

**AN ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM STATE CHIEF (DR) GODSWILL OBOT AKPABIO (CON) ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE 2015 BUDGET PROPOSALS TO AKWA IBOM STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

The Right Honourable Speaker  
Honourable Principal Members  
Honourable Members of Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly

**PREAMBLE:**

I have come here today not only to address this distinguished Assembly on our plans for fiscal year 2015, but also to pay tribute to the Honourable members of this House of Assembly for their historic support to my administration all these years. Conventional wisdom knows that it takes two wings for a bird to fly. No matter the strength of an eagle it cannot fly on only one wing. The good people of Akwa Ibom State and I know that if the Legislature did not provide the other wing to support the “Executive wing”, Akwa Ibom State would not have soared into the glorious orbit of uncommon transformation.

We appreciate the Hon. Speaker, Right Hon. Sam Ikon and the entire leadership of this Honourable House of Assembly for providing vision, purpose, direction and motivation for developmental legislation in this Chamber. We appreciate all members of this great Assembly for lending their hands and souls to the struggle to transform our state. The last seven and a half years have been a time of dramatic transformation and you have all risen to every challenge of making our social fabric stronger, our people healthier, our society safer and more prosperous, and

providing state-of-the-arts infrastructures for all Akwa Ibom people and foreign investors who need superb investment destination our.

I am conscious that this is my valedictory Budget Speech in this Hallowed Chambers. Looking back I can affirm that as the Executive Governor of this State I have taken every action to give the good people of our state the tools and conditions to build a new Akwa Ibom State founded on love, brotherhood and unity. I have stayed on the course of the values, which define the Akwa Ibom promise, and we have turned this state into a veritable specimen of peace and development.

I leave you with three challenges today. One, we must all bury our differences as a people and fight to sustain the tempo of development encapsulated in the uncommon transformation of our state. Two, we must all ensure that the ills which constituted a clog in the wheels of our development are never allowed to rear their heads again in this blessed land of promise. Three, we must acknowledge that the Akwa Ibom man has acquired a new status and greater esteem in our country and we must always remember that we are light bearers and pace setters for other Nigerians to follow and emulate.

The race we have run together has indeed been exciting and we have been accelerating the process towards ending this tenure in an amazing crescendo, which we intend to hand over the baton to the incoming administration in good form. Let those who will succeed us bear witness and let history note that we have invested the resources of this State on those infrastructures and projects critical to the emergence of the state as a major player in the nation's political economy.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, this budget seeks to build on the successes and achievements recorded so far. We intend to complete on-going projects and use the budget proposals to build a

strong bridge between my administration and the incoming administration such that the uncommon transformation, which we have so energetically pursued, will be sustained, and that; our labours will not be in vain.

Before I outline the 2015 Budget, let me use this opportunity to highlight our journey so far.

## **2007 – 2014 HIGHLIGHTS/ACHIEVEMENTS**

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, when I assumed Office as Governor of this great State, I promised that “our mandate is a torch which shall illuminate the path of development, empowerment, education, social justice and infrastructural renaissance ... let me assure you that God’s will is truly done in Akwa Ibom State, and the benefits will be good governance and economic prosperity. We shall put in place an administration that will foster unity, love, engender prosperity, and harmonious co-existence. Let me affirm my mission statement and place on record our determination to steer the Akwa Ibom ship from where His Excellency, Obong Victor Attah anchors, to its final destination that our indigenes will burst forth from shackles of tribalism, subservience, pettiness, blackmail, character assassination, inferiority complex and poverty to a fulfilled, peaceful, virile and united Akwa Ibom State ...” That was my mandate. It translated into a breath-taking, life transforming, revolutionary and nationally-acclaimed infrastructures and programmes that are bound to take the state to the land of fulfillment.

I am glad to announce that I never abandoned the projects and programmes initiated by my predecessor. Indeed I have vigorously executed most of them. These include:

- The Ibom International Airport, complete with Hangar and Maintenance facilities. The first aircraft, Arik Airline named Augustine, with registration No 5N-MJO touched down on that

historic day, Wednesday September 23, 2009 at precisely 2:11 p.m. with tumultuous jubilations by a mammoth crowd of Akwa Ibom people and residents.

