFE AS SECURITY SUPPORT**

Wives of Governors should;

1. **Help their husbands feel the pulse of the citizenry,** particularly on government policies and actions.
2. **Never contradict government position on any issue**
3. **Engage in advocacy**
4. **Embark on the bottom-top approach by holding town hall meetings**
5. **Encourage parents at the grassroots on the importance of education.**
6. **Encourage youths in the area of skills acquisition, and empowerment.**
7. **Sensitize women and youths on community policing,** to enable them know their neighbours, as well as report strange movements within the neighbourhood and the presence of visitors.
8. **Be charitable and accommodating,** to enable them reach out to the various segments of the society.

**CONCLUSION**

There is the need for a change of attitude to security, which is erroneously construed as the exclusive responsibility of security agencies.

In their exalted positions, 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.