

My Vision
For a Greater
AKWA IBOM
STATE

Obong (Barr.)
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For Governor
AKWA IBOM STATE
(2007)

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PREFACE

"Rome was not built in a day", is, perhaps, the best way to describe my own public and political career; which guarantees that having come a long way I will provide Akwa Ibom State with dynamic, effective with visionary leadership. After groping in the dark for so long, Akwa Ibom people, and indeed, Nigerians as a whole, emerged from a dark long tunnel into the light of democracy on May 29, 1999. Our delightful experience so far in our democratic journey, has been because the visionary leadership which had always eluded Nigeria, at last became personified at the Federal level in President Olusegun Obasanjo; whilst, at the State level, Governor Arc. (Obong) Victor Attah, the chief architect and masterplanner of Akwa Ibom, mounted the saddle and bequeathed to us monumental legacies in infrastructure, revenue accruals, morale boosters and people's empowerment policies; as well as futuristic socio-economic keystone programmes and projects. With an acute eye on Federal policies and strategic programmes, Governor Attah became a national crusader for a much sounder, more innovative, home-bred 21 st Century version of fiscal federalism than what Nigerians had previously and placidly taken for granted.

If Akwa Ibom State should be acclaimed nationally and internationally for adopting and experimenting successfully with Westminster parliamentary democracy at the Local Government level, then I, the foot soldier of that innovation and other local government reforms, should be duly acknowledged. Not only did I serve as the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs for the critical phase of Attah's Local Government revolution, I played both the role of midwife and acolyte for Akwa Ibom State rural transformation. As a long-standing insider of the present administration, I share the passionate desire to realize the Governor's vision that set Akwa Ibom State on the path to national and regional pre-eminence through projects such as the Akwa Ibom International Airport; the refinery and petrochemical project; the Independent Power Plant; the University of Technology; and other major projects with long gestation periods which inevitably will spill over into the next administration. People's empowerment is among those long-term commitments and visions that I share.

My honour as a Boys Scout during my youthful years; a Man 'o' War and a John Maxwell Leadership Trainee; a former General Senior Prefect at the Federal Government College, Port Harcourt; an Honourable Speaker of the Students' Union Parliament of the University of Calabar; a learned member of the legal profession; and a former Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of a modern Telecommunications Company; render me duty bound to lead by example, and with absolute integrity, justice, equity; in order to bring the long-awaited sustainable socio-economic transformation to the lives of ALL the people of Akwa Ibom State.

Electioneering campaign promises must be predicated upon a sound reputation, family background and pedigree in a largely traditional and religious society such as ours, especially against as yet the soft foundation of our emerging democracy.

Therefore, the fact that I belong to the third generation of a family of Akwa Ibom State pioneers in public service, that achieved distinction since the 1930's further attests to my loyalty, patriotism, integrity and commitment to the "*Akwa Ibom Project*" initiated by Governor Attah.

My Administration will be dedicated to:

- Completion of all on-going projects
- Establishment of at least one viable industry per Local Government Area based on Agriculture.
- Creation of more Business opportunities.
- Attraction of foreign investors and partners into Akwa Ibom State.
- Sound Education for Akwa Ibom Youths.
- Expansion of physical and social infrastructure.
- Policies that will sustain good governance, transparency and accountability.
- The establishment of a major sea port in Akwa Ibom State.
- The extension of a railway line into Akwa Ibom.

My Vision for a Greater Akwa Ibom State is a socio-economic blueprint that will touch the lives of all Akwa Ibomites and fellow Nigerians positively, including the less privileged; and transform our rural communities into the engine room of Nigerian industrialization.

1. INTRODUCTION

VISION STATEMENT

My Vision of a Greater Akwa Ibom State is, in reality, the picture I have in my mind about the future of our great State. This picture is not an idealistic figment of the imagination, which visions sometimes are, nor is it utopian. Rather, my Vision can, in the words of E.F. Schumacher, the renowned German consultant and author on rural development in the Third World, be described as "A Viable Future Visible in the Present". This vision has also been inspired by no less a source than our great party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which, in its manifesto, openly declares that its Visions is:

To transform Nigeria into an industrialized, secure, economically viable, politically stable, culturally diverse society, where social harmony and the rule of law are established.

My desire for Akwa Ibom State is to fulfill the PDP mandate, by creating a dynamic prosperous, productive populace, where equal opportunity, justice and social and political equity, and harmony prevail among all ethnic nationalities and geopolitical zones in our State.

Arising from personal conviction, and my own intimate knowledge of the issues of governance and development in this State, especially at the grass roots level, where I served as the Commissioner for local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs (2001 to 2006), the Vision I wish to present to my Beloved People of Akwa Ibom State, as their candidate for the office of Executive Governor in 2007, can be captured in these words:

An Akwa Ibom State with an empowered populace and a private sector-driven economy, acting as a catalyst to Nigeria's Industrial Revolution.

VISION GOALS

Community empowerment for industrialization and business ownership will be fundamental to my economic ideology. Community entrepreneurship will provide the logical strategy towards the realization of our collective vision. We shall build on the solid and extensive ethical, fiscal, entrepreneurial and infrastructural foundations that have been so firmly laid by the most visionary Governor in Nigeria today, His Excellency, Arc (Obong) Victor Attah.

VISION FOUNDATIONS

Blessed with the far-reaching accomplishment of this most visionary planner, we, the people of Akwa Ibom State, must consolidate on the legacies and foundations laid by the Attah Administration. We must conserve and complete his blueprints and projects; and consummate his vision so that we can make rapid progress, using the road map which Governor Attah has provided. For, indeed, our generations are, as the French philosopher, Bernard of Chartres, said:

... like dwarfs seated on the shoulders of giants, enabled, therefore, to see more things than the Ancients and things more distant.

Eight years of Attah's Administration would have brought us to the doorsteps of "The Land of Promise". My own Administration will fully usher us into the Promised Land. Christened the Akwa Ibom Project, the vision of the Attah Administration has been to:

"Transform Akwa Ibom State into a prosperous, highly educated, technologically driven, ethnically harmonious, caring and pace-setting state in Nigeria, with strategic policies and programmes to accomplish same".

The Akwa Ibom Project involves attitudinal re-orientation; cultivation of a positive mindset; instilling self-confidence through massive empowerment of our people; and the inculcation of the moral values of hard work, courage, honesty, service and pragmatic peaceful co-existence.

Committed to these lofty ideals in nation-building, the reintroduction of the onshore/offshore dichotomy by the Supreme Court of Nigeria, and the resultant drastic cut of Akwa Ibom State oil revenue by the Federal Government from 2002 to 2004, prompted Governor Attah to fight desperately and doggedly for the abolition of this obnoxious revenue sharing policy, at least as far as continental shelf (less than 200m water-depth) oil production is concerned. This is, perhaps, Attah's loftiest legacy. Governor Attah, thereby returned Akwa Ibom State to a sound financial footing, which ensured that the implementation of the invaluable infrastructural projects that have re-positioned Akwa Ibom State for private sector investment, would not be hindered.

I have taken pains to document photographically, the physical transformation of our State, in the course of the Attah Administration; so that when the past is compared with present, our people will be satisfied that we have come a long way, hence we should, keep moving forward. Recent infrastructural development has led us far along the path towards economic development of Akwa Ibom State. Perhaps, many people do not realize or appreciate this fact. So, if elected Governor, I shall lead my own crusade that will penetrate our rural communities; and mobilize our people to establish one major productive business enterprise or another in each Local Government Area. In essence, I shall basically and aggressively, stimulate increased agricultural productivity to support Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises (SMEs). I shall press even harder for greater development funds from the Federal Government by way of increased derivation. Here again Governor Attah has led the way.

Direct acquaintance with all nooks and corners of Akwa Ibom State, as a former Commissioner for Local Government, convinces me of the compactness of our landmass and easy accessibility of all rural communities from the State Capital, Uyo, which serves as the focal point. While more roads, electricity, and potable water will be extended beyond the Local Government Headquarters, adequate

maintenance of existing rural feeder road network, coupled especially with the expansion of rural electrification, will definitely leverage and sustain increased agricultural productivity and farm product processing.

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy here is that one can move with ones household into an uncompleted family building that has been supplied with electricity, water and security; and function happily and productivity from a few furnished rooms. If the uncompleted family house is equipped with a kitchen and a toilet, it can be occupied while awaiting the full completion of this building, which can happen after quite some years. Our teeming rural population cannot be denied industrialization any further, if unemployment and poverty are to be halted.

Rural agro-allied enterprises and industrialization cannot be delayed any longer if we are to attain the people-oriented Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations, by year 2015.

My Vision for Akwa Ibom is totally compatible with the global MDGs. We shall achieve these goals through the adoption and implementation of rural private entrepreneurial initiatives in order to create and sustain a dynamic and productive, private sector-driven, state-supervised modern industrialized economy. This will be based on large-scale commercial farming and fisheries; the elimination of hindrances to the full exploitation of our natural resources (e.g. petroleum and solid minerals); and, of course also, if we take advantage of our uniquely favourable geographical location along Nigeria's most accessible, world-class ocean outside Lagos beach, where international tourism can flourish.

As a reminder, the Millennium Development Goals, which are integral components and guiding principles of My Vision for a Greater Akwa Ibom State, embrace the following:

- Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger
- Achievement of Universal Primary Education
- Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment
- Reduction of child mortality
- Improvement of maternal health
- Combating scourges such as HIV / AIDS and malaria
- Environmental sustainability
- Global partnership for development

Phased infrastructural development, combined with mass commodities production from rural enterprises was a rural development paradigm advocated for developing countries in the 1980 book, titled "Good Work", by the German authority, Dr. E. F. Schumacher, we mentioned earlier. How Dr. Schumacher put it is most instructive to us, for he sounded as if he was actually addressing Akwa Ibom people today. And yet, he was advising South-East Asian rural populations several decades ago. The Asian Tigers took his advice and leapfrogged into the global industrialized and exporting economy where they are today.

Dr. Schumacher said: "The infrastructure in many places has accumulated over the years, several generations, and in European countries for hundreds of years. It includes an immense number of wires and tubes and pipes beneath the roads. If they have to be created in a poor country, in a hurry, they're immensely expensive. Each mile of road can run into millions of dollars. So if you have to have an elaborate infrastructure first and then a mass-production industry, you have to wait a long, long time and I don't know where the wealth would come from to build this elaborate infrastructure. But if you have small-scale, it does not require an elaborate infrastructure and you can become productive quietly and then perhaps later you will have the wealth to make the infrastructure a bit more elaborate".

