



A COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE STATE OF OSUN STRATEGY WORKSHOP OF FRIDAY 29TH TO SUNDAY 31ST OF JANUARY, 2016

Preamble

The current economic reality of Nigeria as a country has forced Governments at all levels (State and Federal) and other public offices to slow down economic activities. Most State Governments currently just realise enough revenue to meet their salary obligations without reserves to stimulate economic activities that will drive growth and development. The State of Osun is not insulated from this unfriendly reality. Analysts and economists have posited that a radical change in the affairs and operations of Governments in Nigeria is required to stir the country in the direction towards achieving its potentials as the Giant of Africa. It is therefore imperative for the Government of Osun at this point, to be ingenious enough to drive the value that is required for economic growth and development of the State.

Osun has been at the forefront of innovation in governance and is one of the few states in the country with commendable development statistics. The State has made massive investments in physical and human infrastructure in the last five years. In 2013, Osun had the lowest unemployment rate in the country and the second lowest poverty rate. Osun's Youth Empowerment Model and School Feeding Scheme influenced the World Bank's YESSO programme and the APC National School Feeding goal respectively.

However, on the backdrop of the current economic realities of the State and the Government's commitment to delivering on its development promise to the people of the State of Osun, the Governor and his executive team conducted a three (3) day strategy retreat in order to develop actionable initiatives that would facilitate socio-economic growth in the State and the country at large. In attendance were key members of the Executive Team, Industry Leaders, Investors, and Donor Agency Representatives among others.

Purpose of the Retreat

The three (3) day strategy retreat was conducted to:

1. Develop a tentative list of key initiatives and objectives for the State;
2. Define ownership for the identified initiatives; and
3. Develop clear action plans to implement these initiatives.

These initiatives, when implemented, will help:

- Reduce the State's cost of governance
- Increase internally generated revenue (IGR)
- Drive investments into the State
- Institutionalise performance-driven governance.

All initiatives were defined to have a positive impact on the state, improve the quality of life of the citizenry, create the foundation for sustainable governance and have the requisite funding for their execution.

Key Points from the Governor's Speech

The Governor highlighted the current global economic hardship, emphasising that Osun is not alone in experiencing economic difficulties. He stated that these troubles will affect all tiers of government, including its business partners. However, the role of humans in economic development must not be overlooked, so it is important to leverage on the human resources of the State to generate ideas, establish enterprises and create much-needed goods and services. He affirmed that, *"if we can get 40% of the population to be productive and generate surplus value, we will generate enough revenue to be comfortable"*.

The Governor stated that the aim of the Repositioning Osun for Prosperity (ROPE) initiative is to achieve the following:

- Increase IGR by employing creative means to widen taxpayer base and supporting enforcement action
- Reduce the cost of governance by strengthening the state's public financial management system and ensuring compliance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)
- Increase investments in the state by attracting investors for short-to-medium term investments in agriculture, tourism, solid minerals, and strengthening the PPP framework
- Institute performance-based governance by setting up and improving appropriate mechanisms and frameworks to track performance in MDAs and government policies

Conclusion

As an output of the retreat, high level actionable initiatives were identified by the various groups during the break out session. These initiatives would be further broken down to generate specific

action items and costs for implementing the initiatives. These initiatives would also be prioritised to ensure the State of Osun is focused on the most important development elements.

A competent and capable cabinet is expected to be identified and inaugurated soon, and would be expected to work in conjunction with the dedicated civil servants of the state for implementation of these plans.