- Independent Power Plant, located at Ikot Abasi, which has been completed, and the completion of gas supply at Esit Eket for full take-off.
- The completion of infrastructure and commencement of classes at the Akwa Ibom University of Science and Technology (AKUTECH) which is now a multi-campus University- the Akwa Ibom State University, AKSU, Mkpato Enin.
- Provision of potable water supply to all the local government headquarters and other towns in the State.
- Provision of electricity to most of the villages in the State.
- Completion of Le-Meridien Ibom Hotels and Golf Resorts - at Nwaniba.
- Construction of some Ring Roads in Uyo Metropolis.
- Mr Speaker and Honourable Members, in the 2014 Budget Speech that I presented to this hallowed Chambers, which was christened Budget of Actualization, I mentioned my actualized projects and programmes which we are all eye-witnesses to.

These actualized projects and programmes are all summed up in what we know today as 'The Uncommon Transformation'. Please, permit me to mention some of them:

- Massive Road Rehabilitation and Construction throughout the State - 450 roads amounting to over 1,400km.

- Free Education Revolution – free and compulsory, renovation of schools and facilities.
- Construction of e-Library
- Construction of Business and Entertainment Centre-Ibom Tropicana-Tourism Industry
- Transformation of Uyo Metropolis – with water fountains, remodeling of roundabouts, gardens and fly-overs-urban beautification.
- Construction of underground drainage system
- Construction of Ibom Sports Park – which includes an Olympic-size Stadium
- Construction of Specialist and General Hospitals
  - Accreditation of School of Health Technology, Etinan; Schools of Midwifery at Uyo, Oron and Ituk Mbang
  - Expansion of State drugs storage facilities in Uyo and confiscation and destruction of fake and counterfeit drugs worth ₦10m.
- Introduction of free health-care programmes - for children five years and under, expectant mothers and the elderly, Immunization programmes etc.
- Construction of the new Governor's Lodge
- Comprehensive Rural Electrification Scheme
- Housing Development Programmes

- Completion of the Construction of Timber and Lorry Park at Ifa Ikot Okpon, Uyo.
- Construction and relocation of Federal Prisons, Ikot Ekpene.
- Construction of Ikot Ekpene City Plaza.
- Renovation of State Liaison Office, Abuja.
- Construction of Phase II Market Stalls at Urua Akpan Andem.
- Renovation of Fire Service Stations at Oron and Ikot Ekpene.
- Agriculture Development Programmes
  - Perimeter fencing, Landscaping, street lighting and drainage channels constructed at the 540,000 day-old-chicks per month modern poultry hatchery complex at Mbiaya Uruan; etc.
- Improved Security – patrol vehicles, armoured personal carriers, gunboats, “Operation Thunder “and “Quick Response Squad”
- Improved Workers welfare
- Development of Ibaka Deep Sea-port
- Human Capital and Youth Development
- Introduction of Innovative Micro-Credit Scheme
- Construction of State-of-the-art Governor’s Office

- Construction of State-of-the-art Banquet Hall at the Government House
- The new Deputy Governor's Lodge
- Construction of a 4-point hotel at Ikot Ekpene
- Improved Women Affairs and Social Welfare
- Provision of relief materials/cash to victims of flood, fire, ocean surge and landslide in the state.
- Joint field tracing exercises between Abia/Akwa Ibom States boundary.
- Settlement of displaced persons in Boundary dispute areas.
- Improved transportation infrastructures, database for transport information system and automated Road and Maritime transport registration.
- Better motor parks management and control of tricycle operators.
- Renovation and construction of Quarters for Judge's and Magistrate's.
- Youth empowerment and development in sports and other social activities.
- Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government have been improved upon through procurement of office furniture, equipment, training, recruitment, promotions, awards and other service incentives.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT/CHIEFTAINCY MATTERS

The Local Government and Chieftaincy Ministry has two main functions: Supervising activities of the 31 local governments in the State and processing chieftaincy recognitions. The latter is crucial to the maintenance and preservation of the culture of the people and ensuring peace and harmony among the citizenry. Steps taken to improve local government administration include:

