



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

HELD ON

9th March, 2009

AT THE

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

ATTENDANCE

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	John M. Abdul	Nasarawa	Deputy-Governor
7	Chief Martin N. Elechi	Ebonyi	Governor
8	Dr. Muazu Babangida Aliyu, OON	Niger	Governor
9	Abubakar D. Ali, MNSE	Yobe	Deputy-Governor
10	Otunba C.A. Alao-Akala	Oyo	Governor
11	Mohammed Danjuma Goje	Gombe	Governor
12	Alhaji Ali Olanusi	Ondo	Deputy-Governor
13	Jonah D. Jang	Plateau	Governor
14	Ibrahim S. Shema	Katsina	Governor
15	Rt. Hon. Tunji Odeyemi	Ekiti	Ag. Governor
16	Sullivan I. Chime	Enugu	Governor
17	Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN	Lagos	Governor
18	Murtala H. Nyako	Adamawa	Governor
19	Muhktar A. Anka	Zamfara	Deputy-Governor
20	Oshiomole, Adams Aliyu	Edo	Governor
21	Rt. Hon. C.R. Amaechi	Rivers	Governor
22	Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan	Delta	Governor
23	Godswill Akpabio	Akwa-Ibom	Governor
24	Liyel Imoke	Cross-River	Governor
25	Isa Yuguda	Bauchi	Governor
26	Mr. Peter Obi	Anambra	Governor
27	Otunba Gbenga Daniel	Ogun	Governor
28	Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola	Osun	Governor

APOLOGIES

1. Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau Governor, Kano State
2. Arc. M.N Sambo Governor, Kaduna State

S/N	NOTES/OBSERVATIONS	ACTION
A	<p>COMMENCEMENT</p> <p>The meeting started at 8.40pm with opening prayers said by the Governors of Sokoto and Abia States respectively.</p>	
B	<p>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 26th January, 2009 were read and adopted after the following amendments were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On Page 3, item C, the designation of the chairman of the Forum's Committee on Millenium Development Goals (MDG) should be included. ▪ On Page 5, the parting gift to the outgoing Executive Director of the Forum's secretariat should be included. ▪ On Page 8, item F, line 2, the second reference to 'Governor' should be expunged. <p>In the absence of any other amendments, the Governor of Enugu State moved the motion for the adoption of the minutes and was seconded by the Governor of Rivers State.</p>	
C	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:</p> <p>i. MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDG) COMMITTEE REPORT:</p> <p>Owing to the unavoidable absence of the Executive Governor of Ekiti State, the Forum appointed the Rivers State Governor as interim Chairman of the MDG Committee and he was mandated to co-opt two or three other members of the Forum into the Committee. The Committee was further urged to examine the relationship between the MDG and the States.</p> <p>ii. PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT</p> <p>Regarding the proposed Constitutional amendments, the Forum deliberated on the options before it - Whether to set up a committee to look into the issues relating to</p>	

the Constitutional amendment or leave it at the discretion of the States to handle the matter by setting up Committees.

It was resolved that the Forum would keep an eye on the process and would, at its meetings, regularly review events as they unfold until it (the Forum) was able to articulate a final position.

iii. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF ATTORNEYS GENERAL (AGs) ON ILLEGAL DEDUCTIONS

The Report of the Committee of Attorneys General of States was presented to the meeting. The Committee had inter alia, agreed that:

- a. Without prejudice to any existing out of court settlement efforts, the States already in court would continue to pursue their cases to their logical conclusion.
- b. There was a need for representation on a geo-political basis.
- c. The next meeting of the Committee would be on the 26th of March, 2009.

However, some members observed that the desired support needed by some States in court with the Federal Government (FG) had not been given the prominence that it deserved. It was then agreed that favourable public image be created in the media.

It was also resolved that six (6) states not already in Court and representing each of the geo-political zones would be nominated to join the existing Committee.

The Forum also granted permission to the Committee to use the NGF secretariat as its protem Secretariat for proper co-ordination of the body's activities.

iv. ERADICATION OF POLIO CAMPAIGN

Members were reminded of the decisions reached at the last meeting on the eradication of the Polio epidemic. They were also reminded that the Forum had hosted Mr. Bill Gates of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation all in an

effort to eradicate this scourge. Members were further informed that Mr. Gates had written to the Forum expressing his appreciation for the support shown by the Governors in their effort to eliminate the Polio epidemic.

It was noted that some States had already launched the eradication campaign and others were urged to do so. It was also noted that henceforth the Secretariat should be invited to any Programmes by States targeted towards Polio eradication to ensure that it is properly documented.

Finally, the Forum resolved that to underscore the importance of this exercise, members would set aside a day where all the States would participate fully in the eradication campaign.

The Secretariat would liaise with the Chairman and the Federal Ministry of Health (FMH) to work out an appropriate date to kick start the exercise.

