



THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR
Lagos State, Nigeria

**OPENING ADDRESS OF HIS EXCELLENCY,
ASIWAJU BOLA AHMED TINUBU, GOVERNOR OF LAGOS
STATE, NIGERIA AT THE DIALOGUE ON URBAN
SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SECOND WORLD URBAN
FORUM HELD AT BARCELONA, SPAIN, ON WEDNESDAY,
15TH SEPTEMBER, 2004.**

IT IS AN HONOUR TO BE INVITED TO ADDRESS THIS DISTINGUISHED SESSION ON URBAN SUSTAINABILITY AT THE SECOND WORLD URBAN FORUM, BARCELONA 2004. I EXTEND MY GRATITUDE TO THE UN-HABITAT FOR THE INVITATION AND COMMEND IT FOR ITS DOGGED COMMITMENT TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABILITY OF CITIES IN A RAPIDLY URBANIZING WORLD. I SEE YOUR INVITATION AS AN AFFIRMATION OF OUR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CITY OF LAGOS IN THE RESOLUTION OF URBAN CHALLENGES ON THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA. AS YOU ALL KNOW, LAGOS IS CURRENTLY THE MOST POPULOUS CITY IN THE CONTINENT WITH A POPULATION OF 15 MILLION, AND



WILL BE ACCOMMODATING OVER 20 MILLION PEOPLE BY 2010.

DEAR FRIENDS, THIS IS AN URBAN MILLENNIUM, WHICH URBAN ISSUES WILL OCCUPY THE CENTER STAGE OF GLOBAL CONCERNS. INDEED BY 2025, EXPERTS TELL US THAT URBANIZATION IS PROJECTED TO ACCOUNT FOR NEARLY TWO THIRDS OF GLOBAL POPULATION, THAT WOULD SOAR BY MORE THAN TWO BILLION. MORE INSTRUCTIVELY, IT HAS BEEN ESTIMATED THAT BY THE TURN OF THE SECOND DECADE OF THIS MILLENNIUM, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN URBAN AFRICA WOULD HAVE INCREASED TO 500 MILLION.

THESE FIGURES ARE DISTURBING, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE THEY ARE ACCOMPANIED BY POVERTY AND INCREASING HARDSHIP OF PEOPLE IN TRYING TO GAIN THEIR LIVELIHOOD AS BORNE BY THE REALITIES SLUM CONDITIONS IN OUR CITIES. WE ARE TOLD THAT 70% OF AFRICANS LIVE IN SLUMS. TRULY, THE SEVERITY OF OUR POVERTY IS REFLECTED IN THE POOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF OUR CITIES.

WHILE URBANISATION IS A POSITIVE FORCE IN STIMULATING AND SUPPORTING PRODUCTIVITY, IT



POSES FRIGHTENING CHALLENGES, WHEN THE RATE OUTPACES SERVICE DELIVERY AND CREATION OF WEALTH, AS IS THE SITUATION IN SUB-SAHARA AFRICA.

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) CANNOT BE ATTAINED WITHOUT CONFRONTING POVERTY AND URBANISATION. THERE IS NO DEVELOPMENT AID OR PARTNERSHIP FORMULA THAT EXCLUDES THE PEOPLE IN THEIR LOCAL SETTING AND THEIR COMMUNITY THAT CAN HOPE TO EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS THIS PHENOMENON. THE DECLARATION THAT CAME OUT OF URBAN 21 MAYORS' SUMMIT IN BERLIN (2000) EMPHASIZES THE NEED FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND DONOR AGENCIES TO DEVOLVE MORE POWERS AND RESOURCES TO STATE, MUNICIPAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THIS REGARD, DECENTRALIZATION AND STRENGTHENING OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES, OCCUPIES A SIGNIFICANT PLACE IN INSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN NIGERIA. IT IS IN THIS REGARD THAT WE ARE EXCITED WITH THE LANDMARK FORMATION OF THE UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN PARIS EARLY THIS YEAR, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH GIVES MUNICIPALITIES A VIRILE REPRESENTATION AT GLOBAL LEVEL.



THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS DIALOGUE IS THEREFORE, IMPORTANT INITIATIVE IN OUR COLLECTIVE EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE URBANISATION, WITHOUT WHICH, AS AGREED AT THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, JOHANNESBURG 2002 (WSSD), SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE ACHIEVED.

FOR ME, URBAN SUSTAINABILITY HAS TO DO WITH THE CAPACITY AND ABILITY OF URBAN CENTRES TO PROVIDE A MYRIAD OF OPPORTUNITIES, SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR ORDERLY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT CITIES. PUT SUCCINCTLY, IT HAS TO DO WITH SECURING A SAFE, FUNCTIONAL, PRODUCTIVE, AND SECURED ENVIRONMENT, NOT ONLY FOR THE PRESENT BUT ALSO FOR THE FUTURE. HENCE, URBAN SUSTAINABILITY THUS PROVIDES A FRAMEWORK FOR LINKING ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, AND FOR DEALING WITH THE ISSUES OF POVERTY, GENDER, DEPRIVATION AND GOVERNANCE IN THE CREATION OF LIVEABLE CITIES

IN AFRICA, MOST CITIES ARE EASILY DEVASTATED BY WARS, CONFLICTS, AND NATURAL DISASTERS. MEGA



CITIES LIKE LAGOS WHICH ARE DISTINCTLY AT THE CROSSROADS OF CULTURE, IDEAS, AND CIVILIZATION ARE EVEN MORE VULNERABLE. THE CHALLENGE OF URBAN SUSTAINABILITY THEN, REQUIRES NOT ONLY THAT CAPACITY IS BUILT TO MANAGE THESE DISASTERS, BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY THAT INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNANCE BE STRENGTHENED TO PROVIDE A BROAD BASED PARTICIPATORY AND INCLUSIVE PROCESS THAT BUILD CITIZENSHIP AND COMMON HERITAGE.

IT IS IN RESPONSE TO SUCH CHALLENGES THAT THE LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT ENVISIONED AS ITS POLICY THRUST, 'POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH'. INHERENT IN IT IS THE PURSUIT OF A PRIVATE SECTOR-LED ECONOMY AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE (ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ANNUAL ECONOMIC SUMMIT (THE EHINGBETI) AND AN URBAN FORUM) FOR BASING STATE AND CITY-WIDE PLANS ON LOCAL PRIORITIES.

DERIVING FROM THESE CONSULTATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS, WE HAVE INTRODUCED 16 PRO-POOR HEALTHCARE PROGRAMMES, PROMOTED THE FIRST



INDEPENDENT POWER PLANT IN NIGERIA, INSTITUTED JUDICIAL REFORMS AND; IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WORLD BANK, EMBARKED ON URBAN TRANSPORTATION, URBAN UPGRADING, YOUTH EMPOWERMENT, AND PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR EFFORTS TOWARDS URBAN SUSTAINABILITY, LAGOS STATE WON THREE NIGERIA NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE AWARDS IN AREAS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, AND HEALTHCARE DELIVERY AT WORLD HABITAT DAY CELEBRATIONS IN 2002.

PUSHING THE AGENDA OF SUSTAINABILITY FORWARD AND RECOGNISING THE ROLE OF CITIES AS ENGINES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND VEHICLES OF INTEGRATION IN AFRICA, THE FIRST NEPAD CITIES CONSULTATIVE FORUM WAS ORGANISED BY THE UN-HABITAT IN COLLABORATION WITH THE LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT, IN LAGOS IN MAY 2004. THE FORUM, WHICH BROUGHT TOGETHER SEVEN AFRICAN CITIES, INCLUDING LAGOS, UNDER THE SUSTAINABLE NEPAD CITIES PROGRAMME, RESOLVED TO PROMOTE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR, FORGE CITY LINKAGES AND UNDERTAKE



INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS TO RESPOND TO
PROBLEM OF URBAN SUSTAINABILITY. AS AN OUTCOME
OF THIS FORUM, LAGOS AND DURBAN HAVE
COMMENCED PREPARATIONS TOWARDS THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A CITY-TO-CITY COOPERATION
SHARE EXPERIENCES AND BUILD CAPACITIES.

