

BUDGET OF CONSOLIDATION

BEING THE Y2010 BUDGET PRESENTATION OF THE LAGOS STATE GOVERNOR, HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. BABATUNDE RAJI FASHOLA, SAN DELIVERED AT THE CHAMBERS OF THE LAGOS STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, ALAUSA, IKEJA ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2009

Honourable Speaker

Distinguished Members of the Lagos State House of Assembly

Ladies and Gentle men

This presentation of the third full year budget of our Administration marks another critical milestone in the ongoing radical renewal and modernization of Lagos State.

Our disciplined and focussed budget implementation over the last two and a half years is responsible for the massive construction revolution evident throughout the state in new roads, bridges, classrooms, jetties, markets, water facilities, health facilities, sports facilities, courtrooms, street lights, rural projects and beautification projects among others.

We have seized every opportunity to create thousands of new jobs, sustained free and qualitative social services in key sectors like education and health; strengthened existing initiatives and redeveloped new ones to significantly enhance the safety of lives and property while utilizing micro-credit as a major instrument of poverty alleviation in an unprecedented manner.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable members, our Administration has rendered an account of stewardship to the electorate every hundred days since our assumption of office. This is in practical demonstration of our commitment to accountability in governance as well as a deliberate strategy to keep our people informed and involved, in order to ensure a continuous, and consistent improvement on our performance.

The 18th of January, 2009, marked our 600 days in office and it was the first quarterly rendering of account we gave to the public after the delivery of the Y2009 budget to this august assembly.

A major feature of this period has been the completion and handing over of a number of life changing projects, programmes and policies we promised our people at inception.

Some of the projects we delivered to the public during this period include the traffic grid lock improvement and re-engineering initiative on the outer Marina to link Ahmadu Bello Way; the traffic gridlock re-engineering initiative on the right turn at the descent of the Five Cowrie bridge; and the commissioning of the new city link boats operated by city link transit group in a public-private-partnership agreement with the Lagos State Government as part of our efforts to reduce the pressure on our roads through the maximization of our water ways.

During this quarter we completed the 2nd phase of the bar beach protection shoreline spanning 500 meters from the Akin Adesola street to the Adetokunboh Ademola street junction; completed and delivered for public use the second phase of the Ademola Adetokunboh road on Victoria Island in partnership with Eko Hotels Plc as well as completed and handed over to the tax payers the re-claimed, re-constructed and beautified Muri Okunola Park on Victoria Island.

We also completed and handed over the ultra modern and fully equipped Bola Tinubu Paediatric Complex and Diagnostic Centre at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH).

In the period under consideration we disbursed over ₦1 billion through the Eko Micro-Finance Initiative to enable 5000 indigent women and 4,500 graduates of our skill acquisition and empowerment centres commence new small scale businesses or expand existing ones. It was also at this time that we commenced the reclamation and restoration of Oshodi, which has now come to symbolize the new face of Lagos.

On the 28th of April, 2009, we sustained the tradition of rendering to the public an account of our stewardship over the previous four months. A significant feature of this quarter was the commemoration of the first anniversary of the bus rapid transit (BRT) Lite system; a period during which over 52 million passengers had been transported in the safe, comfortable and fast high capacity buses running on dedicated bus lanes.

In continuation of the transformation of our public transportation system, we procured 195 new air-conditioned buses to transform LAGBUS asset management limited into the largest public bus operator in West Africa while also commissioning 200 brand new corporate cabs operated by corporate cabs services limited as a public-private-partnership initiative. Another PPP initiative that came on stream in the transportation sector in this quarter is the Ebute-Ipakodo Ferry Service from Ikorodu to Marina operated by Metro Ferry Services Ltd.

During this quarter, we kicked off the pilot project of the closed circuit television (CCTV) to enhance the security of the state through comprehensive surveillance and monitoring by located cameras.

The Lagos State Security Trust Fund continued to wax stronger as we donated 10 armoured personnel carriers, 1000 AK 47 rifles and 2 million rounds of ammunition to enhance the crime-fighting capacity of the rapid response squad in addition to financially rewarding police officers who demonstrated uncommon courage on duty. In the same vein, we donated twelve operational vehicles to the Nigerian Prison Service to assist in the speedy dispensation of justice in Lagos State.