"In Burma I found the Buddhists, Burmans like it if one speaks in parables. And I said, Well, you know, there's a road and from the road there's a path and by the path there's a shed. And in the shed is a hen that lays an egg. Well, now, all that the road, the path, the shed, the hen is not what you want. You want only that one egg. If you spend all your money on the road, the path, and the shed, you're then broke and can't even have a hen to lay an egg; it's not very good business. So you want to minimize the infrastructure requirement; you want to produce in such a way and at such a location that you don't spend all your money on roads, paths, sheds, and the like, and you can spend more money on getting more hens to lay more eggs".

So, I believe in Akwa Ibom State, enough infrastructure has been provided to enable us commence commercial enterprises, production, and export trade. Additionally, by the time the Independent Power Plant at Ikot Abasi is completed; the Air Cargo and Aircraft Maintenance Terminal near Uyo, the State Capital, is operational; and the 5-Star Hotel, also nearby, is finished, we shall be on a solid foundation to enter global trade. But we can trade and create employment opportunity for our youths only if we have produced items and services of global demand. We have no excuses any longer, whether infrastructure or the capital for commercial enterprises. These are now available as parts of the Reforms of the Obansajo Administration. So enterprises and industrialization at the community level are our new Ideology, our Vision, and our Ultimate Goals. The African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) of the U.S. government further offers us the window of opportunity we have been waiting for, to trade our agricultural products and the products of our SMEs in the U.S. markets.

COMMUNITIES AS TARGET

It also deserves some explanation in this introduction, that in our development strategy, we have singled out the term and concept of Community as the fundamental unit or our target of mobilization, investment and development. When we talk of rural communities we imply cohesiveness, collectiveness and functional and productive co-operation, rather than single individuals, family units or households. This notwithstanding, if elected Governor, we shall continue to fully promote individual initiatives in entrepreneurship. In fact private interests and initiatives will furnish the actual catalyst for our rural development. They will provide the ultimate stakeholders upon whose shoulders will rest the leadership, and the managerial and technical capabilities that will ensure the realization of our dream of rural community entrepreneurship and industrialization. But the entire community must be involved.

Perhaps, the new concept, culture and usage of the term communities as agents or vehicles for grass roots mobilization is among the legacies of the transnational oil corporations operating in the Niger Delta. Communities are recognized, and rightly so, as the focal points of local development. From their corporate headquarters, each oil company, therefore, operates an active, well staffed and well funded Community Affairs Department within its Public Affairs Division.

In fact one of the oil companies involved in community extension services and development in Akwa Ibom State explains her mission in the following manner: "Stimulating and supporting the communities to take responsibility for their own development, underlines our philosophy towards sustainable development. In a growing partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), we are working to carry out participatory rural appraisals (PRA) driven by focused group discussions. A preliminary work plan has already been proposed to address development issues in the crucial areas of water and environmental sanitation; agriculture; fisheries; skills development; education; conflicts and disaster prevention and management; health care; HIV / AIDS prevention, management and support; and environmental management. In line with the new and changing realities, several categories of communities are now identified as direct beneficiaries of our new development plan" Total Upstream Nigeria Ltd (in "Touching Lives").

Total, the parent company of Elf Petroleum Nigeria Ltd, then went on to identify, in a manner absolutely relevant to Akwa Ibom State and My Vision, the following categories of Communities:

1. **Host Communities:** These are coastal communities along the shoreline;- near Elf offshore facilities; or on whose land the company has producing oil and gas wells and/or oil and gas production facilities, office or housing facilities. Host communities apply to and have been identified by other companies as well.

2. **Ethnic Communities:** These communities share the same ethnic nationalities with the host communities, but do not have any company facilities on their land; nor are they impacted by company offshore operations. Such communities may even lie outside the company petroleum concession areas.
3. **Coastline Communities:** Scientifically defined with environmentally sound considerations, Elf Petroleum says: "Arising from our offshore (near shore and deep offshore) operations, selected communities along the Nigerian coast constitute coastal communities. Given the distance of these concessions from shore, and for practical purposes, these communities have been defined in Local Government Areas considered as those that are either directly on the coastline or those that have tidally influenced rivers within their shores.

These Local Government Areas are selected on the basis that our offshore operations including movement of boats could directly impact on their ecological environment. They include in Akwa Ibom State: Eastern Obolo, Eket, Esit Eket, Etinan, IkotAbasi, Ibeno, Ibiono Ibom, Itu, Mbo, Mkpat Enin, Nsit Ubium, Anna, Okobo, Oron, Oruk Anam, Udong-Uko, Ukanafun, Uruan, Urue-Offong Uruko Local Government Areas.

I, therefore intend to adopt these communities as the basis and framework for our rural development programmes.

CREATION OF NEW CORE COMMUNITIES

My Administration will even create new oil-producing core communities in Akwa Ibom State. While I served as Hon. Commissioner for Petroleum and Mineral Resources (2002-2003), I realized that it is possible for Akwa Ibom State to produce onshore oil, rather than depend totally on production from offshore. I, therefore, intend to liaise with the Department of Petroleum Resources of the Ministry of Petroleum, so that the Federal Government can award oil concessions in the onshore parts of Akwa Ibom State; but above, all ensure that oil companies holding onshore petroleum leases in Akwa Ibom, fully drill appraisal and development wells; and start actual oil and gas production. I am reliably informed that over one billion barrels of crude oil and huge natural gas reserves in Akwa Ibom State are awaiting production. I also intend to liaise with Elf and Mobil Producing Nigeria ULTD, or any other upstream operator to develop onshore production. Already, the State-owned oil company Universal Energy Resources Ltd., in partnership with a Chinese operator, are making satisfactory progress to produce one of the marginal fields in Akwa Ibom onshore (Stubbs Creek).

In essence, apart from Derivation Funds, and development projects which are routinely provided in the core communities and other communities, the benefits of onshore production will directly attract more oil company community projects into all the Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State.

Onshore oil production in Akwa Ibom State, is, therefore, one of my priorities and cardinal goals in my Manifesto.

VISION PARTNERS

International donor agencies that we shall approach for support also adopt the community development paradigm. Notable among these are the agencies of the United Nations, World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Other external funding agencies such as the European Union, the World Bank, the Department of International Development and all overseas development agencies of foreign countries conventionally focus their attention on local communities. Today, we talk of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which are basically involved in community intervention programmes. We will increase the participation of these stakeholders as our partners in progress in Akwa Ibom State.

Unlike the past, today, we have Community Development Departments even in manufacturing industries, banks; and of course the famous and widespread Community Development Banks are there throughout the country.

EFFECTIVE MOBILIZATION

Finally, the planning and implementation of rural industrialization of Akwa Ibom State will, therefore, evolve thorough community awareness campaigns, consultations and mobilization, towards implementation. Community participation will be my guiding principle. As a former Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, my sociological and anthropological awareness of community structures, interests and cultures have been deepened through practical exposure, hence the most effective and pragmatic strategies for community mobilization will be deployed. This will be greatly enhanced by my network of grass roots contacts throughout the local communities of Akwa Ibom State. I know them; and they already know me. I am also well acquainted with international donor agencies and corporate stakeholders like the petroleum industry.

2. WHERE MY VISION COMES FROM

And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. - Joel 2 :28

Visions can be spiritually inspired, as evident from the Scripture above; but even this cannot easily be claimed, without authenticating the source of the vision; or verification of the credibility of the visioner. So was it with the prophets of old, and the recipients of divine visions down through the ages. But conventional visions today connote perception, cognition, insight and the picture seen in the mind's eye. In fact, a normal vision, outside the regular eyesight, could be totally and highly intellectual and the product of a highly trained and endowed mind. Elaborate mental or intellectual constructs such as Utopia or Idealism are hardly stumbled upon by serendipity, but rather, they are formulated through reflection, study, focused meditation and contemplation. To formulate a vision about anything requires intimate knowledge of that particular subject matter that is the object of vision. Without being an expert on a particular subject a realistic vision is hardly conceivable. Knowledge, whether gained through formal, informal or professional education and training is the starting point of any vision; to which must be added creativity and originality which are derived from research through which heights or peaks of thought, imagination and knowledge can be attained. But, notwithstanding all of the above a vision can be a spiritual revelation, as was the case with Daniel in the Bible:

Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night Vision.

- Daniel 2: 19

With all humility My Vision too has the element of a revelation.

Such were the collective speculations of Nigerian experts, which in the 1990s, during the Abacha Administration, culminated in a national blueprint referred to as "Vision 2010: Our Aspirations, Goals and Commitments to the Future". While Vision 2010 aimed at a comprehensive action plan for the advancement of the Nigerian society, it merely set higher goals for all sectors of the Nigerian economy. Devoid of moral contents, with very shallow cultural roots, bereft of spiritual values, and without ethical reforms, Vision 2010 ended up as a lackluster, abortive attempt by a corrupt, inhuman military dictatorship to write a social contract with an oppressed people. But since it was written by the same civil servants who supervised military administration and transitioned into the democratic dispensation, residues of Vision 2010, especially the aspects that were pedestrian or conventional wisdom, are still to be found in our national development agenda.

Placed side by side with the redemptive, morally edifying, revolutionary and transcendental reforms of the Obasanjo Presidency, Vision 2010 exemplifies and provides a caveat against the pitfalls of uninspiring, unspiritual visions that are neither divine illuminations nor revelations, nor the distillation of elevated thought

and intimate knowledge. Akwa Ibom people must be reminded of how Nigeria was before 1999 during the military era of bad vision. The nation was suffering painfully from bribery and corruption, nepotism, foreign debts, maladministration, tribalism, advanced fee fraud (419), petroleum products scarcity, incessant power failure, human rights abuses, adulterated drugs and goods, collapse of the educational system, battered national image, inefficiency of the banking sector, unreliable telecommunications, poor health services, and flight of foreign capital.

On the contrary, the following reforms of the Obasanjo Administration have ushered the nation into our new vision. These reforms will provide the pivot and framework for our development strides in Akwa Ibom State.

