



ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 16th TELECONFERENCE MEETING OF THE NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 2nd SEPTEMBER 2020

We, members of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), at our meeting held today, deliberated on issues affecting the country especially the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. The NGF Chairman provided the following updates:

- a. Disbursement of the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) facility to eligible States has been approved by the Ministry of Health to safeguard government interventions in primary health care service delivery during the pandemic.
- b. The Forum received a Rotary International Polio Certification Award for its role in eradicating polio in Nigeria. The Forum had made polio a permanent item on its agenda for at least 18 months and was instrumental in maintaining high political commitment and coordination for routine immunization in all parts of the country.
- c. Governors received updates on the status of pending COVID-19 interventions for States. Governors were concerned by the delay in the release of the results of the SMART survey conducted for the Saving One Million Lives Performance for Results (SOML-PforR) Project.

2. The Forum also received the following updates and presentations:

- a. The NGF Legal Committee led by the Vice Chairman of the Forum, Governor Aminu Waziri Tambuwal of Sokoto State, updated members on consultations with the Attorney General of the Federation to resolve concerns on the implementation of the Executive Order #10. A Technical Committee comprising members from all parties has been working to finalize an acceptable framework for the implementation of the Order.
- b. The Governor of Delta State, Dr. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa, Chairman of the NGF Sub-Committee interfacing with the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on COVID-19 in his update highlighted the importance of continued and increased testing in all States as the economy opens. He called on States to take ownership of the COVID-19 response, especially with the expected winding of the PTF by the end of September 2020. Low testing rates at any time will make it difficult to track the correct status of the pandemic in the country thus making it difficult to make important decisions like opening of schools, NYSC camps, holding elections etc.



- c. The Task Team Leader for the World Bank States Fiscal Transparency, Accountability, and Sustainability (SFTAS) Programme, Yue Man Lee provided an update of the SFTAS programme and near-term action for State governments. The presentation also introduced a new technical assistance programme by the World Bank to support States in updating the property records of at least 50% of properties that have electricity connections in Urban Areas by June 30, 2021.

Thereafter, members of the Forum resolved as follows:

1. In the light of Rotary's recognition of the Forum's role in ending the polio pandemic in the country, governors are called to maintain vigilance to ensure that the structures put in place for routine immunization are not jeopardized by the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The Forum commended the World Bank for the new initiative to support States in updating their property records. Some States are already in advanced stages of developing a geographic information system (GIS) that will help them gather, manage and analyze geospatial data both for the purpose of spacial planning and property taxation.
3. All State governments through their Internal Revenue Services will ensure the seamless implementation of tax relief programmes for businesses and taxpayers. These programmes which were released in some States since March 2020 are designed to reduce the financial burden of taxpayers in the country up till 2021 in some cases.
4. The Forum through its Sub-Committee interfacing with the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on COVID-19 will address concerns raised by States on the reception of new inmates amidst measures taken to curtail the spread of COVID-19 across correctional facilities in the country.
5. The Forum resolved to provide leadership to the COVID 19 response in their respective States by ramping up risk communication activities and community testing for COVID-19.
6. Finally, State governments were called to nominate focal persons that will interface with the Ministry of Petroleum Resources on the actualization of the National Gas Expansion Programme (NGEP). The Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Timipre Sylva had addressed the Forum in July 2020 on the NGEP which is designed as a catalyst for Nigeria's



vast natural gas reserves. The plan will spur revitalization across gas-based industries in fertilizer, methanol, textiles, and feedstock for industries, among others.

Governor Kayode Fayemi
Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum
2nd September 2020