- Provision of modern ambulances to all the 31 LGAs;
- Procurement of Prado Jeeps and back up Hilux vans to all Paramount Rulers in the State;
- Free medical checkups for Paramount Rulers;
- Payment of ₦2billion as severance gratuity to political office holders for the period 1999-2002 and 2003-2007.
- Donation of ₦20million each to the Paramount Rulers of Ini; Ika and Eastern Obolo, for the reconstruction of their palaces;
- Distribution of 31 graders and 31 Hilux patrol vehicles to all the LGAs;
- Procurement and distribution of Yaris Toyota cars to all Clan Heads in the State;
- Upward review of stipends for traditional rulers in the state as well as;
- Capacity building of traditional rulers through seminars and conferences

## **9,999 CAROL NIGHTS**

One of the defining attributes of this administration has been our reliance on God. As a way of celebrating God for all His mercies to us as a people we conceived the idea of a choral night to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. This event encompasses all the nooks and crannies of our state. In doing this we broke the Guinness World Record. The record was, hitherto, made when 7,514 singers at the Bob Jones University in South Carolina sang carols in 2004. It is always a pulsating night of history and it began in December 26, 2008 and has become a yearly ritual.

The 9,999 Christmas Carol festivals has helped in cementing the creed of love in the State and I hope this will be sustained by incoming administrations.

For this and other projects we have garnered honours, encomiums and accolades – International, National, Academic/Professional Awards, Media and others. These have been succinctly outlined. There are other services rendered which are not noticeable now but will soon be made manifest.

For instance, there are international negotiations going on for industrialization to thrive in the State.

The structures put on ground for posterity are not evanescent but things that will stand the test of time.

Therefore, as the duty of my office demands and in accordance with section 121(1) of the 1999 Constitution, I respectfully present to you, with great hope and expectation, the Estimates of the Revenues and Expenditures of Akwa Ibom State Government for the 2015 fiscal year. However, I shall briefly review the 2014 Budget before I delve into the next year's budget.

## REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE OF THE 2014 BUDGET

Mr. Speaker, a total of ~~N~~498.5 billion was approved for 2014 fiscal year made up as follows:

Recurrent Expenditure	-	<del>N</del> 74.24 billion
Capital Expenditure	-	<del>N</del> 333.00 billion
Consolidated Revenue Fund Charges	-	<del>N</del> 91.30 billion
Total	=	<del>N</del> 498.54 billion

As at September 2014, the actual Recurrent Revenue collected was ~~N~~221.40 billion. Another sum of ~~N~~54.29 billion was realized from other capital receipts excluding recurrent surplus. A breakdown of Recurrent Revenue shows that ~~N~~16.36 billion was realized from internal sources: ~~N~~29.96 billion from statutory allocation; ~~N~~6.51 billion from Value Added Tax (VAT) and ~~N~~168.57 billion from derivation.

In re-appraising expenditure, a total of ~~N~~43.94 billion was spent on the recurrent services which include: Personnel Costs ~~N~~29.15 billion; Overhead Costs ~~N~~14.79 billion, Consolidated Revenue Fund Charges ~~N~~54.19 billion. A total of ~~N~~113.22 billion was spent on capital programmes within the period. Our Capital Budget Expenditure is described in details in the Budget implementation report, which has been prepared to facilitate your consideration of the draft 2015 budget

It is worthy of mention that it was a huge success for the 2014 budget to be passed into law last year before the 2014 fiscal year began. I must also confess that this administration did its best to implement the budget as passed by this esteemed Assembly.

## THE 2015 BUDGET

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, we have christened the 2015 budget as the **Budget of Actualization and Continuity**. The 2014 Budget of actualization highlighted many projects, which have been actualized by my administration. The 2015 Budget of Actualization and Continuity has been so named as it is our intense desire to make our people happy, prosperous, healthy, fulfilled in life through the improvement, sustenance and continuity of the already actualized and on-going socio – economic programmes in Health, Education, Good Roads, Electricity, Water Supply, Agriculture, Information, Capacity Building, Infrastructure, Housing, Commerce and Industry, General Administration, Political Posterity and Security, Industrialization, Legislature and the Judiciary.

