

CHARGE BY HIS EXCELLENCY, GOVERNOR YAHAYA BELLO OF KOGI STATE TO COMMISSIONER NOMINEES AND ALL CATEGORIES OF AIDES AND GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONARIES

1. I welcome everyone to this swearing-in ceremony. We will keep it brief. We give all thanks and praises to the Almighty God for seeing us into our 2nd Term in Office. Now it is time to work hard to justify our mandate. In due time we will bring other category of aides on board, but the commissioners we will swear in today will form the nucleus of our Administration.
2. Hopefully, you should be there for the next four years, but change, as we all know, is the only constant in life.
3. I congratulate those of you who made it on Monday as Commissioners-Designate. If you are new to the appointment, it is because we found you worthy in learning, but above all in character.
4. If you were with us in the 1st term, we reappointed you because you proved worthy of a second chance but also because the exigencies of time and politics, especially the zoning formulae applicable in your various constituencies, permitted it. There are some of your former colleagues who also deserve this second chance but the circumstances were not as accommodating as in your cases, so be humble.
5. The honourable commissioners who we have just sworn-in will form the nucleus of our government. You will join me and the Deputy Governor to form the next Cabinet along with the Secretary to the State Government and other aides we may wish to receive into the Kogi State Executive Council from time to time.
6. In a short while, we will arrange a formal induction to familiarise you with our philosophy of governance and our roadmap. I will therefore limit my words to you now to an informal Charge on how to operate in our New Direction Administration as we move to the Next Level to Do More.
1. **Zero Sectionalism.** Your most cardinal sin against this administration will be the practice of sectionalism in all its forms. Tribalism, nepotism, clan, class or religious sentiments as the actuator of any action in your office will get you fired. We have spent the last four years dismantling the division and distrust long engendered amongst our people by these evils and those who practiced them and we will never countenance the same in our appointees, neither will we retain anyone practicing them in our midst. Take the time to familiarise yourselves with our EBIGO programme and spare yourself a lot of grief.
2. **The New Direction Blueprint.** By the grace of God, I am the Governor, not any of you. The New Direction Blueprint is my roadmap for accelerated development of Kogi State in all her constituencies and I charge you to study it, understand it and implement it. The 5 thematic areas will remain but we are pulling out 4 former sub-thematic areas and making them full-fledged in this 2nd Term. These are Human Capital Development, Cooperation and Integration in Kogi State (EBIGO Agenda), Security and Agriculture. Bring your suggestions to the table and they will be given fair consideration, but run my Blueprint and not your agenda if you want things to remain fine with you.

3. **Open Doors.** Governance is about the people and Government exists for them. As high ranking government officials you must remain accessible to all the people, both in your office and in your constituencies. If you succeed in office but we discover you are at loggerheads with your people at home or missing in action at the grassroots, you have failed in a critical part of your duty by our estimation. Reach out, be accessible, approachable and serve the people with humility.
4. **Open Government:** Government must be as open and transparent as possible. All of us must be open to endless scrutiny by those we serve. Opacity and cult-like secrecy is how skeletons get into cupboards in the conduct of government business, and it is expressly forbidden, so avoid it. The Ministry of Information and Communications will deploy the Kogi State Open Governance and Accountability System (KOGAS) for live feedback to and from the public. Every MDA must get on the platform which my Office will monitor directly through the Chief of Staff with weekly status analysis by the Blueprint Team.
5. **Fiscal Responsibility.** This is part of the Open Doors philosophy. We have developed robust Financial Transparency laws and regulations over the last 4 years. Let them guide you to embrace probity and accountability as well as thriftiness with public resources, especially money. The anti-corruption and financial crimes agencies have scrutinised us following petitions by those who feel so inclined but have found nothing incriminating in us. None of you is permitted to ruin our clean record with acts of corruption or moral turpitude. I will not take it kindly with anyone who dares.
6. **Funding Governance.** You all know that government never has enough money to fund all that it has planned for the people. It means government must find resources elsewhere. Money follows ideas and you have been chosen as people of ideas because you convinced us that you are innovative and enterprising. This appointment is your chance to prove it. Government will try to release appropriated funds to your ministry as much as is practicable, but you must network in your sector to fund the Blueprint relative to your office. Your ability to attract outside funding for your assignment is a key performance indicator and carries a lot of marks in your rating. Woo the Ministries, Departments and Agencies of the Federal Government which correspond to your office and activate all areas of partnership and support. Look to international donor agencies and develop functional Public Private Partnerships and Foreign Direct Investments. Do all of this in compliance with global best practices and the principles of cost-effectiveness.
7. Once more I felicitate with you on your appointment.
8. Good luck.

YAHAYA BELLO

Governor of Kogi State

29th January, 2020.