



ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 8th COVID-19 TELECONFERENCE MEETING OF THE NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 13th MAY 2020

We, members of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), at our meeting held today deliberated on the COVID-19 pandemic in the country and resolved as follows:

1. The NGF Chairman briefed State Governors on existing coordination activities with the Presidential Taskforce (PTF) on COVID-19, multilateral and bilateral partners, and the private sector through the Coalition against COVID-19 (CACOVID). In addition to ongoing activities aimed at strengthening the public health response and the delivery of palliatives to vulnerable persons, the Forum is coordinating an additional response with the support of the Dangote Foundation to set up a volunteer work force of health personnel who will be trained and deployed to strengthen the availability of health workers in States in critical need.
2. The Forum is concerned with the rising number of coronavirus cases in the country which reached 4,787 as at 12th May 2020 based on an update from the Presidential Taskforce (PTF) on COVID-19. The worrying trend urgently calls for additional measures by State Governors to ramp up capacity for testing, increase the availability of isolation beds to at least 300 per State, accelerate the procurement of additional personal protective equipment (PPE) and training for health workers, as well as the continued enforcement of interstate restriction of movement.
3. In line with the commitment made by the Forum to intensify public-private collaboration for the delivery of palliatives from the private sector, Governors are making warehouses available for the delivery of palliatives and have appointed State Coordinators who will be responsible for the receipt and distribution of palliatives to vulnerable persons.



4. Following an update from the Governor of Sokoto State and Vice Chairman of the NGF, H.E Aminu Waziri Tambuwal, on the proposed Control of Infectious Diseases Bill, 2020 introduced by the House of Representatives, Governors raised concern with the lack of consultation with State governments who are at the forefront of the epidemic. The Forum resolved that the Bill should be stepped down until an appropriate consultative process is held, including a public hearing to gather public opinion and concerns.
5. In the light of this, the Forum established a Committee comprising the Governors of Katsina, Sokoto and Plateau to lead a consultative meeting with the leadership of the National Assembly on the proposed Control of Infectious Diseases Bill, 2020. The NGF Secretariat was also mandated to comprehensively review the Bill and its implication on States.
6. The Forum received a briefing from the Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Mele Kyari, on the Oil and Gas Industry Intervention Initiative on COVID-19, set up by oil and gas operators to provide medical consumables to States, deploy logistics and in-patient support systems, and deliver permanent medical infrastructure across the six geopolitical zones. Governors commended NNPC for leading the industry to take the initiative and advised the group to prioritize interventions that will boost the country's testing capacity and the capacity of health workers who are at the frontline of the epidemic.
7. Following an update from the Governor of Edo State, H.E Godwin Obaseki on the operation of the World Bank States Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability (SFTAS) project which is supporting a strong pro-poor fiscal response to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, State Governors agreed to take additional measures to strengthen their public financial management systems, including a revision of their 2020 budgets and the amendment of State procurement guidelines to support e-procurement and the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises.



8. To fast-track the deployment of e-procurement across States, the Forum will be adopting a Software as a Service (SaaS) model with the Kaduna State government providing the framework agreement that other States can leverage on.
9. Following an update on the rising trend of deductions from revenues accruable to the federation account available for distribution to the three tiers of government, the Governors noted the threat this poses on the fiscal capacity of States to respond to the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic. Members also raised concern about the ownership and distribution of proceeds from recovered looted funds and accounts or investments funded as first line charge from the federation account. The Forum agreed to engage with the federal government to ensure that the governance arrangement of all federation-funded investments recognize State governments as shareholders in the distribution of proceeds and decision making.
10. The Forum has followed with interest, the development of the 12-month Economic Sustainability Plan by the federal government, which is designed to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. In the spirit of developing a truly coordinated national response to the crisis, Governors expressed the importance of greater consultation and collaboration between the federal and state governments on development planning. A Committee was consequently set up to interface with the federal government on the next Medium-term National Development Plan. The Committee is made up of the Governors of Bauchi, Plateau, Kebbi, Akwa Ibom, Abia and Ekiti.
11. A 2nd Committee comprising the Governors of Gombe, Nasarawa, Delta, Ebonyi, Oyo and Kaduna was established to steer the activities of the NGF-NESG Economic Roundtable (NNER) – a sub-national platform of the NGF and the Nigerian Economic Summit Group created to promote sub-national competitiveness through public-private collaboration.



12. Finally, the Forum congratulated the newly appointed Chief of Staff to President Muhammadu Buhari, Professor Ibrahim Gambari. The Forum wishes him well and looks forward to a fruitful partnership that will support the development of the country.

**Governor Kayode Fayemi
Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum
13th May 2020**