Already, our state has become the toast of both local and international tourists and investors. Akwa Ibom State has now become the choice of most national conferences. Together with your support, we have achieved much and these tremendous achievements in various aspects of our corporate existence are not enigmatic; the pace of phenomenal development is evident to all. There is need for this tempo to be maintained by the in-coming administration come 2015.

Mr. Speaker, the 2014 Budget was prepared based on IPSAS (International Public Sector Accounting Standards). Honourable Members and Civil/Public Servants in the State have been trained on this new accounting system; and we are getting used to it. I believe you have seen and acquired copies of the 2014 budget, which are in two booklet forms - one showing the Chart of Account and the other Documentation Reports. Of course, there is also the e-budget. The 2015 budget also follows suit-IPSAS based, no more pains and fears. We are definitely making progress.

## **POLICY THRUST AND OBJECTIVES**

The major policy thrust of this budget is to finish on-going projects and perhaps, handle very pressing new ones.

Government is a continuum - it does not terminate with one administration therefore, development cannot also terminate.

Successive administrations will still strive to keep the light of the Uncommon Transformation shining till we get there - Land of fulfillment. It is said that Rome was not built in a day. I have been saying that Akwa Ibom people have not seen anything yet.

That was during my first tenure but now that this administration is winding down we can see clearly even beyond expectation: but then, better things will still happen in the future because we cannot afford to fall back to the doldrums; we have to make continuous, significant progress. This is so because Akwa Ibom State is sophisticated. As I was fished out by the people of this state to be their governor, so too our people will make the right choice in 2015 and beyond in order to maintain the level of its sophistication.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, this administration has received numerous awards /accolades from different strata of the society locally, nationally and internationally. It is not because of my extra intelligence, but because all of us decided to work together. From this hallowed Chambers to the Judiciary, to all Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, both public and private institutions have all lent credible contributions to my success as the Executive Governor of this state. To this end, I dedicate the awards/accolades to God Almighty and the good people of Akwa Abasibom State. You are all wonderful people.

Be that as it may, Mr. Speaker, I have come today, being the last budget speech I am presenting during my tenure, with all sense of humility and faith in our God, to inform this lofty Chambers that my

love for this great state has been meteoric, my loyalty to the Akwa Ibom State has been astronomic, my purpose for the visible uncommon transformation of the State has been titanic and my verdict on crucial issues oceanic. My scorecards are in your hands but through it all, the Lord Almighty saw us through. From the foregoing, the compelling force behind the 2015 Budget proposals is to consolidate the gains so far achieved, resolutely complete on-going projects, improve on the standard of living of our people using the available resources at our disposal and to make sure our dreams concerning our people are sustained. By the grace of God, I promise to commission some projects on my handing over day.

**IN SPECIFIC TERMS, THE CARDINAL OBJECTVES OF THE 2015 BUDGET INCLUDE:**

- To improve the standard of living of the citizens of the state.
- To develop and implement strategic plans for the completion of on-going projects in the state and the enhancement of our employment generating capacity.
- To optimize the sources of the key economic drivers, particularly agriculture and Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSEMS) and laying a foundation for real sector growth;
- To continue to intervene through the use of direct labour to sustain the pace of socio-economic transformation of our rural communities, satellite towns and the state capital;
- To ensure a peaceful and safe society through effective security surveillance in the state;

- To promote youth and women empowerment as well as ensure the protection of the child and vulnerable groups in the society to ensure social equality;
- To expand and diversify the resource base of the state economy through the encouragement of Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Direct Private Investment (DPI);
- To enthrone best practices as an abiding principle of public sector administration and ensuring effective and efficient application of our limited resources through prioritization.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

We shall adopt the following measures and strategies to achieve the above objectives:

- Build a strong fiscal regime through the expansion of our revenue base and the elimination of wastages and leakages in our expenditure profile;
- Build on the current foundation so far laid and consolidating the gains of a world class infrastructural development by employing effective public – private partnership synergy;
- Increase the viability of Akwa Ibom Maritime, the air space – airport facilities and expansion of our road infrastructure;
- Re-invigorate Agriculture and Agro-allied industries by making the sector attractive and responsive to national requirements. To make government subsidies reach end-users and generate output to ensure a sustainable food supply for consumption as well as provide raw materials to agro-allied industries;