Some of the other accomplishments of this quarter include the completion and handing over of the Bourdillion, Alexander and Gerard roads in Ikoyi; completion and delivery of Montgomerry road, Aje road and Commercial Avenue all in Yaba; completion and delivery to the public of Ago Palace Way and expanded link bridge as well as the completion and handing over for public use of the waste Transfer Loading Station at Simpson along with 50 additional waste compactor trucks.

In the health sector, the 4th Eko Mission was a success with six open heart surgeries safely conducted with equipment fully owned by Lagos State. We also successfully hosted the 1st Lagos State International Climate Change Summit, which drew up a road map to guide Lagos State and Nigeria's response to the global environmental challenge.

Another milestone of this quarter was the payment of ₦5 billion as pension arrears to 5,575 teaching, non-teaching and Local Government pensioners and the establishment of the Lagos State Pension Commission to efficiently manage pension funds and ensure that retirees get their benefits on time.

Apart from successfully upgrading the Teslim Balogun Stadium to meet FIFA standards, we also successfully hosted the most spectacular and Eyo Festival in the history of the unique Adamu Orisha play to signal the readiness of our State for global tourism and its vast economic possibilities.

All of these activities were reflected in our 1st quarter budget performance of 67%. Although this was an improvement on our 1st quarter performance for the previous year, we were not satisfied but resolved to work even harder to achieve improved budgetary performance in subsequent quarters. Thus, our half year appraisal of the Y2009 budget revealed an overall performance of 70%.

This reflected concretely in the real economy and lives of our people resulting in creation of over 156,000 new jobs by the first half of the year. A breakdown of these new jobs shows that 6,114 health and education sector workers were employed at the lower levels; 52, 685 persons were directly employed into the civil service while 98,000 persons were employed indirectly either as sub-contractors or as employees of hundreds of construction sites across the state.

On the 6th of August, 2009, we rendered the quarterly performance of our 800 days in office to a cross section of youth representatives in the State. Incidentally this is a year in which our administration placed premium on the welfare of children, youth

and women as the cardinal plank of our poverty alleviation programme.

This year our administration created vacation jobs for 5000 students during the long holiday period enabling them to engage their time usefully and earn some pocket money to cushion the financial pressure on their parents and guardians.

As part of our efforts towards the expansion of opportunities and the diversification of our economy we are implementing an agriculture based youth empowerment scheme tagged Agric-YES.

The major objective of Agric-YES is to engage, equip and empower interested Lagos youths to become world-class agro-entrepreneurs. This is being achieved through a three-phased programme involving:

- ✓ A six-month intensive practical based training in poultry, aquaculture, horticulture, bee-keeping and Agric Business;
- ✓ A twelve-month internship on a commercial farm to gain experience using internationally accepted best-practices; and
- ✓ Settlement on a one hectare per graduate farm in established farm estate with financial as well as institutional support.

This new-age, laptop carrying agro-entrepreneurs are the future of agricultural production in Lagos State with access to latest technological advancements for food production, value addition and trade.

The project was conceived in the wake of urban youth unemployment as a form of social protection response and will contribute to employment generation, food security and economic development.

We re-launched the uniformed voluntary organizations such as the Boys' Scout, Girls' Guide, Red Cross and Man O' War in all our schools to restore the values of creativity, curiosity, healthy adventure and patriotic community service in our youth.

Other youth-oriented programmes successfully undertaken by our Administration include the re-introduction of the inter schools debate to inculcate the culture of healthy intellectual contest among the youth; establishment of Climate Change Clubs in schools to actively engage the youths in the battle for a healthy environment and the initiation of the school traffic advocacy programme to enlist the youths as positive change agents on our high ways.

This period marked the flag off of our aggressive drive to eradicate polio and other communicable diseases from Lagos State. Our successes in this regard have been acknowledged by the national primary health care agency.

We are committed to completely wiping out the incidence of polio in this state within the shortest possible time to ensure that our children grow up in good health to actualize their potentials for the benefit of Lagos State and Nigeria.

In addition to sustaining all our free health care programmes, particularly for children, women and the aged, we continue to single-mindedly pursue the speedy completion of our seven new 100-bed Maternal and Child Care Centres currently in different advanced stages of finishing in different parts of the state.

During this quarter, our administration successfully convened the 2nd Lagos State Education Summit, which afforded critical stakeholders in the sector an opportunity to brainstorm on challenges confronting education and suggesting far-reaching solutions to elevate the quality of education in the state.