- Effective Telecommunications
- Ethics of Transparency, Accountability, Good Governance
- Sound Democratic Process
- Moral and Spiritual Re-birth
- War Against Corruption
- Protection of Human Rights
- Freedom of the Press
- Sound Health Policy
- Foreign Debt Cancellation
- License to Private Universities; Universal Basic Education
- Improved Image of Nigeria in the Comity of Nations
- Conducive Atmosphere for Foreign Investors
- Nigerian Experts in Diaspora Scheme
- Boost of Local Manufacture of Goods
- Improved Power and Steel Sector
- Reformed Solid Minerals Development Sector
- Availability of Petroleum Products at all Times
- Gas Utilization and Export
- Transparency in Extractive Industry Operations

- Monetization Policy,
- Due Process in Public Procurement
- Privatization of Public Enterprises
- War on Fake Drugs and Counterfeit Products

Today, President Obasanjo, Governor Attah and the PDP, therefore, have ushered in a new National Vision:

To ensure continuity of policies that are clearly needed to move the nation into the developed and industrialized nation category, I have, therefore, also embraced INDUSTRIALIZATION as the cornerstone of My Vision for a Greater Akwa Ibom State.

3. TESTED, I AM TRUSTED AND HONOURED BY THE PEOPLE

Prolonged field exposure and experience provide the sure path to a valid, credible vision. That is why, if someone comes up and claims he or she has a vision, the first question will be: Who is he? or Who is she? If the person pulls out his curriculum vitae and says:

This is me; what that individual has written about himself may not be trusted at all, without the testimony of a third party. This is where certificates, testimonials and letters of recommendation from teachers, Local Government Chairmen, Clergymen, or Paramount Rulers are required these days to establish ones identity and credibility.

If the status, credentials and capabilities of an ordinary citizen is subjected to such scrutiny, how much more the person who aspires to be the Governor. Akwa Ibom people will naturally ask such a person: What do you know about us? What vision do you have for us?

In my own case, my identity in Akwa Ibom State is already well established before the public, to whom I wish to present myself for election as the next Governor in 2007. I have served as Commissioner in the State from 2002 to 2006. As a public officer for that length of time, I have naturally been an object of Press scrutiny for so long.

My political responsibilities, esteem and honours are evident from the following chieftaincy titles, awards and honours throughout Akwa Ibom and the rest of the country:

1. Iberedem Ibibio Title
2. Obong Iberedem Ekid
3. Ukai Ibibio
4. Ibatai Iman /bom
5. Obong Ifiok Ibesikpo
6. Obong Idorenyin Ini
7. Ubok Udom Ikot-Ekpene
8. Adaha Itu
9. Ntanta Oro
10. Iberedem Nsit Atai

11. Itai Odoro Ikot

12. Ubok Udom Ukpum

Political Responsibilities Include:

1. Chairman, Arc Victor Attah 2nd Term Rally and Mobilization Declaration Committee 2002 for Ikot Ekpene.
2. Chairman, Obasanjo/ Atiku Presidential Campaign Rally and ' Mobilization Committee in Akwa Ibom State 2003
3. Chairman, Attah/Ekpenyong 2003 Campaign Rally and Mobilization Sub-Committee.

Other honours and recognitions are:

1. Youth Ambassador of Nigeria by the National Youth Council of Nigeria
2. Most Outstanding Commissioner in Akwa Ibom State, 2005
3. Patron to 178 Youth Organizations in Nigeria
4. Facilitator of Akwa Ibom State Chapter of National Coalition for Continuity of Reforms Agenda (NCCRA) of President Olusegun Obasanjo.
5. Facilitator of Movement for National Accommodation and Continuity; committed to sustainability of the Obasanjo Reforms.

4. MY SCORECARD FROM PUBLIC EYES

Rather than blow my own trumpet, let me quote here how one of the most critical and most influential Newspapers in Nigeria assessed my experience, performance and contributions to the development of Akwa Ibom State. In essence this is my scorecard as seen by other Nigerians. It comes from Thisday, Vol. 11, No. 4151, The Saturday Newspaper, September 2,2006.

"To Barrister Godswill Akpabio, we must now move. Touted as ... perhaps the only serving commissioner with an eye for the governor's seat, Akpabio, who until recently, was in charge, at the ministry for local government and chieftaincy affairs, was moved to the ministry of lands and housing. Very visible and result oriented, Akpabio is said to have revolutionized local government administration in Akwa Ibom State. He initiated the legislative amendment of the extant portion(s) of the local government laws, aimed at making the heads of council more proactive and result-oriented. Specifically, the local government administration law (2000) was amended in 2003 by the State House of Assembly, an amendment which made it illegal and highly sanctionable for any local government to obtain a loan without a written approval by His Excellency, the Governor. The law had far reaching intentions, as it made provisions for both the defaulting bank and local government to be sanctioned.

It is to his credit, the innovation of the 'parliamentary system of government at the local government level. This system, which is currently practiced only in Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria, now has commendations from local government scholars and practitioners in Nigeria and even abroad. The argument is that the hitherto practiced presidential system constituted a huge financial burden for the third tier of government especially since most of the practitioners at that level are not sufficiently exposed to understand the dynamics of presidential system of government. The parliamentary system made it possible for the council chairman to evolve from the body of councilors, since the chairman, as it were, is primarily a councilor who only emerged from the Electoral College (made up of all the elected councilors in the local government).

As a policy, varying people-oriented projects totaling 340, such as boreholes, electricity, renovation of schools, construction of classroom blocks and human empowerment were executed. It also cannot be overlooked, the payment of severance gratuity, salaries and allowances of past political office holders at the local government level between 1999 and 2003, totaling N1.1 billion. Also, under Akpabio, a record-breaking 482 traditional rulers were recognized between August 2003 and now, that is, aside from the justice, fairness, equity and transparency, which characterized the installation of all cadre of stools, whether in contention or not. In this regard, more than 282 courts cases he inherited had been settled amicably out of court. In the same vein, the chamber of the state council of chiefs was renovated during his stewardship, which Mr. President himself commended during his visit to the State in 2004. Today, the Akwa Ibom State Traditional Institution is - savoring immeasurable peace and harmony.

Huge sums of money were shared to all Paramount Rulers to rehabilitate their palaces, an action unprecedented since Nigeria's independence. One could go on and on. But this is not the point".

Other candidates who are vying with me for Governorship should make available to the Akwa Ibom State public similar elaborate independent assessments of their own contributions to the State; and especially the people they want to govern. They should present these along with details of their leadership vision; and what informs their visions. They are morally bound to do so, rather than attempt to slip in through the back door. The Bible says:

"By their fruits, ye shall know them":

5. VISIONARY LEADERSHIP: A DOUBLE PORTION OF THE SPIRIT

In 2007 Akwa Ibom State needs a leader with a strong sense of vision, a leader who believes in the Akwa Ibom Project, the new Vision instilled into the people by Governor Attah. That Vision should not die, be distracted or derailed. Our future hangs on sharing the Vision of this historic leader, a towering professional architect who singularly drew up the Regional Development Plan for the State; the masterplan for Uyo, the State Capital; provided the first State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (AK-SEEDS) to the nation; and other visionary blueprints and projects for Akwa Ibom State. Indeed, architects are the most visionary of all visioners. This is because nobody can design a building without first seeing in the mind's eye what the edifice will look like, before you draw sketches and actual dimensions on paper. Besides, the Governor is always full of new ideas.

And so, personally, I feel like Prophet Elisha in this story told in the Bible:

And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" Elisha said "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me".

So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so".

Then, it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and his horsemen!" SO he saw him NO more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into pieces.

He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan.

Then he took the mantle that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" And when he also struck the water, it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed".

I Kings 2: 9-10

Elisha, therefore, performed his first miracle of parting the Jordan, and other subsequent miracles in Israel; because he had worked with the great Prophet Elijah; most importantly he specifically asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Having served as Commissioner for Petroleum and Natural Resources (2002 - 2003) and seen His Excellency fight doggedly for the release of the correct

petroleum derivation revenue, as well as the abrogation of the obnoxious onshore/offshore dichotomy in the Supreme Court of Nigeria, a legal battle the magnitude of which I fully appreciated as a lawyer, I shall continue to keep a watchful eye; and ,guard our petroleum revenue, totally committing it to the most rapid economic advancement of our State, and the immediate diversification of our revenue base. Similarly, as the

foot soldier responsible for the implementation of Governor's Attah's local government reforms, transformation and upliftment of traditional institutions, I will also double the passion and intensity for grassroots mobilization, empowerment, productivity, living standards enhancement, social welfare, poverty eradication and overall development. With God-given youthful energy and a demonstrated strong sense of duty, proven integrity, and benevolence and egalitarianism towards all members of our AKWA IBOM FAMILY; and my brotherly, open, accessible, supportive disposition towards all, both young and old, I will double Governor Attah's spirit of empowering our people of Akwa Ibom State, by creating more economic opportunities for all. Also to be doubled are:

- Peace, Social Justice, Political Equity and Harmony throughout the State.
- Security of lives and property.
- Standard of education and Achievement levels among our Youths.
- Investment opportunities/Business ventures.
- Employment opportunities.
- Health and human welfare.
- Productivity/Performance level across all Sectors of the Economy.
- Inflows of Federal and Foreign assistance and investments.

6. PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS AND WAKE-UP CALLS

Nigerians have always been called upon to find visionary leaders, as if this were the most vital need of the Nation. In his popular, provocative, little book: "The Trouble with Nigeria"; in his chapter on, "Where the Problem Lies" Chinua Achebe said:

I am saying that Nigeria can change today if she discovers leaders who have the will, the ability and the Vision. Such people are rare in any time or place. But it is the duty of enlightened citizens to lead the way in their discovery and to create an atmosphere conducive to their emergence. If this conscious effort is not made, good leaders, like good money, will be driven out by bad.

- Chinua Achebe in "The Trouble with Nigeria:
Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1983.

So, leadership in Nigeria had operated after Gresham's law of economics, where bad money chases out good money. There is now a strident public outcry that this should no longer be the case at the Federal level. Even President Olusegun Obasanjo recently expressed concern about the quality of our future leaders, when he said in his address titled; PDP: PASSING THE TORCH:

A major focus in the quest for deepening internal democracy in the party is the deployment of men and women of integrity to conduct the various primaries leading up to candidate selection. If we have persons who see the exercise as an opportunity to smile all the way to their bank accounts, they would have denied both the party and the nation that smile which a true democratic transition ought to bring. There must therefore be a renewed party commitment on the part of party leadership to compose lists made up of men and women of proven-track record of honesty whom no amount of money can compromise to conduct the various congresses, and the convention. While I concede to the obvious difficulty in finding enough of those kind of people in our kind of environment, it must be admitted that after 7 years, some broad knowledge should exist about people whom we can rely upon in this area. The new PDP must be an embodiment of clean politics; politics where integrity is the watchword.