- Sustain women and youth empowerment through capacity building and elimination of gender discrimination practices against women and enforcing the Child's Right Law;
- Develop the tourism potentials in the state in order to boost revenue base and enhance employment opportunities.
- Ensure effective and optimum tax collection.
- Build an efficient security network around the state that is proactive to foil attacks and make the state more peaceful, thereby encouraging investment.
- Make the Public Service more efficient and effective to meet the challenges of good governance.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2015 BUDGET:**

The 2015 Budget is predicated on oil benchmark of \$55 per barrel at a production rate of 1.5 million barrels per day. The price benchmark envisioned here is based on:

- The current gyration in global price of crude oil; and
- The production level which is below OPEC quota could serve a dual purpose – to accommodate disruptions in local production and further inherent decline in global price of crude oil.

### **BUDGET SIZE:**

Government has proposed a total budgetary outlay of ~~N~~492.00 billion for the 2015 financial year as against ~~N~~498.54 billion of 2014.

This is made up of as follows:

Recurrent Expenditure	-	<del>₦</del> 94.74 billion
Capital Expenditure	-	<del>₦</del> 268.00 billion
Consolidated Revenue Fund Charges	-	<del>₦</del> 129.26 billion
Total	-	<del>₦</del> 492.00 billion

## REVENUE:

The total projected Recurrent Revenue for 2015 is estimated at ~~₦~~424.00 billion as against ~~₦~~444.16 billion for 2014. The breakdown is as follows:

Internally Generated Revenue (IGR)	-	<del>₦</del> 33.06 billion
Statutory Allocation	-	<del>₦</del> 50.00 billion
Derivation Fund	-	<del>₦</del> 301.11 billion
Retained Revenue from Parastatals	-	<del>₦</del> 1.83 billion
Value Added Tax (VAT)	-	<del>₦</del> 15.00 billion
SURE – P	-	<del>₦</del> 23.00 billion
<b>Total</b>	-	<b><del>₦</del>424.00 billion</b>

## RECURRENT EXPENDITURE:

For the 2015 fiscal year, Recurrent Expenditure is proposed at ~~₦~~224.00 billion, made up of ~~₦~~54.61 billion for personnel costs, ~~₦~~40.13 billion for overhead costs and ~~₦~~129.26 billion for consolidated revenue fund charges including pensions, gratuities and public debts.

## CAPITAL EXPENDITURE:

The total Capital Receipts and Expenditure for the year 2015 is estimated at ~~₦~~268.00 billion as against ~~₦~~333.00 billion for 2014. A total projected capital receipts shows that ~~₦~~200.00 billion will be

transferred from the consolidated revenue fund while the balance of ₦68.00 billion is to be realized as follows:

Opening Balance from 2014 account	-	₦12.83 billion
Internal/External Loans	-	₦ 3.00 billion
Grants	-	₦ 4.00 billion
Ecological Funds	-	₦ 0.10 billion
Re-imburement from Federal Government on Road	-	₦46.45 billion
Dividends from Government Investment	-	₦ 1.62 billion

## SECTORAL ALLOCATION

The sectoral allocation of the total estimated Capital Expenditure outlay of ₦253 billion for the year 2015 is presented as follows:

S/NO.	SECTOR	ALLOCATION N(BILLION)	PERCENTAGE OF ALLOCATION
1.	General Administration	93.63	37.0
2.	Economic	100.61	39.8
3.	Law and Justice	7.85	3.1
4.	Regional	3.80	1.5
5.	Social	47.11	17.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>253.00</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Analysis of sectoral allocation above shows that priority is given to projects and programmes under the Economic sector.

## **GENERAL ADMINISTRATION SECTOR**

For an efficient and effective Public/Civil Service, Government will keep training and retraining its workforce, and undertake specialized recruitment to fill essential vacancies and digitization of most government offices to boost the administrative sector. To this end, Government will intensify efforts in internal generation of revenue and tax administration. General Administration has been allotted ₦93.63 billion in the 2015 budget.

## **ECONOMIC SECTOR**

This vital and crucial sector will harness economic activities of generating revenue to government through effective planning and managing same in order to achieve sustainable socio-economic growth and development vis-à-vis capital projects.

