



**Rt. Honourable Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi,
Governor of Rivers State & Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF)**

PROTOCOL

It is with delight that I welcome all of you to the 3rd Retreat of the Nigerian Governors hosted by His Excellency, Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola, Governor of Lagos State. Today's event marks the third in the series of retreats organised by the Nigeria Governors' Forum as part of efforts to collectively reflect on our national life and articulate ways forward not only for our States but also for the country as a whole.

As you all know, the 2nd Retreat which was held in Sokoto State in November 2013, provided a unique opportunity for us to deliberate on important issues of good governance, the imperative for managing and leaving a sustainable legacy and the role of States in ensuring these. The Retreat underscored that critical milestones on the roadmap towards a Greater Nigeria must include:

- (i) The political devolution of more powers and functions, with the requisite fiscal empowerment and independence, to the states;*
- (ii) The broader redefinition of national security, in line with Chapter II and Chapter IV of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) to ensure human security and environmental security;*
- (iii) Greater demonstration of, and commitment to transparency, ethics and accountability in governance; and*
- (iv) Transformative political leadership.*

We are gathered together again on the occasion of this third retreat to build on the gains of the last Retreat as well as explore and take forward the 2014-2016 Strategic Plan of the Forum.

At our last meeting in Abuja, we agreed to focus on the following priority areas: Agriculture, Corruption, Education and Security. Therefore, it is my hope that drawing from the various presentations and contributions of all our governors and special guests here present, we would adopt, internalize and domesticate measures that would enhance the quality of governance not only in the States but in our country.

On behalf of my brother colleagues, I wish to express our profound gratitude to our brother and host, His Excellency, Babatunde Raji Fashola, the Governor of Lagos State for his hospitality. We also commend his developmental strides which are evident as one drives around the city of Lagos. Peer learning is our major hallmark as a Forum and there is no doubt that we have a lot to learn from Lagos State.

Finally, I wish to thank all our Governors and other distinguished guests for making out the time to ensure the success of this Retreat.

Thank you very much.

**3RD Retreat of the NGF
Friday, 14th March, 2014
Lagos, Nigeria**