As for Akwa Ibom, The Pioneer Newspaper has warned about leadership expectations as follows: "2007 gubernatorial election is beyond tribal sentiment. What matters is picking the governor who is naturally endowed with leadership qualities that transcend tribal or clannish reasoning". In the next chapter I shall take pains to demonstrate that my leadership qualities and aspirations are beyond sentiments and are well sharpened and constrained by my own pedigree, quite apart from my tract record mentioned above.

The above article in the Pioneer Newspaper went on to list the following qualities and public expectations of the next Governor of Akwa Ibom State in 2007, viz:

- We want to hear ideologies as regards our socio-economic, educational and industrialization advancement.
- The masses expect to hear how they would put three square meals on their tables.
- We want to know the fate of some of the tangible projects of the present Administration which may not be completed at the end of this Administration.
- No doubt, Governor Attah, for the past seven years has provided the State with a catalogue of development projects. Ranging from 5-Star Hotel, International Airport, massive road construction and rehabilitation, urban renewal projects.
- When one ponders on the achievements of the present Administration it becomes more worrisome thinking about his successor.
- He must be ready to defend the interest of the State even in the face of intimidation and blackmail.
- Above all, he must be apt with the challenges of the State and be willing and determined to proffer useful solutions.
- We need a Governor with good connections within and outside Nigeria. And he must be ready to exploit these connections for the betterment of the State, not for selfish reason.
- Governor Attah's successor that we pray for is an intelligent, dynamic, selfless and detribalized Akwa Ibom man who will rule this State with the fear of the Lord. -Margaret Edem, The Pioneer, Monday, October 9, 2006

7. VISIONS INHERITED FROM AKWA IBOM PIONEERS

Unity: The Greatest and Most Ancient of Visions

I have a vision of an Akwa Ibom State perfectly united, where all ethnic nationalities, political, social and economic barriers are dissolved and all interests perfectly commingled. I see an Akwa Ibom State where all human energies, talents and endeavours are harnessed towards the collective good; without acrimony, rancor and strife; a State where peace and security reign; "the land of promise" not only filled with "milk and honey", but a choice Elysium where, the three visions of Isaiah, the Prophet, will be fulfilled:

1. " ... they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" .

Isaiah 2: 4

2. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined".

Isaiah 9 :2

3. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The suckling child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"

- Isaiah 11: 6-9

A land where peace and progress prevail is my Vision for the entire Niger Delta region, where we too, in Akwa Ibom, belong. Peace in the delta will radiate to all parts of the Nation as swords everywhere will be turned into plowshares or farming implements. With a realistically negotiated petroleum derivation revenue that has a human face, I believe justice and equity will usher in peace everywhere.

Our Common Heritage

Historians, like our famous Professors Monday Noah and Monday Abasiattai, tell us that the peoples (Ibibio, Annang, Oron, Eastern Obolo, Eket, Okobo, etc.) have always lived together for many millennia, in fact since between 7000 and 8000 B.C. According to a popular tradition, most of these peoples originated and migrated from Usakedet in the Cameroon. In fact, Professor Monday Noah concluded in his publication on the "Early History of the People" that:

"Indeed, like the Afaha group in Ibibio land, the Annang accept Usakedet theory of origin. It should be noted, in Annang tradition, all the Afaha people are known as "iman", or blood relatives from whom anything could be shared without fear of any kind. It, therefore, suggests that these two groups of people had a lot of things in common arising from the fact that at one time, they considered themselves people of the same origin... We can conclude therefore that though the different groups in the same State might have migrated to their present abodes at different times, the bulk of the Akwa Ibom people came from the same geographical area".

As Governor, I will continue to forge unity among our various ethnic nationalities until all traces of ethnicity melt away, except cultural and ceremonial legacies. As the American say, we shall turn Akwa Ibom into a true "melting pot", where all primordial survival instincts will become totally unnecessary.

United by Neglect and Deprivation

As already noted Akwa Ibom historians have demonstrated exemplary loyalty and commitment to national unity. Ours is a case of unifying and homogenizing intellectualism and political scholarship. Since they were all classified as minorities, our founding fathers or better, our "pioneers" must have perceived that without being united, Akwa Ibom people would not survive within the Nigerian Federation. Nor would we have anywhere else to go. Professor Monday Abasiattai in "Our Pioneers, 1920-1967" explicitly summaries our historical socialization processes as follows:

1. Timing: "Our study of the pioneers begins from the late 1920's and early 1930's. This period marked somewhat of a watershed in the Akwa Ibom area between the mostly "traditional" society of the past, and an emerging, "modern", whose socio-economy was characterized by a burgeoning class of Western-educated elite, expanding modern commerce, and growing Western influence".
2. Political Background: "In the new political environment (in which the 1954 elections were held), the most remarkable political factor for Akwa Ibom people was their minority status in Nigeria's Eastern Region ... (that) largely denied the Akwa Ibom area social amenities, and political, privileges like scholarships, appointments to public offices, or grant of agricultural and other loans by government financial institutions".

3. Infrastructure: "Thus in the final analysis, the Akwa Ibom area was largely neglected by the British colonial rulers as well as the Nigerian regional and federal governments that succeeded the British in the pre-and post-independence periods, compared with other areas of Nigeria. No railway or government secondary schools (in the colonial period) for example, were provided in the area despite demands for them by the people. And ports like Eket, Opobo (now Ikot Abasi) and Itu remained largely underdeveloped throughout the colonial period and beyond. Consequently, the brunt of development fell on the people themselves through the inspiration and guidance of their pioneers".

VISION OF OUR PIONEERS

Akwa Ibom pioneers who emerged in the 1920's were predominantly brilliant and distinguished scholars who earned their historical distinction by being the first to acquire the light of Western Education, right from the source, in the United Kingdom and the United States. In fact, they were among the first Nigerians trained overseas. In many instances the Akwa Ibom intellectual pioneers surpassed fellow Nigerians both in academic excellence and in subsequent achievements.

Known as the first five "merchants of light" who sailed to Europe and America in August 1938, they were leading members of a common ethno-cultural organization known as the Ibibio Union which was born in Calabar in 1927; and merged in 1928 with the Ibibio Mainland Association, a group of enlightened Ibibio and Annang back home in what was known as the Mainland of the then Calabar Province.

It must not be lost to the collective memory and consciousness of Akwa Ibom people that a strong bond of unity held them together at the very beginning, which earned them national and international respect. This was through the display of exemplary talent, hard work, "self-help, patriotism, honesty of purpose, a well articulated integrity, a proper code of conduct and the pursuit of higher education in all its aspects".

If today any part of Nigeria should experience difficulties in power sharing, it should not be the people of Akwa Ibom State, unless they have totally lost their sense of history and abdicated their heritage. This is because, in their quest for development, self actualization and identity, our fathers were honest, just and with legendary integrity and self-denial. The best example of all times was set by the President of the Ibibio Union, Chief Samson Udo Etuk, in 1938. As Professor Abasiattai puts it, "S. U. Etuk, President of the Union, sailed to England and America in the same boat with these Ibibio sons to study Education on his own, having declined an offer of the Union's scholarship which he himself had largely organized". That is the spirit which we all in Akwa Ibom State must embrace today, the spirit of sacrifice and self-denial in order to promote unity and give everyone a chance. This is the great Vision we must share.

Let us return to the saga of the five Akwa Ibom sons or "merchants of light", in order for us to remind ourselves of the fact that the vision our great grandfathers had in sending them to study overseas became a mighty catalyst to Akwa Ibom greatness, leadership and development. We must learn from the visions of the past for us to re-ignite the spirit of Co-operation and thereby successfully chart our way forward. If our people united in the past to send their children to school, we in our present generation can unite to bring industrialization to our various communities.

The story of our "merchants of light" is perhaps, best told by one of the most renowned, unforgettable, proficient, most erudite, scholarly public servants Akwa Ibom State and, indeed Nigeria ever produced, the late Chief N. U. Akpan, OFR. In his article, "Contributions to Nationhood", Chief, without exaggeration said:

"The first task of this "assimilated" Ibibio Union was that of galvanizing the Ibibio and Annang people for "the pursuit of higher education in all its aspects. Their gospel fell on happy and receptive ears. With the ground properly prepared among the people, the Union decided that the best approach was that of raising funds to send suitable young men to study and acquire professional qualification in universities and other high institutions of learning abroad in Britain and the United States. In spite of the lack of a public transportation system and other difficulties, members untiringly and sacrificially traversed by foot, bicycles and canoe, every nook and crook of the Mainland, and never lacked local leaders and volunteers to support their drive in all of the six administrative divisions of Abak, Eket, Ikot Ekpene, Itu, Opobo (Ikot Abasi) and Uyo. Levies were raised and willingly paid by every man and woman. Children in school were not left out: they contributed a penny or even half-a-penny each! Contributions were not confined to the Ibibio and Annang Mainland and Calabar. Branches of the Union were established wherever Ibibio / Annang sons and daughters found themselves, especially in the big towns and cities like Port Harcourt, Lagos, Zaria, Kano, Aba, Enugu and others. Members from all these branches of the Union contributed towards the project of sending students abroad to acquire the Golden Fleece.

In 1938, the Ibibio Union astounded and impressed the world with the spectacular dispatch to the United Kingdom and the United States of America, six young men, one each from the six colonial administrative divisions making up the Mainland of the then Calabar Province. The disciplines of pursuit were distributed as follows: Abak (Medicine); Eket (Education); Ikot Ekpene (Education); Itu (Medicine); Opobo (now Ikot Abasi) (Law); Uyo (Agriculture).

This incredible feat of ethnic / national cohesiveness and collective aspirations, and altruism for the general good, manifestly impressed and catalyzed other nationalities in Nigeria to emulate. Thus, the Ibo Federal Union (later Ibo State Union) was formed in 1943. The Bauchi General Improvement Union, founded under the leadership of Sir Tafawa Balawa, came into being in 1943, and it is believed to be the forerunner of ... "(Northern Peoples Descendants), the "Egbe Omo Oduduwa" founded by Awolowo in London in 1945 had its debut in Lagos".

