

ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF YOBE STATE, HIS EXCELLENCY ALHAJI IBRAHIM GAIDAM FCNA, CPA, ON THE OCCASION OF A WORKING VISIT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE NIGERIA GOVERNOR'S FORUM SECRETARIAT Mr. A.B.OKAURU AND MEMBERS OF HIS ENTOURAGE ON TUESDAY 22nd JUNE, 2010.

His Excellency, the Deputy Governor of Yobe State,
Engr. Abubakar D. Aliyu MNSE,

The Honourable Speaker, Yobe State House of Assembly,

The Honourable Chief Judge and the Hon. Grand Kadi,

Honourable Members of the Yobe State House of Assembly,

Members of the State Executive Council,

The Director-General of the Nigeria Governor's Forum Secretariat and
the members of his entourage,

Chairman ANPP Yobe State,

The Secretary to the State Government,

The Head of Service,

Permanent Secretaries, Chief Executives of Federal and State Boards and Parastatals and Heads of Extra Ministerial Departments,

Distinguished Invited Guests,

Gentlemen of the Press,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am delighted to welcome the Director-General of the Nigeria Governor's Forum Secretariat and members of his entourage to Damaturu. I understand that the team is in the State to have first hand information on our programmes, as a step towards developing a comprehensive framework for peer review mechanism. The visit is a morale booster to us in our quest for improved service delivery to justify the mandate given to us by the people of Yobe State. Furthermore, we also expect that it would lead to the adoption of policies, standards, values, and practices for improved governance.

2. The Nigeria Governors Forum's adoption of the Peer Review Programme initiated by the African Union (AU) is undoubtedly one of the most progressive steps taken to entrench good Governance by evolving common standards of service delivery. In a world which is increasingly becoming inter-dependent, participation in Peer Review Programme

therefore will afford us the opportunity to compare notes, borrow from each other's points of strength and also serve as a veritable tool for healthy competition.

3. I wish to observe that as a preliminary step towards developing an acceptable framework for Peer Review Mechanism for the States of the Federation, the choice of socio-economic development theme is most appropriate and timely. Though the significance of the other areas like democracy and political governance, economic governance and corporate governance cannot be denied, socio-economic development, provides the most visible and transparent result of good governance.

4. Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, as a demonstration of our commitment to the socio-economic up-liftment of Yobe State as stated in our manifesto and campaign promises, we collaborated with indigenous experts and those in diaspora to organize the Yobe State Socio-Economic Summit. During the Summit, Government presented its vision for the socio-economic development of the State for scrutiny and suggestion by experts. In the light of the existing situation in various economic and social sectors, short, medium and long term objectives as well as implementation strategies were proposed.

5. I am happy to say that the implementation of the documented plans has started. In this regard, our 2010 budget which we tagged “budget of continuity” incorporated a portion of the objectives and strategies the Summit came up with. The objectives of our 2010 budget reflect most of our short term and part of our medium term objectives for socio-economic development as follows:-

- a) Completion of all on-going projects that spilled over from 2009;
- b) Continuation of building and re-building the infrastructural basis on which the rapid integrated socio-economic development of the State depends;
- c) Provision of greater job opportunities for our youth and other unemployed citizens;
- d) Sourcing for appropriate external technical assistance and cooperation programme for development and programme enhancement;
- e) Pursuit of further programmes on improved and cleaner environment;
- f) Exploration of areas of collaboration on Public and Private Partnership (PPP);

- g) Ensuring greater efforts aimed at harnessing the considerable revenue potentials of the State;
- h) Promotion of probity, transparency and accountability in the conduct of government business.

6. Our distinguished guests, I would have gone further to enumerate the different projects, programmes and activities which are being undertaken in order to achieve the foregoing objectives. However, the tour will enable you see the projects and document them. Moreover, the interactive session conducted with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) yesterday must have given you detailed information on our projects and programmes.

7. At this point, I would like to draw the attention of the team to the fact that, the emphasis on physical infrastructural facilities in our project inventory like road network, bridges, housing and the like is due to our conviction that a severely underdeveloped State like ours needs such a solid infrastructural basis to launch it to the path of advanced development. The other areas of emphasis include education and educational infrastructure, health care delivery as well as the provision of amenities, like portable water – all of which fall within the category of basic facilities necessary for more advanced development.

8. Esteemed guests, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to indicate our willingness to participate actively in the Peer Review Programme the Nigeria Governor's Forum is trying to develop. In this regard, I assure you of our full cooperation and readiness for the familiarisation visit and inspection of a cross section of on-going and completed projects. Due to constraints of time and terrain, you cannot be taken to all our project sites but I am certain that the ones selected for the purpose of this visit are adequate for you to inspect, scrutinize and assess. We are ready to have an assessment of our accomplishments, shortfalls, recommendations, and to share our positive experiences with our counterparts in the Federation.

9. Though the purpose of your tour is to inspect projects to be used in developing a framework for Peer Review Mechanism, we expect some feedback which we would use for continuous re-appraisal of our strategies for project formulation and execution. Furthermore, as you develop appropriate mechanism and benchmark for Peer Review Programme, I advise you take proper cognizance of the peculiarities of individual states within the Federation in order to make the scheme all – inclusive. Let me also observe that the Secretariat has an important role to play in supporting and stimulating the peer review process.

The transparency, accuracy and quality of your work are essential to the effectiveness of the process. From what we have seen so far, I have no doubt that the Secretariat supported by policy consultants and public relations/media groups is equal to the task. We will certainly see the emergence of a self monitoring mechanism based on mutual trust and shared confidence.

10. With these remarks, I would like to once again welcome you to Yobe State and wish you memorable stay, successful familiarisation working tour, and safe return back to your respective destinations and abodes.

Thank you.