

**BEING TEXT OF THE INAUGURAL SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY, ALHAJI YAHAYA ADOZA BELLO ON THE OCCASION OF HIS SWEARING-IN AS 4TH EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KOGI STATE ON WEDNESDAY, 27TH JANUARY, 2016.**

Protocols

His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, The President, Federal Republic of Nigeria.

His Excellency, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, The Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria.

His Excellency, Dr. Olubukola Saraki, The President, Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

His Excellency, Hon. Yakubu Dogara, The Speaker, House of Representatives.

His Lordship, Hon. Justice Mahmud Mohammed, GCON, The Chief Justice of Nigeria.

His Excellency, Chief John Odigie Oyejgun, The National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress.

His Excellency, Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu, The National Leader of the All Progressives Congress.

Your Excellencies, My Brother Governors here present or represented.

His Excellency, Rt. Honourable Momoh Jimoh Lawal, The Honourable Speaker, Kogi State House of Assembly.

My Lord, Honourable Justice Nasiru Ajanah, The Chief Judge of Kogi State.

Royal Fathers and Revered Custodians of Our Traditional Institutions.

Members of the Diplomatic Corps.  
Our Distinguished Guests from Far and Near.

My Dearly Beloved People of Kogi State.  
All other Protocols deemed as duly observed.

Welcome!

It is with great Joy that I receive you all to the warm hospitality of Kogi State of Nigeria today. Kogi is the Confluence State, the Geographical Bridge between every Nigerian and his Compatriot. You are indeed welcome.

Life is a precious thing and we cannot earn or own it. It is given to us freely. We often take it for granted, failing to recognize its importance or significance. Should it not instead instill an immense sense of gratitude in our hearts to the One Who created life and gave it to us? "It is God Who brought you out of your mothers' wombs knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and minds so that you may be grateful" The Quran 16:78. Say "O Allah, owner of Kingdoms. You give your Kingdom to whom you desire. And you take your Kingdom from whom you desire. You honour whom you desire. And you humble whom you desire. In your hand all is GOOD. Indeed you are over all things COMPETENT." Quoran 3 vs 26.

I stand here today a grateful man. I am grateful to:

Almighty God, the Eternal One who led a young boy, fatherless while still a baby to this momentous day of my Swearing-In as the Governor of this Great State, and her humble Servitor.

Alhaji Bello Ipemida Ochi, my father, whose evergreen memories and legacies remain till today despite his death early in my life. Hajiya Hauwau Oziohu Bello, my model mother. Oziandu Obanyi, your hand rocked my cradle, and you still rock my world. Despite the anguish of young widowhood, your values steadied me through the turbulence of youth and years of self-discovery. All my siblings, especially Prof. Iliyasu Bello Ohiani, my elder brother, who became the father that I know.

My family. My dear wives and children were Wonderful. In particular, Hajiya Rashida Bello followed me on this chequered journey with a devotion and sacrifice that is astounding.

President Muhammadu Buhari, the one man who epitomizes the Personal Discipline, Rugged Determination and Honest Discretion I intend to model as Governor of Kogi State.

Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu. The APC National Leader is arguably the most singularly successful Nigerian Politician of this Democratic Dispensation. His Vision has given wings to those of many of his followers, including ourselves.

Prince Abubakar Audu, the Late Icon whose foresight and doggedness paved the way for the Victory we are celebrating today. Continue to rest in peace my Leader.

My Core Team, especially the Progressive Youth of Kogi State led by my right-hand man, Edward Onoja. Their doggedness and forthrightness brought home to me in a very personal way that popular line 'Though tribes and tongues may differ, in brotherhood we stand...' They are the apostles of this broad-minded Change.

The APC Family. The APC in Kogi State wanted Change for their dear State and worked hard to bring it. The APC at the National Level provided the Platform.

The entire People of Kogi State. Irrespective of who you are or where you stood during the elections, Na God Win. We are all united today, celebrating the outcome. My People, you are my one big Constituency, and I am responsible for, and to each and every one of you.

Nigeria has a rich diversity of traditions, cultures and history but it is instructive that in searching for a philosophy for this New Direction my Team and I did not have to go very far to locate the perfect response for our times:

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to reiterate what President Muhammadu Buhari said in his celebrated Swearing-In Speech on May 29, 2015: "I belong to everybody and I belong to nobody!"

This quote is a complete worldview which defines the PURPOSE and METHODOLOGY of my Administration, and sets an AGENDA OF INCLUSIVENESS, which I am determined will characterize my tenure.

In this single sentence, Mr. President summarized the restorative force of the CHANGE ideology with which our great party, the APC, has swept Nigeria. I now declare it our guiding principle for fair action and equitable governance in Kogi State.

My Administration shall exist for the sole purpose of serving the superseding interests of the people of Kogi State to the very best of its capabilities. We also undertake to never lend our capacities to servicing the avarice of anyone or group—whether from Kogi State or elsewhere.

There is no greater evil than Corruption and nothing champions that evil more than Impunity...Corruption and Impunity made sure our people repeatedly arrived at a promised future and found it bereft of substance, or the promised better life.

