

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

**HELD ON**

**23<sup>rd</sup> 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	Erelu Olusola Obada	Osun	Deputy Governor
3	Ibrahim Shekarau	Kano	Governor
4	Muhktar A. Anka	Zamfara	Deputy Governor
5	Suswam, G.T	Benue	Governor
6	Aliyu Akwe Doma	Nasarawa	Governor
7	Chief Martin N. Elechi	Ebonyi	Governor
8	Hon. Ahmed Musa Ibeto	Niger	Deputy Governor
9	Otunba C.A. Alao-Akala	Oyo	Governor
10	Mohammed Danjuma Goje	Gombe	Governor
11	Olusegun Mimiko	Ondo	Governor
12	Danbaba D. Suntai	Taraba	Governor
13	Dr. Phillips Salawu	Kogi	Deputy Governor
14	Rt. Hon. Olatunji Odeyemi	Ekiti	Ag. Governor
15	Sullivan I. Chime	Enugu	Governor
16	Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN	Lagos	Governor
17	Murtala H. Nyako	Adamawa	Governor
18	Saidu N. Usman	Kebbi	Governor
19	Oshiomole, Adams Aliyu	Edo	Governor
20	Sule Lamido	Jigawa	Governor
21	Prof. A.A. Utuama, SAN	Delta	Deputy Governor
22	Arc. Sambo, M.N	Kaduna	Governor
23	Ibrahim Gaidam	Yobe	Governor
24	Isa Yuguda	Bauchi	Governor
25	Mr. Peter Obi	Anambra	Governor

S/N	NOTES/OBSERVATIONS	ACTION
<b>A</b>	<b>COMMENCEMENT</b>	
	<p>The meeting started at 8.45pm with opening prayers said by the Governor of Adamawa State.</p>	
<b>B</b>	<b>CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS</b>	
	<p>The Chairman began by welcoming the newest member of the Forum, the Executive Governor of Ondo State and congratulated him on his victory at the Tribunal.</p>	
	<p>Members were informed that the meeting was meant to deliberate on the Report of the Electoral Reform Committee which would be the focus of the National Council of States' meeting on March 24, 2009.</p>	
	<p>The Forum had the option of either reviewing the Report as presented in the National Council of States Paper or reviewing the recommendations. The meeting adopted the first option.</p>	
	<p>On the issue of the appointment of the Chairman of Independent Electoral Commission (INEC), the consensus of members of the Forum was that this was an exclusive responsibility of the Executive and the President should be allowed to nominate the appointment of the Chairman while the National Assembly ratifies the appointments.</p>	
	<p>However, following a member's submission that he would canvass a minority opinion at the National Council of States' (NCS) meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March, it was resolved that members with divergent views on the issue could promote it without creating any impression of a division within the Forum. Members were assured that this would not be interpreted as an act of betrayal.</p>	
	<p>The Forum also rejected the abolition of State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC) because this position clearly contradicted the fundamental principles of federalism.</p>	

The idea of holding elections on a fixed date was similarly rejected by the Forum as recent developments in the courts have clearly taken clear of this.

Whilst members agreed that following recent judicial pronouncements on the Governorship disputes that had had come before the courts, the issue of having staggered elections in respect of gubernatorial elections had become a fait accompli, they rejected a similar proposal to stagger other elections such as National and State Assemblies Elections.

Regarding the question of disposing of electoral disputes in six (6) months, the general position was to allow the Practice Directions of the Courts to resolve the issue by setting a time frame for determination of electoral disputes.

Similarly, after intense deliberations on the issue of stipulating time limits on disposal of electoral disputes, members rejected the proposal.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The meeting ended at 10.20 pm with closing prayers said by the Deputy Governor of Osun State.

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

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE MEETING OF THE  
NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM HELD AT THE  
KWARA STATE GOVERNOR'S LODGE ON MONDAY,  
MARCH 23, 2009**

We, the Executive Governors of the Thirty-six (36) States of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in a meeting held on 23rd March, 2009 at Abuja deliberated on the Report of the Electoral Reform Committee together with the White Paper released by the Federal Government and hereby resolve as follows:

1. That the appointment of the INEC Chairman is an exclusive responsibility of the Executive and the President should be allowed to nominate the Chairman while the National Assembly ratifies the appointment.
2. That we reject the abolition of the State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC) because this position clearly contradicts the fundamental principles of federalism.
3. That although we believe that recent judicial pronouncements on Governorship disputes has settled the issue of holding gubernatorial elections on a uniform date, we reject a similar proposal to stagger other elections into the State and National Assemblies' elections.