**REMARKS OF DOROTHY MCAULIFFE. FORMER FIRST LADY OF VIRGINIA. 2014 -2018**

It is an honor and privilege to be here with you today. This is my first trip to Nigeria, and I have had such a warm welcome. I was honored to be greeted last evening by Her Excellency, Mrs. Dolapo Osibanjo at the Vice President’s residence for a meeting. And so meaningful to hear the remarks of Her Excellency Mrs. Aisha Muhammadu Buhari and the former First ladies of Nigeria here this morning.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL FIRST LADIES BOTH NEW AND RETURING**

I want to thank the National Governors’ Forum for the invitation to speak on the role of the First Lady in the 21st century. My husband served as Chairman of the National Governors’ Association and I served as Chair of the NGA Spouses Program. Gathering such as these are so important and impactful as we share best practices, mentor each other, innovate and grow together. So many challenges that we face in our States are similar and so the power of this type of meeting is incredible and exponential.

I want to thank former US. Ambassador to Nigeria Howard Jester, who has served the US in the role of Ambassador with distinction and was gracious in coordinating my invitation to present and share with you here at the First Ladies Summit this morning. So critical that Nigeria and US work together to face the challenges world faces in globalization. My three (3) overriding guiding principles to share with you as you consider either taking your new role or resetting your priorities as you continue a new term. No matter how busy you are with day to day duties and your agenda, it’s important to step back and look at the big picture, to pursue and reflect and measure up against your goals. So opportunities giving yourself the space and time to reflect and measure against yours goals.

1. **NARROW YOUR PRIORITIES**

You can’t do it all (everyone will ask you) focus most of your time on one or two priorities. I focused 75% of my time on ending Child hunger. This fit into my husband’s platform of creating job opportunities and expanding the economy. That regions an educated workforce- a healthy workforce.

When we were campaign for my husband’s election in 2013 as Governor, with Agriculture is 2 private industry. We have plenty of food, yet we had 270,000 children from food insecure households. So, we knew we had to focus on school needs, so every child has access to nutrition to grow and thrive. “Children can’t be hungry to learn, if they are just plain hungry”. So, I focused my work on working with local schools, slave agencies of local non profit partners to expand access to school breakfast, after school and summer meals.

We worked formed a campaign studied focus and non-Virginia schools are serving 12 million more school breakfast every year than when we started 4 years ago. That’s just one example of our success, and what focused goals and priorities can do.

1. **USE POWER OF CONVENING**

There is so much power for nation of Nigeria in this room.

And so much power in your State. So many people already doing good work across sectors to help tackle challenge. Use your role to Shine the light, raise awareness and bring various constituents and share holders together to help organize innovative ideas and challenge old ways of approaching issues you can’t to all of the work and there is so much power in leveraging others and bringing them into your efforts. The collective impact makes work even more effective and creates critical Buy-In among stakeholder and constituents. And it allows you to listen and learn well. So much power when you have large scale buy in.

1. **REACH ACROSS POLITICAL/CULTURAL DIVIDES IN YOUR STATE**

Never forget that you represent all the people all the people of your State, not just those that voted for your husband. You also represent Nigeria and you are a role model that people look to as an example.

The goals we have on education, healthcare are not partisan and they are shared halves across other divides. Find what unites, use as humanity and keep your heart open to those with whom you may not always agree.

I worked with leaders of other political party who controlled our legislature in order to get money in the State budget for school breakfast.

We worked together because we all agree no child should be hungry; but I had to help them understand and I worked to listen to their concerns, and we found a way to work together to secure those funds.

The bottom line is we all want a bright future for our own children and for all children in our States and our Country.

Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to be with you and to share my ideas, and to learn from you. I look forward to our panel discussion and continuing to grow the friendship and important relationship between our two countries.

Thanks.