A vision realized is indeed a vision divine; and a vision that leads others to greater heights is a vision sublime. Thus, what began in Akwa Ibom State, became the model for even the larger, dominant ethnic nationalities in Nigeria to follow. Standing, therefore, on the platform of Akwa Ibom State Pioneers, I see ahead of us renewed "cohesiveness, collective aspirations, and altruism for the general good", which our people exhibited so long ago. Indeed, during my Administration, We shall re-discover and recreate ourselves. But this will be towards the mobilization and development of the common folks in the village communities, not just a few elites, as was the case at the dawn of our political consciousness.

Other lessons we can draw, thus far, from our Pioneers include:

- Grassroots social mobilization.
- Strong bond of unity among our Peoples.
- Pursuit of a common cause.
- Spirit of co-operation.
- Patriotic zeal.
- Excellence in learning and character, determination to succeed.
- "Upward ever, backward never" spirit of the Pioneers.
- Sources of inspiration to subsequent generations.
- Our Pioneer "Merchants of Light" still shine like lodestars and beacons. Their families still flicker with light to Akwa Ibom and the Nation (e.g. Governor Attah, Senator Udoma, etc.),
- Akwa Ibomites resident outside the State, like those who are today overseas or in Diaspora were made to contribute to the common cause.

"MERCHANTS OF LIGHT"

All "Merchants of Light" scholars had equally intimidating academic achievements. They remain as our role models even until today. Their legacies are immense. They were:

1. Asuquo U. Idiong (Abak): Medicine in Canada (Where he died prematurely); and was replaced by Effiong U. Ekpo of Abak who sti((studied Medicine that was zoned to Abak, but he studied in Ireland, U.K.
2. Basseyy U. A. Attah (Uyo), father of His Excellency Arc. (Obong) Victor Attah, Governor of Akwa Ibom State. Chief B. U. A. Attah studied at Tuskegee Institute of Agriculture, U.S.A., Iowa State University, U.S.A.;

and Trinidad School of Agriculture. He was the first Nigerian to obtain a postgraduate degree in Agriculture.

3. Egbert U. Udoma (Opobo): Law, Trinity College, Dublin; and Oxford University, England. He was the first Acting Governor of Uganda and first Chief Justice of Uganda; and a Judge of the Supreme Court of Nigeria. He was the father of our Distinguished Senator Udoma.
4. Obot E. Antia-Obong (Itu): Medicine, Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, Scotland, U.K.
5. Ibanga U. Akpabio (Ikot Ekpene): Education, Columbia University, New York, U.S.A. He was my late uncle.

8. LEADERSHIP PEDIGREE: AN ENDURING LEGACY

My late Uncle, Dr. I. U. Akpabio, therefore, was one of the "Merchants of Light". Apart from his own personal intellectual and professional attainments, it impressed me most that he remained at the socio-political vanguard in the service of Akwa Ibom people. He rose to become the Eastern Regional Minister of Education in 1957; Minister of Internal Affairs in 1963; and several times he served as the Acting Premier of the Eastern Region. His degrees were in education, obtained even in those early days from America's most prestigious, Ivy League Institution, Columbia University, New York.

But what an Uncle was may not rub off so easily onto a grand sibling, as much as what a grandfather was. Indeed, I am a "chip of the old block". But the question is: Which block? What stock am I from?

My grandfather, the Late Okuku Udo Akpabio, was the First Warrant Chief in Ikot Ekpene. The office of Warrant Chief deserves explanation. In British Colonial Rule, Warrant Chiefs were at the foundation of colonial authority. They were the grassroots instruments of colonial administration. Apart from the fact that a Warrant Chief was the highest traditional authority, he also presided over the Native Court, where his decisions were final; and his pronouncements the law. Warrant Chiefs, therefore, doubled as rulers and judges at the same. Their power and authority being next only to the "white man" or British official, Warrant Chiefs were the native rulers or intermediaries between colonialists and native Africans. In Colonial terms, therefore they were the agents of Indirect Rule and the local surrogates of British authority. They wielded powers far beyond that of the present Local Government Chairmen or Heads of Council. They were autocrats.

The British practiced Indirect Rule in India and Nigeria between 1891 and 1930; and Lord Lugard, the first Governor-General of Nigeria, was its architect. In those days what is now Akwa Ibom State was divided into "six districts" by the colonial government. They were Abak, Eket, Ikot Ekpene, Itu, Opobo (now Ikot Abasi), and Uyo. One can then appreciate the extent of the domain of my grandfather's influence and authority. However, his position did not influence the selection of one of his sons, Chief I. U. Akpabio, for overseas studies, among the first "Merchants of Light". That was purely by merit. Interestingly too, one of my grandfather's grandchildren became a Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and a legal justice in Akwa Ibom State. I am referring to my cousin, Senator (Justice) Nsima Akpabio.

When, therefore, in my own generation I was appointed the Honorable Commissioner of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs in Akwa Ibom State, I felt what a coincidence that the mantle of my grandfather's authority should fall on me, generations after. However, I did not consider myself to be a Warrant Chief. Nevertheless, I was determined to discharge my duties with the same

passion, zeal, strong sense of mission and dedication to the service of my people of the entire Akwa Ibom State.

The spirit of philanthropy and passion for education and the urge to help the underprivileged often credited to me is also a family trait. A leader that loves his people, cares about their welfare and wants their advancement; and more especially dedicates himself to the service of his people cannot, but, do so sacrificially. He must be willing to volunteer his time, energy and financial resources as well, if he has the latter. Anyone imbued with the sense of service will hardly turn into a heartless hoarder of ill-gotten public wealth, to the detriment of his people. My great Uncle, Chief Ibanga Udo Akpabio was a philanthropist. He loved education beyond the fact that he held the doctor of philosophy degree in this field of learning. Just as Professor Eyo Ita founded the famous West African People's Institute (W.A.P.I.), Calabar; and Sir Udo Udoma established the Secondary Commercial School, Ibekwe in Ikot Abasi; Dr. I. U. Akpabio in 1962 also established the Independence High School, Ukana, Ikot Ekpene.

Our Pioneers fought for colonial emancipation. They were men of vision, with a deep sense of mission, to which they dedicated their endeavours. Our generational struggle today is for the emancipation of our people from poverty. Any political aspirant who lacks this perception and commitment; and does not have a clear vision of how to win the war against poverty, disunity, ignorance and backwardness should not nurse any political ambition. Such an aspirant will be only a taker, not a giver nor an achiever. He will not move us forward.

My family origin, lying at the very core and cradle of the first sociopolitical organization (Ibibio Union) that existed in Akwa Ibom State, or rather, as we saw earlier, that existed in Nigeria, I have riveted into my conscience, the enormous burden of living up to great social and political expectations. The Objectives, Aspirations (Vision) and Strategies of Akwa Ibom Pioneers were driven by the philosophy of enlightenment and humanitarianism aimed at the total emancipation of our people socially, educationally, politically, spiritually, and commercially. It is amazing that what our Pioneers envisioned 60 years ago, are still our Vision, yet to be realized in this New Century and Millennium. If our Pioneers were to award us performance scores or marks, there is no doubt that they would rank us as miserable non-starters. They would label us a wasted generation.

9. VISION AS HINDSIGHT, INSIGHT AND FORESIGHT

Imagine what the Motto (Vision) and logo of the Ibibio Union was, way back in the 1930's; and how relevant they still are today.

The motto contained the following:

- Love
- Unity
- Co-operation
- Self-Sacrifice
- Freedom

The Union's badge had the following logos:

- A hoe
- An Oil Palm
- A burning candle
- Two swords
- A horn
- An open Bible
- A shield

At our prevalent low level of technological development agriculturally and industrially, we can say that most of these symbols accurately depict where we are today and define which way we should be heading. Is our agriculture still not dependent on the hoe? Is crude palm oil from the tree still not the mainstay of our rural economy? Are we still not burning candle light at night? Oh! The gun has replaced the sword; and the GSM handset the horn!

Yes, I thought we should recall where we came from; where we are today, so that we can discern where we will be tomorrow.

My Vision is, therefore, a combination of hindsight, insight, and foresight.

It was this Vision that set me out early in my youthful days to volunteer my humble services to humanity; and to serve my educational institutions in the following capacities:

- Boys Scout
- General Senior Perfect at the Federal Government College, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- Honourable Speaker of the Parliament, Student Union Government, University of Calabar.

To industrialize our rural communities is today my next compelling Vision that has prompted my desire to serve as the Governor of Akwa Ibom State in 2007.

10. NATIONAL OR MEGA PROJECTS

Background

In the preceding part of this Manifesto, I have exhaustively explained the Vision I have for Akwa Ibom State. The purpose was to create an awareness and proper understanding of the most salient issues embedded in My Vision the background; the substance and cardinal concepts; Vision foundation; sources of inspiration; the personalities and historical circumstances that have informed this Vision; as well as the background philosophy behind it. But more importantly, I wanted to rally all Akwa Ibomites behind the common cause, which our parents and grandparents have grasped and tackled more successfully with more tangible results and breakthroughs than our present generation, the issue of disunity whose head is uglier today than in the past.

The next part of this Manifesto will, therefore, be devoted to how I intend to address these, and other challenges and opportunities posed by the globalized international economic environment; our nation's democratic reforms; oil and gas industry developments, especially local content policy; the historic milestones of the Attah Administration; the enormous potential contributions which can be made by Akwa Ibom sons and daughters living in foreign countries (in Diaspora); my ineluctable personal grip of Akwa Ibom politics right from the cradle; and most importantly the hurdles posed by our multiculturalism or the Nigerian factor, in reality a blessing in disguise!