Let it be recorded today that future generations will not be given reason to count the incoming Administration among those who reveled in Corruption or Impunity. We will be different by the Grace of God. We must and will be that generation of Leaders who made the entirety of Kogi's Resources work for the entirety of Kogi's People.

Accordingly, I hereby declare and affirm that the Yahaya Bello Administration will have ZERO TOLERANCE for Corruption and Impunity. I will lead Kogi State by honest and humble example. So help me God.

To reinforce our commitment to accountability, the incoming Administration will employ technology and a multilayered system of checks and balances to block all leakages in our financial processes and improve our wealth creation and retention capacities.

The rule of law is key to effective governance. We intend to work hand in hand with the Judicial Arm of Government and the Legislature to deliver the best governance possible to Kogi State. In this regard, we shall be guided by both legislations and binding judicial decisions.

Peace is key for prosperity. The sudden events that culminated in my emergence as Governor are beyond any mortal man. The sudden death of our leader, Prince Abubakar Audu remains a great mystery. This Administration shall liaise with the Kogi State House of Assembly for legislation to immortalise him in some meaningful way. I therefore extend my hand of brotherhood to all and sundry.

In the course of this journey we met and interacted with families, kindreds, clans, hamlets, villages, towns and cities, traversing the length and breadth of Kogi State and the picture we came away with is a depressing one. Everywhere, our People live in deprivation despite our abundant natural endowments.

The statistics as they apply to Kogi State are not rosy. As we step into Office today, we are at once excited and tremulous. Excited at the great opportunities but tremulous at the massive challenges. One thing is clear, positive and decisive action must be taken quickly to rescue Kogi State. We are ready for action.

We are conscious that to fail in this task is to fail in everything else. But take it from me, we will not fail because, apart from our preparations and resolve, God and good is on our side.

We have conceived a socio-economic Blueprint that we trust God will rapidly develop our State and radically empower our People. The said Blueprint will rank as a sort of Marshall Plan for rebuilding Kogi State on every index of Development.

Under this Plan, Education and Health Infrastructure, State of the Art Security Coverage, Roads, Rural Water Schemes, Farm and Agricultural Communes, heavy Investments in Solid Minerals, Artisanal Mining Collectives, repositioning of Kogi State as a preferred tourist destination, etc. are projected to play lead, often overlapping, roles.

We will run this Blueprint along with Civil Service reforms to change the orientation of our workers and improve their productivity. To show that we are ready to work and not just talking, the Blueprint contains 'Action Plans' for developing each sector. We expect that we will see begin to see increase in our Internally Generated Revenue.

For ease of monitoring by Kogi People my Team and I have distributed our Projects into the 100-Day Accomplishments, the First Year Results, the Halfway Marks and the Final Milestones. When our full Blueprint is published, anyone can predict where we will be, developmentally, in 100 days, and after each year of our Administration.

Security is a huge concern across Kogi State as we step into Office – in particular the dastardly and twin scourges of armed robbery and kidnapping. I therefore acknowledge with pleasure the Commissioner of Police and Heads of every Security Agency in Kogi State. Gentlemen, I shall be meeting with you soon to fashion out modalities to rid Kogi State of Insecurity. Please have forceful and actionable proposals for me when we meet. I promise you every support that this Administration can give.

Nothing engenders skepticism, even cynicism, in the citizen than lackluster leadership of the sort that we have experienced in the Confluence State. I am aware that with some notable exceptions successive Administrations have posted largely unimpressive performances. The cumulative effect is that the average Kogi Person has developed an acute distrust of Government.

We cannot succeed, in our Blueprint or anything else, without the co-operation of our People and our friends. Co-operation is difficult if trust is withheld. My people, we shall build rapport, and by delivering on our proposed array of people-centered projects, we shall earn your trust. I would appreciate, and I ask for nothing, other than that you give me the benefit of the doubt as we set off. Let the taste of this pudding be in the eating.

We know salaries have not been paid to some of our Civil Servants for some months now. We propose to commence paying as promptly as possible while implementing strategies to gradually defray the arrears. While doing this we shall count on the understanding of all the good people of Kogi State.

We shall immediately commence consultations with all stakeholders to get the buy-in of every progress-minded individual into every agenda that we have designed to move Kogi State in the New Direction. I see this as a Challenge and I am resolved to win your trust.

Today is indeed an auspicious day. We will not fail to appreciate those who made it possible. My predecessor, Captain Idris Ichalla Wada, has been most gracious. We appreciate your service sir. The Transition Committees on both sides have acted with dignity and cooperation. We thank you. The Inauguration Committee has really worked hard to make this day a success. Thank you very much indeed.

Change has come to Kogi State. I may be the Torchbearer, and Custodian of it, but you, the great united people of Kogi State, are its Owners and Proprietors. Let us arise together, take our Collective Destiny in our hands and go forth excitedly to chart our New Direction. Kogi, THIS CHANGE IS YOURS.

Distinguished Listeners, this speech is an overview, it is not intended to say everything that we have to say, or plan to do, in Government. That being the case, I hasten to conclude.

God            bless            The            Federal            Republic            of            Nigeria.

God            bless            Kogi            State            of            Nigeria.

God bless you.

Thank you for listening.