I must in this respect thank members of this distinguished assembly for passing the vocation and technical education institutions law, which is already helping to strengthen this sphere of education as

a veritable tool for achieving our objectives as Africa's emergent Model Mega City.

Another significant achievement of our administration during this quarter was the expansion of our modern taxi scheme with the addition, through Public-Private-Partnership, of 1,255 new Taxis thus creating 1,255 new jobs mostly for young persons.

In a similar vein, critical stake holders enthusiastically endorsed the commencement of work on our revolutionary expansion of the Lagos-Badagry Expressway into a Ten-lane international highway. Our mobilization of the contractor to site as well as payment of compensation to owners of structures affected by the development is an indication of our commitment to this massive project that will open up the entire Badagry corridor to rapid development and elevate the economy of Lagos State to new heights.

We also recorded significant progress on our Digital Mapping and Geographical Information System (GIS) Project.

Through this equally path-breaking initiative, we are systematically capturing every inch of land in Lagos digitally; an accomplishment which will facilitate prompt documentation of land titles and assist in the efficient planning and deployment of services and utilities across the state. This project will significantly enhance the capacity of the state to provide infrastructure and create wealth for the benefit of the citizenry.

Our Administration has equally spared no effort to continually upgrade safety standards across sectors in the state.

The establishment of the Lagos State Safety Commission to regulate safety standards on public highways, construction sites, work places and schools among others will go a long way in mitigating the incidence of building collapse, pipeline explosion, road accidents and other avoidable disasters.

Our successful hosting of the Y2009 Federations Cup Finals is an indication of how far we have gone in restoring the glory of Lagos as a Centre of Sporting Excellence.

We equally demonstrated our commitment to increasing the avenues and opportunities for healthy recreation in the state through the construction and delivery of the kernel street recreation park in Surulere as well as on-going construction of new youth centres/recreation facilities at Imota, Agbowa, Mosan-Okunola, Ori-Ade, Ajara, Badagry, Ibeju, Oto-Awori and Mushin.

We equally demonstrated our methodical efficiency and effectiveness as an administration by our unrivalled preparedness as a secure and hospitable venue of the Y2009 FIFA under-17 football competition. The tournament has come and gone, and our visitors have received nothing short of our famous hospitality for which we must thank all members of the local organising committee, the volunteers and all the citizens who took ownership of this championship and ensured its success.

It is not surprising that during this period, the transformational strides of our administration was recognized and applauded both internationally and locally through such awards as Transport Planner of the Year 2009 by the Transport Planning Society of the United Kingdom; Award for good Governance at the year 2009 African Business Awards in London and the Cleanest Capital in the Federation by the Federal Ministry of Environment.

Equally significant is the success of Lagos State in hosting the largest annual conference ever of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) as well as the consensus at the mega event, irrespective of party affiliation or ethnic origin, that Lagos is a developmental pace setter in Nigeria today. With your support, we have simply forged ahead to work harder to justify the confidence of our people and to continuously raise the standards of excellence.

Accordingly, our y2009 3rd quarter budget review, covering the period, July 1st to September 31st, 2009, recorded an impressive overall performance of 75%.

Within the context of the 67% performance reported in the 1st and 2nd Quarters of the year, our cumulative gross actual budget performance at this period stood at 70%. This substantial budgetary performance was reflected in the continued aggressive provision of infrastructure development and delivery of qualitative social services across diverse sectors in our rural and urban areas. It was also a function of more effective supervision and greater diligence on the part of the public service and our development partners resulting in better performance despite inclement weather constraints.

Towards the close of the 3rd Quarter of the budget cycle, we carried out a sectoral re-ordering of resource allocation, in conjunction with this Honourable House to shift revenue utilization to the most critical areas of need. This will expectedly improve the performance of the Y2009 budget in the last quarter of the year.

If there was any more doubt that the faithful implementation of the budget has touched the lives of ordinary people and helped to strengthen the fabric of society, it would be found in the significant reduction of crime levels across the state to an unprecedented minimum as revealed by the crime statistics published in the 3rd Annual Report of the Security Trust Fund which showed that the indices of robbery, vehicle snatching and other violent crimes had dropped by 79.9% within the year.

Y2010 BUDGET – MACRO-ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

Distinguished Ladies And Gentlemen, while a lot of work has been done in our attempt to bridge the infrastructure gap and a lot of projects, too numerous to mention will be completed before the end of this year and in the first and subsequent quarters of next year such as schools, health facilities, roads, water supply facilities and so much more. We believe that we are now at the most challenging phase of our journey to a bright and rewarding future.