Our Contributions to Nationhood

Akwa Ibom in the national scheme of things has often been the first to be heard and seen, but the last to be served. Imagine being the first group to sponsor Nigerians abroad on what today we would call staff development, human capital building, manpower training; being the first to launch an umbrella ethnic national union for self-help; the first to achieve political identity; and yet among the last groups where a state was created. We have always had national visions, which raised us to pre-eminence in national service and nation-building. With my deep sense of history I cannot but remind Akwa Ibomites and fellow Nigerians of our following contributions to building the Nation:

1. First Nigerian Military Officer (NA/ I) and first Commissioned Officer in the British Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF) and the Nigerian Army - Brigadier Wellington Bassey.
2. Father of the Nigeria Delegation to the 1947 Constitutional Conference in London - Chief Nyong Essien, CMG, CON.
3. First Leader of Government Business or Premier of Eastern Nigeria -Prof. Eyo Ita

4. First West African Catholic Bishop in 1953 and first West African Cardinal Priest (1975) - Cardinal Dominic Ekandem (v) First Governor of the Nigerian Central Bank - Chief (Dr.) Clement Isong

The Nation should listen to Akwa Ibom State even the more today because our sons and daughters have continued to lift Nigeria to greater heights in their various professions. Among the technical distinctions earned by Akwa Ibom people recently, which should serve as signposts and sources of inspiration, especially to our omen; and convince the Nation to accept Akwa Ibom viewpoints, developmental initiatives and technical inputs are:

1. Mrs. Mfon Usoro: Director-General and Chief Executive Officer, National Maritime Administration of Nigeria
2. Mrs. Gloria Essien: Executive Director of ExxonMobil
3. Engr (Mrs.) Mayen Adetiba: First woman to head the Association of Consulting Engineers of Nigeria
4. Francis Dan Akpan: Flag Officer Commanding the Western Naval Command.
5. Bartholomew B. Ebong: Group Managing Director, Union Bank Plc.

Mega Projects

These are major projects that will impact on the nation, the region and the international community as a whole. As Governor, my preliminary obligation will include to:

- Identify and orchestrate mega projects
- Ascertain the potential economic benefits
- Identify technical partners
- Identify relevant Federal Government Policy Framework
- Determine funding agencies and partnerships
- Provide feasibility studies
- Ensure sustainability, environmental soundness, social equity.
- Facilitate implementation

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is an integrated political and economic entity, whose interdependency and cohesion are increasing with time. Developments in any part of the country are bound to affect other parts directly or indirectly. Much as

each member of the federation, through its own legislature, can initiate and adopt socio-economic programmes that enhance the well-being of her people, it is the duty of the Federal Government to mediate, co-ordinate and enhance both policy and project synergy among our federating units; just as a policy of, brotherliness and good neighborliness are expected of the various states.

The following mega projects have been initiated by Akwa Ibom State Government and are under construction. They will impact positively on the lives of all Nigerians wherever they are; these are major contributions to national development.

The projects are:

1. Akwa Ibom International Airport
2. Akwa Ibom Power Company
3. Akwa Ibom Refining and Petrochemical Company

My administration will add the following national or mega projects:

1. Ibaka Integrated Deep Seaport (with Shipyard and Offshore Oil Terminal)
2. Akwa Ibom Railway Extension

The proposed mega projects are, therefore, essentially in the area of national infrastructural development and industrialization.

Federal Government Petroleum Policy Framework

1. Barter Agreements with Asian Multinationals for Infrastructural Development

Now that the Federal Government has allowed China, India and Korea to enter the upstream petroleum sector; and awarded oil concessions for these fresh entrants to explore and produce oil and gas; their investment terms must be nationally utilized to the benefit of all. Among the Asian multinationals that is now in our petroleum industry is an India consortium comprising the India Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (INGC) and the Mittal Group, the world's largest steel manufacturer. In a barter agreement with our Federal Government this Consortium will be allowed to produce 650,000 barrels of oil per day and in turn commit 6 billion US Dollars into the construction of:

- I. 1000km railway line that will run from Port Harcourt to Kano.
- II. 2000-MW coal-fired Independent Power Plant

- III. 120,000 barrels per day export oil refinery Large-scale agricultural development projects.

The recent Federal Government policy of tying oil concessions to downstream and infrastructural development in the country has also enjoyed strong appeal to China. China National Petroleum Company, China National Offshore Oil Company and the Chinese Petroleum Corporation of Taiwan have acquired several offshore blocks. These include 45 per cent shares in Akpo Field (OPL 246) operated by Total. This is one of the largest fields in the deeper offshore, with oil reserves of 700 million barrels of crude and condensate and 2.5 trillion standard cubic feet of gas. Although the Akpo Field in the Eastern Niger Delta deeper offshore, it does not lie exactly off Akwa Ibom State, Total holds a large number of oil acreages in our offshore. The Chinese companies in their barter agreement with the Federal Government will:

- I. Construct a 1000-MW hydroelectric station on the Mambilla Plateau in Adamawa State.
- II. Acquire controlling share in the 110,000 barrels per day Kaduna Refinery.
- III. Manage the Port Harcourt Refinery

But a more exciting barter agreement was struck with the Korean National Oil Company (KNOC) in July 2005, in a Memorandum of Understanding in which Korea will:

- I. Construct a Shipyard in Nigeria, Koreans are leading international shipbuilders, specializing in the construction of FPSO (Floating Production Storage Off-take) platforms, hence they should construct Nigeria's shipyard at Ibaka, Akwa Ibom State.
- II. Build a 2000-MW IPP; a gas pipeline from Niger Delta to the North.
- III. Manage one of the Nigerian Refineries.

2. Nigerian Local Content Development Policy

This is perhaps, the ideal Federal Government policy window offered to oil-producing states like Akwa Ibom by the Federal Government. I intend to utilize the Local Content Policy to the fullest to establish mega projects in order to fast-track Akwa Ibom State development

The Local Content Policy aims at arresting the huge capital flight that Nigeria has been experiencing in the petroleum sector. Of the 8 billion US Dollars invested annually in this sector only 10 per cent is of direct benefit to the local Nigerian economy. In 2001 the British oil engineering firm AMECO Services Ltd; raised eyebrows and dust in Nigeria when Shell

awarded to it a contract worth 460 million US Dollars, to supply the equipment for the Bonga Field deeper offshore platform in the Niger Delta. Thereafter, in 2005, the Federal Government directed that:

- I. All FPSO construction contracts must carry out topside fabrication and integration locally.
- II. Front-end Engineering Design (FEED) and detailed engineering designs for all projects are to be domiciled in Nigeria.
- III. All fabrication of subsea systems including riser and flow lines, subsea assemblies and ancillary facilities including system integration tests are to be performed in Nigeria.
- IV. Fabrication of all piles, decks, anchors, buoys, jackets, bridges, flare booms and storage tanks.

The above offshore technical fabrications and services hardly exist anywhere in Nigeria, hence the need to construct a modern integrated port with shipyard and offshore oil engineering capabilities at Ibaka in Akwa Ibom State, as envisioned below.

Ibaka Deep Sea Port Complex (with Shipyard and Offshore Oil Terminal)

This port will be the next most strategic port in Nigeria after Lagos. Just as Lagos occupies the Western maritime and industrial gateway into Nigeria, Ibaka as the easternmost landward outpost in Nigeria, will command the nation's eastern gateway.

Strategic, Economic and Historical Factors

1. Recent changes in the geography of eastern Nigerian frontier, resulting from the loss of Bakassi Peninsular to the Cameroon Republic. Mbo Local Government Area, near the ancient city of Oron has now become the last Local Government Area, in Nigeria, rather than Bakassi.
2. Our Armed Forces have been withdrawn from Bakassi; the Nigerian Navy now has restricted access to the Eastern Naval Command, Calabar; because the mouth or Estuary of the Cross River has become an international waterway, jointly owned with the Republic of Cameroon; the international boundary now runs North-South along the middle of the Cross River Estuary.
3. The hitherto low-keyed presence of the Nigerian Navy at Ibaka, overlooking Bakassi, established during the Nigerian-Cameroonian Boundary Dispute over Bakassi, needs to be expanded into a full Naval Base with tactical capabilities.

4. With its most open access to the ocean in the Gulf of Guinea, Ibaka port is strategic to petroleum supply from oil-rich Gulf of Guinea to Eastern United States. United States multinational oil corporations have invested heavily in the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa, from Nigeria down to Angola, with the Niger Delta offshore as the largest supplier of petroleum. This has attracted U.S. Naval presence into the Gulf of Guinea.

A deep sea port is, therefore, needed on the Nigerian coast to service naval fleets and offshore oil operations. A bilateral security agreement, known as the Nigeria - United States Gulf of Guinea Energy Security Initiative, has been established to protect U.S. oil and gas interests in the region. This must be matched with port, dockyard and enormous naval and petroleum maritime support services .. Ibaka should, therefore, constitute the core port capabilities expansion programme that is necessitated by the new strategic and economic importance of the Nigerian eastern seaboard. This emerging role and dominance was recently underscored in the following newspaper analysis:

"Against the background of heightening tension in the Niger Delta area, the country's overriding interest in the gulf is because it accounts for about 50 per cent of the crude oil as well as other economic potentials of the zone that stretches from the West. Africa coast line through Cameroon to Angola".

The Gulf of Guinea region alone currently hosts about 14 billion barrels of crude oil, mainly, locked-up in the deep offshore, with 33 fixed crude oil production platforms, 20 floating production storages, 13 floaters and off-take vessels, all of which are estimated at several billions of dollars.

The region is expected to host about 159 fixed platforms and 700 oil wells by 2008 and any disruption of activities in the area would affect the world energy supply.

Besides, every additional flow of one million barrels of crude oil from the gulf is expected to attract about \$10billion fresh investments to the contiguous countries.

The country wants to position itself favourably through the Gulf of Guinea security strategy and to take advantage of the security situation in the Middle East by providing a secure and stable alternative".

- Thisday, Tuesday, August 29,2006

5. Existing Nigerian ports were established way back in colonial days, between 1451 and 1870, as slave ports. Those were the days when smaller ocean crafts with shallow drafts could penetrate the hinterland. Lagos, Bonny, New Calabar and Old Calabar (the present one) were established in those days as the Atlantic slave trade terminals. Port Harcourt and other second generation ports and a hosts of river bank trading posts, now abandoned, were set up after the Berlin Conference of

1884-85, by British imperialists for mostly palm produce trade in the Niger Delta; and to move imported manufactured goods into the hinterland. With the emergence of the Niger Delta as a world-class oil-producing region a third generation of ports exclusively for oil and gas processing (export terminals) were established by oil companies at Onne, Bonny, Forcados, Escravos, Brass, Pennington, Qua Iboe, etc. These are really not conventional ports for shipping; but entirely private, company-owned ports for oil tankers. However, they provide an idea of how a deep port should be configured.

It can be said, therefore, that Nigeria has no other major seaport, except Lagos. The others are so far up river courses and so shallow that they are totally avoided by large ocean liners. Below are the distances of Nigerian ports from the ocean; and their shallow water depths which limit the amount of cargo and the size of ships. Besides, these ports require regular dredging.