**SECRETARIAT/
CHAIRMAN/
FMH**

v. PLATEAU STATE CRISIS

The Chairman of the Forum's Committee on the Plateau State Crisis, the Executive Governor of Adamawa State presented the Committee's report to the meeting.

The position of Plateau State on the crisis could be summarised thus:

- That Plateau State awaited the response of the Federal Government (FG) to the suit brought by it before the Supreme Court.
- That the matter before the Court was on the interpretation of the Constitution on whether the FG had powers to investigate the crisis.
- Any investigation into the role of security agencies in the crisis was a legitimate area of intervention by the FG.
- The Terms of Reference of the two Panels set up by the FG and Plateau State on the crisis were different but not contradictory.
- There was no need to merge the panels. Each could carry out its functions.

Following intense deliberations on this subject, the Forum agreed that it would continue to monitor the progress made in the matter.

The Forum also expressed its gratitude to the Committee for a job well done and to the Plateau State Governor for the clarifications made as well as his co-operation with the Committee.

D EXECUTIVE BRIEFS: PROGRESS REPORTS

The Director General (DG) of the NGF Secretariat presented progress report to the Forum. The Chairman once again introduced the new management of the NGF Secretariat to the meeting.

There were observations on the scope of the DG's mandate and a member expressed the view that the DG should not communicate directly to members and should not address the media on their behalf. However, after deliberations on the matter, it was resolved that the powers exercisable by the DG shall be as delegated and mandated by the chairman of the Forum.

E EXCESS CRUDE ACCOUNT

The Forum was presented with a comprehensive **ANALYSIS OF THE EXCESS CRUDE ACCOUNT (ECA) DISTRIBUTION OPTIONS.**

Upon intense deliberations on the issue of fuel subsidy, it was resolved that States would no longer fund the inefficiencies of the FG under the guise of petroleum subsidy. The Forum however expressed support for the measures considered by the FG to de-regulate the downstream sector and therefore requested the FG to refund the subsidy paid in 2008. The Forum also advised against any further deductions in whatever guise in 2009.

Regarding excess crude, it was agreed that the \$4.75billion in the reserve account be shared among the States to enable them cushion the effects of the global economic crisis.

The Forum agreed that these decisions must be

canvassed at the National Economic Council (NEC) meeting on the 10th of March as the position of the Forum.

F NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS (NUT) STRIKE ACTION

The Forum was reminded of the NUT strike in 2008 and the resultant intervention of the NGF. One of the agreements reached with the NUT was the addition of 27.5% to their basic salaries. Teachers were now insisting on the implementation of that Agreement and had downed tools to press home their point.

Members whilst expressing sympathy with the plight of teachers, however, expressed the unworkability of the Agreement in view of the present economic realities. They added that the Agreement reached in 2008 signified their good intention towards teachers and willingness to support them but did not anticipate the eventual decline in the economy.

It was resolved that owing to the decline in the revenue accruable to States and the current financial meltdown, the 2008 Agreement was not sustainable. A meeting between the NUT and the Forum's Committee on the NUT crisis under the chairmanship of the Governor of Kaduna State would be re-convened. The Governors of Edo and Lagos States were co-opted into the Committee.

**NGF
Committee
on the NUT
Strike**

G PERMANENT SECRETARIAT PROJECT

Members were of the opinion that this matter be stepped down pending the availability of funds from the Excess Crude Account. This was adopted as the Forum's position.

H A.O.B

- A member expressed his displeasure at the Chairman's omission to recognise him to express his views at the meeting and felt that members ought to be allowed to freely ventilate their opinion. The Chairman while assuaging the member's feelings assured him that the perceived slight was not intended.

- The attention of members owning properties on the Lagos Bar Beach Water Front was called to the development going on there. These properties were now dilapidated and run-down and in most cases put to untoward use by miscreants. Such members were urged to assist the Lagos State Government by rehabilitating these structures and putting them to acceptable use or disposing of them.
- The attention of the Forum was also called to the question of airport closure and its attendant hazard.
- Members decried the lack of adequate concern by the Forum over its welfare. They were of the view that the welfare of members should be of paramount consideration. A case in point was the recent demise of the former Governor of Yobe State. It was resolved that the Forum would make adequate provisions for the welfare of the family of its deceased member.
- The Secretariat was also mandated to make bye-laws that would govern the welfare and other matters concerning members.
- The Forum was informed of the death of the Kano State Governor's uncle. The Secretariat was directed to send a condolence message to His Excellency.
- The Forum was invited to the commissioning of the Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina on the 19th of May, 2009.

Secretariat

Secretariat

CONCLUSION

I The Governor of Lagos State moved for the adjournment of the meeting and was seconded by the Governor of Rivers State.

The closing prayer was said by the Governor of Niger State and the meeting ended at 11.25pm.

Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki
Executive Governor, Kwara State
Chairman,
Nigeria Governors' Forum