EVIDENTLY, THE PRINCIPAL CONSTRAINTS
SUSTAINABLE URBANISATION LIE IN THE LACK
PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT
CAPACITIES ON THE PART OF GOVERNMENTS AND THEIR
PARTNERS. REVERSING THIS SITUATION CALLS FOR THE:

PURSUIT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL CAPACITIES AND
RESOURCES FOR PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT.

MAINSTREAMING OF POVERTY,
ENVIRONMENT, HIV/AIDS, AND THE ROLE OF
WOMEN AND YOUTH IN DEVELOPMENT.

DEVELOPMENT OF MECHANISM FOR
COHERENCE AND MUTUAL SUPPORT FROM
DONOR AGENCIES.



AS WE DIALOGUE IN THIS SESSION THEREFORE, WE CALL NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY TO COMMIT MORE RESOURCES THAN BEFORE, TOWARDS STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES OF MUNICIPALITIES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES, WHO ARE OFTEN LEFT TO GRAPPLE WITH THE NEGATIVE EXTERNALITIES OF GLOBALISATION.

ABOVE ALL, LINKAGES BETWEEN GLOBAL CITIES AND SUPPORT FOR INNOVATIVE IDEAS SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED, AND STRATEGIES PECULIAR TO EACH HABITAT DEVELOPED. THESE WILL ENSURE FLEXIBLE INSTRUMENTS FOR ACHIEVING OUR MOST DESIRED URBAN SUSTAINABILITY AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

THIS SESSION MUST MOVE FROM MERE DECLARATIONS ARTICULATING ACTIONABLE AND MEASURABLE PROGRAMMES FOR WHICH I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE, AS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS, WORKING TOGETHER IN SYNERGY, MONITORING PROGRESS AND SHARING EXPERIENCES WILL ASSUREDLY ACHIEVE A SECURED AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE. THIS IS EVEN MORE



IMPERATIVE COMING AT THE HEELS OF THE WORLD FORUM ON URBAN CULTURES.

CONCLUDING, I WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT THAT CITY DWELLERS AND MANAGERS MUST COMMIT THEMSELVES TO: BRANDING THEIR CITIES, BY CREATING A SHARED VISION; BELIEVING IN ITS GROWTH PROSPECTS; INVESTING IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT; PROVIDING SERVICES TO SUPPORT PRODUCTION RATHER THAN CONSUMPTION; CREATING NEW JOBS; DECENTRALISING GOVERNANCE; AND ABOVE ALL, PROVIDING FOR CITIES THE WAY FAMILIES DO FOR THEIR MEMBERS. BY THESE, THE ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY OF CITIES WILL BE ENHANCED TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES OF URBANISATION. THE UN-HABITAT CAN PLAY A ROLE BY GUARANTEEING A DEVELOPMENT BOND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE URBAN POOR.

FOR, UNLESS THESE VALUES ARE ACTIONED, AND PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT ARE PUT FIRST, OUR GOAL WILL BE UNATTAINABLE. THIS IS A MATTER OF SURVIVAL. I PLEDGE THAT LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT WILL EMBRACE THE SESSION'S OUTCOMES, AS WE



BELIEVE THAT WE OCCUPY A NICHE IN THE SUCCESS OF THE FUTURE OF URBAN AFRICA.

AFRICA, LIKE OTHER DEVELOPING CONTINENTS, CAN ONLY KNOW PROSPERITY AND ACHIEVE THE MDGS IF WE WOULD COMMIT OURSELVES TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2002 WORLD ECONOMIC SUMMIT FORUM GLOBAL AGENDA AND THAT OF NEPAD PROGRAMME. I AM CALLING ON ALL DELEGATES TO MOVE FROM PLEDGES TO PRACTICES, FROM SHARED COMMITMENTS TO CONCRETE PROGRAMMES, AND FROM INTENTS TO ACTIONS.

ONCE AGAIN, I COMMEND THE UN-HABITAT FOR ORGANISING THIS HIGHLY ENTERPRISING GLOBAL FORUM AND THE CITY OF BARCELONA FOR GRACIOUSLY OFFERING US ITS PLEASANT HOSPITALITY.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.

ASIWAJU BOLA AHMED TINUBU
GOVERNOR
LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA



SEPTEMBER 15, 2004