Port	Draft/Dept (Metres)	Distance from Upstream (km)
(i) Lagos	9.5m	
(ii) Port Harcourt	7.2m	65
(iii) Onne (downstream from Port Harcourt)	9.2m	25
(iv) Calabar	8.0m	67
(v) Warri	7.5m	1'00
(vi) Koko	6.4m	32
(vii) Sapele	6.4m	100

With the opportunities offered by our petroleum industry Nigeria should not sink any more resources into these old colonial ports. But, rather, a modern deep sea port should be constructed at Ibaka in Akwa Ibom State.

A comparison of the water depth (draft) at oil terminals reveals that Nigeria has not yet developed a major seaport. These terminals, like Ibaka, are located right close to the ocean; much closer to the ocean than regular Nigerian ports, except Lagos. But note the greater water depths (drafts) required by large ships (oil tankers).

Oil Terminals	Drafts
I. Bonny On-Shore	(m) 15.0
II. Bonny Off-Shore	22.86
III. Escravos	32.0,21.95
IV. Pennington	13.72

V. Forcados	19.81
VI. Qua Iboe	26.56

Configuration for Ibaka Integrated Port

- I. Deep offshore oil and gas development; and offshore technical services capabilities based on the current Local Content Policy of the Federal Government and also involving offshore joint ventures with Companies in Aberdeen, Scotland; and Rio De Janeiro, Brazil and South Korea will embrace:
 - (a) Construction of supply boats for offshore oil operations.
 - (b) Fabrication of offshore lifting cranes, maintenance and repairs
 - (c) Production of wet Christmas trees
 - (d) Supply of subsea manifolds
 - (e) Construction of oil platform jackets for oil production systems.
 - (f) Dry docking for oil installations offshore
 - (g) FPSO fabrication, etc.
- II. Ibaka Liquefied Natural Gas Plant, would process for export the voluminous associated gas from the extensive offshore gas production in the eastern Niger Delta. It is conceived as a viable gas export activity at this deep seaport.
- III. Gulf of Guinea deep offshore companies in neighboring West African countries (down to Angola) will utilize our services at Ibaka Port. Our vision for Ibaka should transform it beyond its local trawler terminal and local fish market into a modern international offshore oil terminal industrial port complex. If we can create a regional airport in Akwa Ibom State, we can certainly develop a deep sea port for our regional offshore oil operations as well.
- IV. Nigeria must begin now to acquire the technology for future oil operations when our deep offshore oil fields would have been too depleted to continue to attract multinational oil companies; and the nation would have become a mature or declining oil-producing nation, providing only enough for itself, to meet its domestic oil and gas needs. Akwa Ibom State can lead the way into the acquisition of a local, domesticated offshore oil technology. With its local content policy, there is no doubt that the Federal Government will buy into our initiatives such as the Ibaka Deep Sea Port Offshore Petroleum

Services Programme. Other West African countries (Angola, Gabon, Congo, Cameroon) would do the same.

- V. Supported by these considerations, both strategic and economic, I intend to undertake a detailed Feasibility Study on the Ibaka Deep Seaport, as a matter of priority. The Nation must position itself to generate fullest employment opportunities, financial benefits, industrial multiplier effect and technological transfer from its vast world-class offshore oil and gas resources. Now when the whole world, especially the United States is interested in safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea is the right time when Nigeria should expand and modernize her maritime capabilities.

Host Community Support

Recognition of the maritime significance of Oron by the Federal Government is evident from the establishment here of the Nigerian Nautical College. Oron-speaking people in the five Local Government Areas Oron, Okopedi, Udung Uko, Urue Offong Oruko, Mbo are mostly seafarers. As already noted above, the Director-General/CEO; an Executive Director of ExxonMobil, the largest multinational oil company operating offshore Akwa Ibom; and the high-ranking Flag Officer Commanding the Western Naval Command are indigenes of Akwa Ibom State. Besides, the Oron nation is known for her highly industrious citizens, truly distinguished in all fields of human endeavour.

Akwa Ibom Railway Extension

Like the nation's ports, the Nigerian railway system is totally of colonial vintage, out of touch with modern-day realities. That was why it collapsed completely. It was designed to transport tin and columbite minerals; and cotton, ground nuts, and other agricultural products from the Northern part of the country to Southern ports, for overseas shipment. Imported goods were sent into the hinterland. The railways, indeed, provided the most dependable means of human traffic in its heyday.

But our national railways expansion must accord with the realities and imperatives of our modern economic development and industrialization agenda.

Part of the Coastal Zone Socio-economic Development Council recently launched by President Olusegun Obasanjo, with Chief A. K. Horsfall as Chairman ought to include railway extension into the Niger Delta.

The 1000km railway line which the Indians are to construct from Port Harcourt to Kano in exchange for oil and gas production in the delta should be rendered more economic to stimulate industrial investments and services by extending it into Akwa Ibom State. To facilitate movement of goods the railway extension should run from Aba through Uyo into the new international airport and terminate in the coast at Ibaka Port Complex. This would cater for the Oron-Aba axis, a

most congested human corridor with enormous traffic and industrial potentials, to be served by a seaport, an airport and a railway line.

It is a tribute to the vision of President Obasanjo to award oil and gas concessions in the Niger Delta in order to attract railway infrastructure. We in this part of the country must demonstrate to the rest of the Nation our readiness to utilize such an opportunity for our long-awaited sustainable socio-economic development, otherwise we shall have ourselves to blame. On my part, I shall commence the Feasibility study on the Akwa Ibom Railway Line as soon as I assume office.

Promotion of National Unity

If nations experience and accept to live with trans boundary technology transfer; if they can accommodate collapsing trade and economic barriers; if the European Union can exhibit incipient avant-gardism towards a regional or multi-national government; if democracy can be accepted universally as the normative form of government; if human rights and women's empowerment should transmogrify into transcendental global issues; then I see no reason why I should not advocate that Nigerians should move closer together and homogenize culturally, politically and economically as America has done in its "melting pot". I see no reason why Nigerians cannot sing and dance to this American pop song which the Americans shared with one another in the 1960s, as they achieved the most spectacular feat of landing men on the moon. The toga of tribalism has tortured the Nigerian and, indeed, the African for too long. Let us throw away tribalism and recall this song:

This Land is your Land

This Land is my Land

From California to the New York Island

From the redwood forest to the coastal islands

This land was meant for you and me.

- Lyric of pop song by the Seekers in the 1960s

What this song was telling Americans was that their country belonged to all of them, from California and redwood forests on the West Coast of the U. S.A., to New York Islands on the East Coast. In essence, Americans asked one another to forget about or ignore state boundaries; and live as one people in one Nation.

Can this be said of Nigerians today, when the so-called non-indigenes cannot obtain jobs outside their states; and their children have to pay much higher and discriminatory school fees; not to talk of all forms of socio-political injustices meted out to non-indigenes? Can we say we enjoy equal political rights and that we are not practicing apartheid or tribalism when to be President of Nigeria depends on where you come from?

It was after he had come face to face with disunity that Governor Attah summoned Akwa Ibom people in his historic address at the commencement of his Administration, and said:

"Come Let us Built Together"

Building together is, indeed, the antidote to divisiveness and the "pull-him-down" syndrome.

If President Olusegun Obasanjo could labour so hard, travel the whole wide world before he could persuade the Paris Club, the London Club and the World Bank to allow him throw off the yoke of crippling foreign debt, I will join hands with the next President of Nigeria and our African brothers and throw off the yoke of tribalism and eradicate it from the national consciousness of the African. I have the personal credibility to do so, since in my own personal life I have proved socially and culturally that I am completely and perfectly a de-tribalized multi-cultural Nigerian. I will, therefore, join hands fully and promote national unity by whatever means possible. This will be among my contributions to Nigerian nation-building. To me this will be another mega or pan-Nigerian Project.

11. VISIONARY PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Planning and development of Akwa Ibom State during my Administration will be based on:

- National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS)
- Akwa Ibom State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (AK-SEEDS).
- SEEDS Benchmarking by the National Planning Commission (NPC).
- Akwa Ibom Economic Summit

NEEDS

Aimed at national value re-orientation, poverty reduction, wealth creation and employment generation, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) is the SOCIO-ECONOMIC IDEOLOGY of President Olusegun Obasanjo's democratic administration.

I fully accept the goals of NEEDS and solemnly pledge to strive towards its fulfillment.

I accept the Vision and pillars of NEEDS, one of which is the 2001 KURU DECLARATION, which embodies our ultimate National Vision, viz:

To build a truly great African democratic country, politically united, integrated and stable, economically prosperous, socially organized; with equal opportunity for all, and responsibility from all; to become the catalyst of (Africa) Renaissance, and making adequate all-embracing contributions, sub-regionally, regionally and globally.

NEEDS embodies the canons of our national economic blueprint. Apart from the provision of physical and social infrastructure NEEDS offers to me the following challenges to which I fully will address myself as dictated by my private sector and business background; and interest in promoting rural community enterprises. I, therefore, pledge to uphold these tenets:

1. Offer farmers improved support, machinery and crop varieties to help boost agricultural productivity, and tackle poverty seriously, because over half of Nigerians are poor and are farmers.
2. Support Small-and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) which will help create jobs. Together with AK-SEEDS, we shall implement integrated rural development programmes to arrest the flow of our youths from rural to urban centers.
3. Empower the private sector as the engine of economic growth in Nigeria; the executor, investor and manager of business.

4. Play the role of enabler, facilitator, regulator, that will help the private sector to grow, create jobs, and generate wealth.
5. Promote private enterprise by increasing access to credits; hold regular consultations with private sector operators; grant land use rights and facilitate private sector development in the area of social equity, environmental responsibility and sustainability.
6. Develop the industrial sector by relying more on local resources and less on imports. I will be guided by local research and development support from our Universities and Research Institutions, and strategies that seek to promote science and technology based on small-and medium-sized enterprises. Some of these enterprises will be generated in our Ibom Science Park; and other technology and business incubation centres. Emphasis will be on agricultural produce processing, industrial chemicals like ethanol, information and communication technologies, biotechnology, etc.

A cardinal objective of NEEDS is to stop our wasteful exploitation of natural resources which we sell or export as raw products. Internal product processing will generate jobs and diversify export earnings. Ambitious targets set by NEEDS for the industrial sector are: 7 per cent annual growth, 70 per cent capacity utilization; and that 70 per cent of the investment should be made by the private sector.