The sum of ₦100.61 billion has been estimated to boost this sector.

## **LAW AND JUSTICE SECTOR**

Government will continue to administer peace, law and order, and justice with the utmost sense of benevolence to its citizenry. Every applicable law will be used to dispense justice to (and enforce the constitutional right of) both Government and the governed. Public enlightenment on the different law issues as they affect the citizenry will be embarked upon. A total of ₦7.85 billion has been budgeted for law and justice.

## **REGIONAL SECTOR**

Government is still determined to turn the fortunes of rural dwellers around by focusing on rapid transformation to give them a new lease of life. Rural electrification; rehabilitation/maintenance of rural farm/feed roads; tarring of slippery hills; provision of mini water schemes, renovating community schools and many community empowerment and poverty alleviation programmes have been on course and this administration will do its best to ensure that more of such services are executed and sustained. This sector will gulp the sum of ~~N~~3.80 billion for the actualization of these projects.

## **SOCIAL SECTOR**

The social fabric of our society needs much attention in terms of education, information, sports, health care, women, youth and traditional institutions. Also our environment needs aesthetic touches here and there to keep our state on the high side. My administration will do all it can to give the social life of our state a meaningful and rewarding status. To this end, the sum of ~~N~~47.11 billion has been estimated for socials.

## **GENERAL CHARTER OF THE 2015 BUDGET**

The belief which drives our vision is anchored on the fact that Akwa Ibom State can and must be a better place for all Akwa Ibom people born and unborn. This article of faith inspired the renewal of our state in the past seven and a half years and will inspire us to do more in the remaining part of this administration, particularly, in completing on-going projects. We have demonstrated the core values of democratic governance and become pacesetters in our national developmental efforts.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, we have been riding on a developmental momentum which is unprecedented in our state in particular and our country in general. With a deep sense of

humility and being fully conscious of the faith of the people in us, we have decided to continue to commit ourselves to the cause of the people and to bind ourselves to the task of complete transformation of our state and its good people. To this end, we intend to complete our on-going programmes in the following areas:

## **CONTINUITY**

The quantifiable benefits to our people have been enormous in the past seven and a half years. We intend to continue with this objective of making the welfare of the Akwa Ibom person the centre piece of all our efforts and actions as a government.

## **INDUSTRIALIZATION**

What has always counted in this administration is what works. That is why we have committed ourselves to completing all viable abandoned projects and not leaving behind any abandoned projects ourselves. Our objectives may sound radical, but that is simply because they are bold, modern and visionary. We still commit ourselves to the establishment of an industry in each of the local government areas of our state. This we believe, will make our state the industrial hub of our nation and leads to the employment of our teeming youths.

## **EDUCATION**

In order to consolidate on our widely-acclaimed gains in this sector, we intend to provide more basic facilities like libraries, science laboratories, instructional materials, etc. for distribution to our school children in public school system. Renovation and construction of more classroom blocks, recruitment of teachers, payment of bursary/scholarships to our students and boarding facilities to ensure a controlled and disciplined learning

environment will be a continuous affair. The 2015 Budget will ensure that the Education thrives well and this will gulp a total of ₦18.03 billion.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Akwa Ibom government has directed efforts at meeting and competing favourably with its counterparts elsewhere in science and technology. It has recorded the following as successes in this endeavor:

- Sponsorship of Akwa Ibom indigenes for ICT training in Canada and other foreign countries:
- Creation of information and awareness for science and technology through international conferences and workshop;
- Organization of Science and Technology Summit in the State and;
- Sponsorship of yearly science and technology fairs and exhibitions to showcase local industrialists, entrepreneurs, engineers and technologists, as well as their inventions and products.

We intend to keep this vision continuously on course. The sum of ₦1.34 billion has been budgeted for this.

## **AGRICULTURE**

Government intends to sustain the tempo and level of agricultural activities currently going on in the state by using the dynamics of technology in the sector. The Integrated Farmers Scheme (IFS), FADAMA III Programme, Rice Project, WADEP, Community Plantation Development Scheme (CPDS) and the Rural Community Farms Development Scheme among other

programmes of the Ministry of Agriculture will still be vigorously pursued. To make this aspiration realizable in 2015 my administration has estimated the sum of ₦5.82 billion.