For too long, we seem to have evolved survival strategies for dealing with chaotic and unplanned living that we now seem afraid to approach orderly living predicated on law and order.

We are at the point where we must build the most enduring infrastructure. This is the infrastructure of the mind. This is the infrastructure that empowers people to seek new levels of excellence that demands new attitudes that commits to greater ideals.

We recognise that while the buildings, schools and roads can be easily pulled down and rebuilt, the human mind is the most difficult to rebuild, although it is the most enduring.

We have decided to start with ourselves. We have inaugurated a Ways & Means Committee of the State Executive Council and Permanent Secretaries to begin to review how we have operated in the public sector and to propose changes from those things that make our work inefficient and improve on those that make it more efficient.

For us, it is a journey and we have found the courage to take the first step. We will require the understanding and support of all members of the public for whose benefit we exist and on whose behalf we exercise public trust. From time to time, we will be announcing changes to policies that will take us nearer our destination and we look forward to your endorsement and compliance. The truth and reality is that whenever there is voluntary compliance, the cost of governance is significantly reduced.

Against the background of the foregoing performance review of the Y2009 budget, common sense and economic realities dictate that the Y2010 budget must necessarily be a budget of consolidating the achievements of the last three years. Of course, Lagos does not exist in isolation and our budget will always be implemented within the context of global and national economic realities.

Some of the contending variables in this respect include the global economic recession from which the world is gradually emerging; the attendant impact on the price of oil, the mainstay of our economy; the implication for foreign investment in our economy and the reverberations of the global financial turmoil on

critical sectors of our economy as reflected in the current crises in the banking sector and the stock market.

It is equally too early yet to predict the sustainable impact of the commendable post-amnesty scenario in the Niger-Delta on the country's long term oil revenues or that of the proposed deregulation of the oil sector.

Taking all of these factors into account, we have predicated the Y2010 budget on a bench mark oil price of \$50 per barrel, a state GDP growth rate of 8% and 20% interest rate on Naira-Denominated loans.

Despite prevalent macro-economic constraints, the state cannot afford to waver on its commitment to massive investment in infrastructure to create jobs, improve the investment climate, alleviate poverty and sustain economic recovery and growth. The conventional wisdom being demonstrated across the globe is that massive public sector spending on infrastructure is a critical factor in lifting distressed economies out of recession.

We intend to continue along the lines to maintain social equilibrium and keep the economy going with a focus on completing the existing projects. Against the background of the already stated global and domestic pressures on public revenues, we will necessarily in Y2010 place greater premium on Public Private Partnerships (PPP) as a viable option for funding infrastructure expansion and renewal.

Luckily, the awareness dawns on us more acutely everyday that the contemporary world is indeed a compact global neighbourhood.

Therefore, in different parts of the world in which i have been privileged to interact with key public and private sectors leaders, there is a consciousness of the strides we are taking in Lagos State and the eagerness to key into the immense investment opportunities being thrown up. Of course, this is not because anyone wants to do us a favour but it is in the nature of highly

mobile global finance capital to move to areas of potentially higher return on investment.

It is therefore our collective responsibility and challenge to reiterate, at every point, to prospective investors the incomparable advantages of helping to transform our infrastructure challenges into profitable economic opportunities in diverse sectors including rail, road and water transportation; housing and real estate development; environmental renewal and waste management; recreation, tourism and hospitality as well as water and power supply to name a few.

However, we also realize that our salvation lies within our hands and our state through the PPP Office will take the lead in promoting a Nigerian owned economy.

Our history has shown that we have not owned enough of the business opportunities that exist here and we have kept so much investible capital in Europe and other western economies to our detriment.

We will therefore be promoting investment portfolio opportunities for Nigerians in many of our developmental projects through the PPP Office as a way of diversifying investment choices beyond the traditional basket. We are convinced that this is time to bring back all that capital to work in this economy for our people.