## **LAND, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

The State's uncommon transformation in terms of physical development and infrastructure has been tremendous during my tenure. We intend to actualize our dreams by consolidating, sustaining and completing on-going projects in this sector. Government land will be fully utilized to the benefits of the citizenry.

Housing which is so crucial to human existence will continue to receive the needed framework to make the masses feel the dividends of democracy by maintaining and rehabilitating urban renewal scheme in the state capital and other major towns. Government will continue to pay compensation on acquired lands, enlighten the public on issues concerning Certificate of Occupancy, embark on maintenance and rehabilitation of public infrastructure and ensure developmental control within Uyo Capital City. A total of ₦36.74 billion has been slated for these.

## **RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Government is poised to consolidate on the gains already made in this sector by opening up more rural communities through the provision of basic social and economic infrastructure – rural electrification, tarring of slippery roads, mini water scheme, empowerment of rural community development etc. The sum of ₦3.80 billion has been estimated for these projects.

## **ENVIRONMENT AND MINERAL RESOURCES**

One major commitment of my administration has been that of safeguarding the environment for the healthy living of our people.

Government has embarked on various programmes and activities in this area and will continue to gear efforts towards improving them especially in flood control, collection and evacuation of wastes in Uyo Metropolis, landscaping and mapping of Uyo and maintaining the aesthetic and festooning beauty. The sum of ₦6.25 billion has been allocated for this sector.

## **COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

My administration has been re-engineering support for, and promotion of vocational arts and skilled manpower in the state. Consequently, a resource survey has been concluded to identify raw materials available in the different local government areas. We have also pursued the industrialization of the State via attraction of Foreign Direct Investment, FDI, and promotion of Public Private Partnership, PPP. We are also developing the requisite human capital to drive the industrial and commercial activities, thus creating wealth and employment opportunities. Government has also developed a working plan to guide the State's industrial efforts even as it has introduced a Micro Credit Scheme for small-scale industries and Small and Medium Enterprises, SMES. These will require ₦11.66 billion of the budget.

## **CULTURE AND TOURISM**

Tourism is one of the greatest revenue earners in the world today. Therefore, in order to boost tourism for increased revenue generation in this sector, government has undertaken the following.

- Expansion work at Le Meridian Ibom 5-Star Hotel and Golf Resort.
- Construction of a multi-million Naira Ibom Tropicana Entertainment Centre, complete with cineplex, galleria, malls, dry and wet parks, hostels and convention centre, etc.

- Sponsorship of the State Arts and Culture troupe to arts and culture festivals in foreign countries.
- Sponsorship of a children's culture troupe- e.g. Ekemini Cultural Troupe.
- Provision of enabling environment for private ownership of over 50 standard hotels in Uyo, the State Capital. We intend to spend ₦1.48 billion on this for continuous achievements.

## **HEALTH**

The health sector has experienced an unprecedented revolution since the advent of this administration.

Government has invested enormous financial resources through the Ministry of Health to revamp and restructure the sector in order to make health care delivery not only accessible and affordable for every Akwa Ibom person but also to ensure that nobody dies from a preventable disease. The sum of ₦12.47 billion has been estimated to run these programmes in this sector.

## **ROAD, WORKS AND TRANSPORT**

The importance and necessity of good roads and efficient transportation system on the lives of the citizenry and the attraction of investors to the state cannot be over-emphasized. To this end, my administration has embarked on massive construction / rehabilitation of roads / bridges, improvement/maintenance of standard urban electricity supply, installation and reactivation of street lights along major roads/streets as well as fire prevention and protection.

The transport sector has concluded survey on traffic flow in Uyo and introduced biometrics data capture of owners and operators of vehicles and tricycles in the state. It has also embarked on closure

of illegal motor parks in the state, clearing and restoring basic facilities in the four major motor parks in Uyo. Government has estimated the sum of ₦62.04 billion for these developments.

## **INFORMATION, SPORT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Information management and sensitization of the people on the policies and programmes of government is important. Government intends to build on the gains already made by continued provision of basic information and communication infrastructure to enable media professionals operate optimally.