Y2010 BUDGET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

We remain optimistic and confident that, despite the current dismal global economic scenario, Lagos is firmly on the path to becoming a major economic success story of our time and the Y2010 budget is a critical bridge to the attainment of this goal. Accordingly, the following key goals and strategies will drive the 2010 budget:

- Aggressive Revenue Generation
- Completion of on-going infrastructure Projects

- Maintenance of existing Infrastructural facilities and public utilities
- Human capital and institutional reform In the state's civil service
- Mitigation of global warming through greening, beautification programme and other initiatives
- Teachers' welfare enhancement
- Enhancement of community based Vocational education
- Sustenance of the state's free Healthcare services
- Assistance/empowerment of Farmers/fishermen for food production and processing
- Expansion/construction of new water Schemes

PROPOSED Y2010 BUDGET

Mr. Speaker and distinguished members of the house, it is my pleasure and honor to formally present to you highlights of the y2010 budget, which as i earlier hinted is aptly tagged **BUDGET OF CONSOLIDATION**.

The Y2010 budget will ensure the completion and consolidation of all on-going projects/programmes while only viable new initiatives will be undertaken. For this purpose the budget has been prepared on the basis of a medium term expenditure framework. The overall budget size for 2010 is **N429.596 billion** which represents an increase of 5.3% over the Y2009 budget.

HIGHLIGHTS OF Y2010 BUDGET

The total revenue projection of the y2010 budget is estimated at **₦307.027 billion**. This comprises internally generated revenue (igr) estimate of **₦204.000 billion**; dedicated revenue estimate of **₦20.027 billion**; federal transfer projection of **₦78 billion** and extraordinary revenue estimate of **₦5 billion**.

Recurrent expenditure is estimated at **₦178.818 billion** made up of total personnel cost of **₦55.079 billion** and total overhead cost of **₦123.739 billion**.

The detailed components of the total overhead cost are broken down as follows:

• Overhead cost	-	₦67.002 billion
• Subventions	-	₦18.977 billion
• Transfer to other funds	-	₦0.050 billion
• Public debt charge	-	₦17.683 billion
• Dedicated expenditure	-	₦20.027 billion

Capital receipts for the y2010 budget is estimated at **₦28.372 billion** and this is composed of the following sub heads:

➤ Other capital receipts	-	₦23.101 billion
➤ Matching grants	-	₦5.021 billion
➤ Investment income	-	₦0.250 billion

The budget has a capital expenditure estimate of **₦250.778 billion** with the following components:

➤ Core capital	-	₦209.207 billion
➤ Capital development	-	₦22.804 billion
➤ Matching grants	-	₦ 5.021 billion
➤ Counterpart funding	-	₦5.246 billion
➤ Special expenditure	-	₦ 8.500 billion

The sectoral demarcation of the Y2010 budget has been aligned to the standardized format set by international development agencies such as the World Bank and the IMF. The sectoral allocation of the budget is as follows:

➤	Public order and safety	-	₦ 10.550 bn
(2.46%)			
➤	Education	-	₦ 60.041 bn
(13.98%)			
➤	Health	-	₦ 30.219bn
(7.03%)			
➤	General public service	-	₦ 105.607bn
(24.58%)			
➤	Economic affairs	-	₦ 145.160bn
(33.79%)			
➤	Environmental protection	-	₦ 28.710 bn
(6.68%)			
➤	Housing and community amenities	-	₦ 36.917 bn
(8.59%)			
➤	Recreation, culture and religion	-	₦ 9.375 bn
(2.18%)			
➤	Social protection	-	₦ 3.018 bn
(0.70%)			

BROAD POLICY THRUSTS

Embedded in these sectoral figures and the attendant percentages are certain distinct policy thrusts and initiatives, which must be clearly enunciated for a better appreciation of the budget.

First and foremost as i had earlier stated is a commitment to ensuring that no project or programme is abandoned while managing the state's finances for optimum benefit to the populace.

Again, our emphasis in the maintenance of public order and safety goes beyond simply combating crime to taking more people off the streets by creating jobs, alleviating poverty and reducing the desperation that feeds crime.

We are already reaping in this budget the benefit of our previous massive investment in key agencies and sectors. Our sustained investment in agencies such as the Lagos State Waste Management Authority (LAWMA), Lagos State Water Corporation

(LAWC), and the Lagos State Advertising Agency (LASAA) has enhanced their capacity to run on their own strength therefore actually reducing overhead costs on these agencies in the Y2010 budget.

The benefit is that we are able to shift the strategic focus in the funding of our environmental renewal efforts to awareness campaigns for attitudinal change that address the root causes of environmental degradation.

Furthermore, the sectoral allocation reflects the immense success we have recorded in our Public Private Partnership schemes in different areas including the waste to wealth projects, the site and service schemes of the New Towns Development Authority (NTDA) and the development of new housing schemes by the Ministry of Housing.