Sporting activities will soon take a new dimension especially as the Olympic size stadium was commission on 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2014. Government will continue to promote the development/protection of women, children, the elderly and other socially disadvantaged persons through relevant agencies.

We will not relent on our efforts in promoting peaceful understanding and cooperation between the government and the governed as well as various political interest groups.

Government believes in a peaceful labour and industrial atmosphere in the state and so, will endeavor to keep the friendly pact intact.

Cooperative activities and development will continue to be vigorously pursued to help our people undertake meaningful economic activities for their mutual benefits

Government also intends to carry out tax awareness/enlightenment programmes/campaigns in order to enhance higher productivity and increase the revenue base of the state.

It is also the desire of government to ensure prompt settlement of any inter and intra state boundary/land dispute for peaceful co-

existence of border communities and give attention to effective disasters management in the state.

## **JUSTICE**

My administration will use its legal agencies to provide effective legal services to the Government and people of Akwa Ibom State. This means there will be:

- Prompt prosecution of criminal and civil matters.
- Prompt and accurate drafting of relevant Bills (Memoranda of Understanding – MOUs) for the State Government and its MDAs.
- Provision of Revised Edition of the Laws of Akwa Ibom State.
- Provision of books for/furnishing of the Law Library.
- Establishment of two area offices of Centre for Alternative Dispute Resolution (CADR) in Eket and Ikot Ekpene Senatorial Districts.
- Construction and renovation of Judge’s and Magistrate’s Quarters where none existed.
- Construction of a High Court Complex to accommodate High Courts, Magistrate Courts, Administrative blocks Health Centre, Recreational Grounds.
- Construction of High Court building across the state and Customary Court of Appeal Complex.

## **SECURITY**

In a deliberate effort to tackle holistically the challenges of insecurity in the state, I stated unequivocally at the commencement of my administration; “The enviable position we occupy as a safe state in the Niger Delta region must be maintained at all cost. This is the only way by which the much-needed investors, with the multiplier effect of employment for our people, can be encouraged

and sustained". We have achieved much in this area and intend to steer it on.

## **THE PUBLIC AND CIVIL SERVICE**

This forms the entire workforce that co-ordinates the programmes, activities and policies of government that enhance the fulfillment of the Uncommon Transformation Agenda of my administration. Much has been achieved in its capacity building through training and retraining both locally and overseas to ensure an effective, virile, result-oriented and responsive institution for service delivery.

We hope to continue to improve upon existing standards.

## **THE EXECUTIVE, HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY AND JUDICIARY**

When I came on board as the Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State, I had something in my mind - a cooperating, supporting and harmonious relationship that could be so peaceful among the three arms of government. Throughout our tenure, we have striven together, seen progress together and enjoyed the proceeds of Uncommon Transformation together. What a political trio!

## **CONCLUSION**

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, thank you very much for your attention so far. Let us all meditate on the majestic, glorious splendor and incomprehensibility of our great God who has lovingly transformed our lives and State. It is by His mercies that we have been able to achieve and actualize all these. It is by His Mercies too that this Budget of Actualization and Continuity will judiciously be implemented even by the incoming administration.

Dear Honourable Members, the 2015 budget has been carefully packaged to make room for on-going projects to be completed and commissioned same before I finally handover the baton to my

successor who will also continue to implement its provisions. We are poised to maintain the lofty ideals of a greater Akwa Ibom State and to still take it to more enviable heights.

As you lend your kind support to these budget proposals, we promise a faithful implementation of the budget for the general good and happiness of our people as it is our profound desire to alleviate poverty and backwardness, then create wealth, generate employment, stimulate agriculture and industrial development and maximize the overall well-being of all.

I beseech you therefore, to expeditiously consider and approve the 2015 budget proposals. The relevant details will be provided by the Hon. Commissioner for Finance.

Finally, let me once again salute the State House of Assembly and the good people of Akwa Ibom State for the tremendous goodwill and overwhelming support you have extended to my administration all these years. He who brought us this far will not abandon us.

As I end this address, I wish you good health, divine guidance and protection, happiness in yourselves, happiness in your families and happiness in your deliberations. Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2015 to all Akwa Ibom people. I love you.

Thank you and God bless Akwa Ibom State.