The injection of private sector funds in these key sectors has reduced the need for direct government funding thus enabling much more objectives to be achieved outside the budget. But for these initiatives, we would have been confronted with the unavoidable imperative of a larger budget size with the attendant challenge of funding capacity.

We are also placing greater emphasis in the Y2010 budget in improving the quality of life in our rural areas particularly through agriculture based micro-finance funding under the existing framework of the Lagos State Micro Finance Initiative (LASMI).

The objective is to boost the rural economy, create rural based employment and encourage more people to stay within their environment, which will enjoy greater local economic buoyancy. Another unique feature of the budget is our creation of a special grant for scientific research and development to encourage local talent particularly in our higher institutions and help evolve home grown solutions to our peculiar challenges.

One of the most critical initiatives of this budget is the creation of investment incentive packages to boost economic growth and mitigate the liquidity crunch in the economy. This basket of

incentives will include bringing down some of our rates to reduce, for instance, the cost of land transactions, planning fees and mortgage rates with a view to stimulating domestic investment both locally and through the repatriation of funds from the diaspora.

An important component of the incentive package is in the area of real estate where we have now made it possible for legal occupants of housing estates in the state to possess legal title deeds and not just letters of allocation.

With these documents, poor and middle class citizens can now have access to the requisite collateral to raise credit, plan their future and lift themselves out of poverty. In the next weeks and months to come over 20,000 units of housing occupied by our people will be issued these title deeds.

Our slashing of mortgage rates and reduction of professional fees will facilitate this process of democratising access to credit and phenomenally expanding opportunities for wealth creation.

Mr. Speaker; honourable members, a necessary condition for achieving the objectives of this budget and indeed that of Lagos State as a Model Mega City is the renewal of the soft infrastructure of the hearts and minds of our people.

There is a set of habits, orientations and attitudes necessary to maintain not only the physical infrastructure but the very idea of civilized co-existence in a modern community. Unless a critical mass of the population instinctively imbibe these qualities, society will ceaselessly degenerate to chaos and anarchy. This is why we are committed to initiating and sustaining massive attitudinal re-orientation campaigns to back up our on-going radical modernization of infrastructure and social service delivery in Lagos State.

One of the areas which such awareness campaign will focus on in the next budget cycle is that of deliberate population control as a necessary mechanism of poverty alleviation. We have now

reached a stage where it is no longer avoidable to ask how many people Lagos State can meaningfully employ and sustain.

Our State is faced with a daily influx of people from all over the country who want to take advantage of the opportunities of an economy that works. But the reality is that persistent uncontrolled population growth worsens the problem of poverty and negates government's efforts to improve the quality of life for majority of the people. As individuals we therefore cannot claim the right to procreate without limit.

Unless individuals exercise self restraint by properly spacing and limiting the number of their offspring, unduly large families become an unbearable burden on the entire society. This is an issue that we must frontally confront and which i will continue to address in greater detail in the days ahead.

I am happy to announce that we are also in the closing phases of concluding the residents identify card scheme that will increase our capacity to plan the delivery of social amenities to our people.

CONCLUSION

Mr Speaker, Distinguished Members of the House, Ladies and Gentlemen, we live in truly challenging but also very exciting times.

I acknowledge the path-finding work of the previous administration of which i was a proud member and the efforts it has taken since 1999 to get us to where we are.

At this period of our national life, i remain all too aware of the promise that our Party, the Action Congress represents as the model of progressive thinking and democratic content. I understand that it is the burden of our generation to deliver that promise with the support and guidance of our leaders.

I understand also that it is only those who are strong, determined, resourceful, resilient and uncompromising in their commitment to

excellence that can succeed and thrive in times like this. I have no doubt that the enterprising people of Lagos have the courage, ingenuity, self-confidence and will to actualize the immense potentials of this state so abundantly blessed by nature and God Almighty.

It will take a lot of hard work. It will require a great deal of sacrifice. It will demand tremendous individual and collective discipline. But i have no doubt that as a state we will, in the shortest possible time, realize our manifest destiny and rank among the most stable, secure and prosperous mega cities on earth.

On my part and that of our Administration, i solemnly pledge that we will continue to show the example and on the path of excellence we shall neither fail nor falter.

Thank you. God bless you.

Long live Lagos State. Long live Nigeria.

Eko O Ni Baje!