AK-SEEDS

After the Federal Government launched NEEDS in the middle of 2003, Akwa Ibom State was the first to launch the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy in December 2003. I will, therefore, accept the responsibility of implementing fully the recommendation of AK-SEEDS.

Akwa Ibom State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (AK-SEEDS) can be defined as:

- A comprehensive socio-economic blueprint for transformation.
- The State economic reform process.
- A Social Contract between Government and the Governed on how the State will overcome obstacles to progress, with enhanced service delivery,
- A focused intervention framework with measurable impact that satisfies the demands and criteria set by our development partners.

Akwa Ibom State, as previously observed was the first to launch its SEEDS which is properly aligned with the national development strategy (NEEDS).

Participatory methodology was involved in the preparation of AK-SEEDS, the final reports being a synthesis of submissions of several technical study groups. Participants included all segments of society, viz:

- Leading politicians
- The public sector
- Technocrats
- Representatives of private sector
- The Civil Society
- Consultants

The Final Report presented in Volumes I and II; and the Abridged Version covers:

- Analysis of the State economic background
- Strategic issues
- In-depth analysis of constraints and recommendations for the various sectors of the economy.
- Strategic implementation and evaluation guidelines

Ak-Seeds is the most realistic road map to industrialization and socio-economic development of Akwa Ibom State, which I plan to adopt as my primary working tool.

Akwa Ibom Economic Summit

Policies and implementation milestones of AK-SEEDS, NEEDS, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were subjected to reviews by stakeholders at the Akwa Ibom State Economic Summit (AISES) on March 24, 2006. The President of the Federal Republic was represented by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Obong Ufot Ekaette; the State Governor presented his scorecard titled the "Akwa Ibom Project"; with other addresses by the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Professor Charles Soludo; and by the United Nations Development Programme Resident Representative in Nigeria. Being such a high profile peer-group review and policy forum, the following highlights will guide my own Administration as they deal with most pertinent Akwa Ibom issues:

1. Acknowledgement of Giant Strides in Akwa Ibom State social and infrastructural development. In fact a newspaper report captured highlights of the Governor's Summit presentation, most impressively under the

banner headlines: "Akwa Ibom Economic Summit: A Rebirth for Infrastructure". This speaks for itself:

"The State is developing urban roads that will be motorable throughout the year. Uyo, the State capital, has been completely transformed, with several interconnecting motorable roads. Since our inception, about N40billion has been spent on the construction and rehabilitation of roads throughout the State, including intercity roads. In 2004 alone, road development contracts covering a total of 230km and valued at N24billion were awarded. In 2005 contracts earlier determined at the instance of the contractors as a result of the resource control saga were re-awarded. In all road contracts spanning a distance of 88km valued at N9.9billion were awarded in 2005. In 2006, a total sum of N12billion has been proposed to finance road development. We are determined to improve on road development since this remains the most vital mode of transportation in the State today. The State Government has committed a total of N15.5billion into the ongoing urban water scheme in the State. This is made up of repayment of African Development Bank (ADB) guaranteed facilities, its direct contribution and other sundry charges. This has also raised the installed urban water capacity from 10,000 cubic meters a day in 1999 to 200,000 cubic meters a day currently. The water scheme covers 14 local governments.

Some of the milestones aimed at further boosting the business environment in the State and provide investors alternative mode of accessing the State, include the new international airport at Okobo in the outskirts of Uyo. The airport is a "Maintenance, Overhaul and Repairs (MOR) project with facilities for maintenance, overhaul of engine and repairs of airplanes. The airport project shall not only be a source of revenue to the State but shall effectively complement the 5-star hotel currently at its completion stages.

The Hotel has an 18-hole world standard golf course and a marina with water front sports facilities. Other facilities include a 120-exquisite / standard bedrooms, three blocks of apartment suites with 60 rooms and seven chalets of 2 and 3 bedrooms each.

- Saturday Independent, March 11,2006.

2. Gaps to Be Filled, according to the summit in Akwa Ibom are in areas of:
 - I. Human capital
 - II. Health
 - III. Infrastructure
 - IV. Entrepreneurial Development

With so much already sunk into infrastructure, my Administration will now address the last area of deficiency, Entrepreneurial Development, as the priority.

3. Entrepreneurial Development Strategies Recommended by the summit are:

I. To attain the goals-of AK-SEEDS and sustainable development, a strong private partnership must be developed for the private sector to:

- Create jobs
- Raise incomes
- Raise productivity
- Take the lead in economic activities
- Raise funds from the capital market

II. But Akwa Ibom Economic Summit gave Government the less challenging tasks below:

Government concentrates attention and limited resources to (amongst others):

- the provision of necessary infrastructure
- maintenance of law and order
- ensuring good governance
- creating stability in the system

4. Vision. My Administration will acknowledge giants strides in infrastructural development; and press the Federal Government to link Akwa Ibom by rail and construct a modern integrated port and shipyard at Ibaka. But, we shall shift State infrastructure more into rural areas, where we shall generate industrial enterprises. Government will take the bull by the horn and stimulate the private sector. Instruments of governance, administration, and investment such as the recently established Uyo Branch of the Nigerian Stock Exchange, Micro-Finance Institutions, etc;, will continue to be committed to the private sector.

SEEDS Benchmarking Exercise

My Administration will also be conscious of and fully abide by the norms of good governance recently advocated by the National Planning Commission (NPC), to monitor how state governments are performing in the implementation of their

State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. A standard set of objectives was used in a benchmarking exercise, viz:

- Participatory policy-making and planning.
- Fiscal prudence
- Due process in delivery of services at all levels
- Institutionalizing of the principles of value-for-money in service delivery.

Specific SEEDS assessment yardsticks that State shall comply with include:

- I. Evidence that the House of Assembly scrutinizes the State Auditor-General's Reports.
- II. Preparation of annual financial reports regularly.
- III. Regular monitoring of the finances of state-owned enterprises and parastatals.
- IV. Up-to-date records of internal and external debts and debt-management strategies.
- V. Documentation and transparency in obtaining new loans.
- VI. Proper debt management records with debt sustain ability analysis showing financial implementation of debt servicing.
- VII. Increased recurrent budget allocations to areas identified as SEEDS priorities.

12. MY PRIVATE SECTOR BACKGROUND

Mine is a perfect blend of public and private sector experience. Since I have been presenting and discussing my political experience this far, it is about time I unveiled my professional and entrepreneurial profile. As a legal practitioner and private investor I have traversed the following business terrain.

1. Legal practitioner with the prestigious firm of A. Obunike Orakwusi & Co., Lagos.
2. Legal practitioner, Akpabio, Oduoza & Co., Lagos.
3. Associate Partner, Paul Usoro & Co., Legal Practitioners, Lagos.
4. Director, Corporate Affairs / Legal Services, 1995-2002, EMIS Telecoms (a private licensed Fixed Wireless Telecommunications Company)
5. Pioneer Representative of Private Telephone Operators (PTOs) at the Interconnectivity Agreement Negotiation with NITEL.
6. Acting Managing Director / Chief Executive, EMIS Telecoms, 2002, Lagos.
7. National Publicity Secretary of the Association of Telecoms Companies of Nigeria (ATCON).

Private initiative and entrepreneurship will drive my Akwa Ibom State industrial and business promotion. My personal experience has enabled me fashion appropriate strategies outlined below.

13. STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE AND NEW BUSINESS VENTURES

Sustainable Industrialization Summit

At the risk of sounding too informal, I need to introduce and apply two new terms: "know-how" and "strategic governance". So, I must explain them. "Know-how" simply implies the ability to get something done; while "strategic governance" means the skillful planning and management of government affairs to achieve desired public goals. As a private sector person both terms are appealing, being pragmatic and compatible with my own background. I intend to jostle around fresh ideas and strategies for our development in my presentation below.

Out of sheer desperation and sense of urgency I am throwing together various ideas, some new, some old; to show the need for us to brainstorm over the "way forward" or the "road map" to industrialization.

I also want to demonstrate the urgent need for an Akwa Ibom State Sustainable Industrialization Summit that will involve stakeholders like:

- Akwa Ibom Indigenes Abroad (Ibom Peoples Congress)
- Private Investors / Businessmen
- Foreign Economic Delegations from Malaysia, Brazil, Korea, China, India, Indonesia, Taiwan, etc.
- Nigerian Research Institutes and Universities
- Oil Companies
- Nigerian Export Promotions Council
- Manufacturer's Association of Nigeria (MAN.)
- Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce of Industries, Manufacturers, Mining and Agriculture (NACCIMMA)
- Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN)
- Financial Institutions
- Raw Materials Research and Development Council
- International Agencies (e.g. World Bank, UN Agencies, etc.)
- Foreign Embassies

The Summit will evolve a practical, phased agenda for industrialization, with processes and products, machinery, manpower, capital, investors, markets, start-offs, etc.

My Administration will no longer monkey around with industries, as Nigeria has been doing, but will show seriousness and commitment.

Strategic Partnering and Alliance with Asian Tigers:

Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore; and in fact even Burma (Myanmar) and Thailand are countries for beneficial strategic partnering that would transfer technology in agriculture and agro-allied businesses, vocational and technical education and a whole gamut of manufacturing. Cultural and attitudinal adaptations are also transferable like mini-blouses, mini-skirts, tight jeans, face caps, etc. Those Asians would come over to Akwa Ibom, like the Tsonga White Zimbabwe farmers who have revolutionized farming in Kwara State. In our own case rice and catfish and other fisheries; palm oil and rubber processing; Nipa palm management; and a host of high priority SMEs would involve Asian Joint Venture Partners. My Government would bring them into our Local Government Areas and support them. Strategic alliances with China and India would even open more opportunities to our people and institutions. But the trade missions, business delegations and a host of protocols and expectations and diplomatic and bilateral matters that these will entail are far beyond the capabilities of our local businessmen; and will be handled by government.

War Against Rice Smuggling into Nigeria

The rice industry will never find a foothold in Nigeria with the colossal level of rice smuggling into the country. It hurts particularly the Niger Delta, where rice could flourish like in Vietnam's Mekong Delta or Thailand. If the Federal Government could declare total war against smuggling with "carrots" to Benin Republic, smuggling could cease. The Obasanjo Administration has launched war successfully against fake drugs, corruption; co-operated with U.S. anti-narcotic agencies; established a Joint Development Zone with Sao Tome-Principe; allowed Cameroon Republic to get away with Bakassi and combated trans-border crimes jointly with Benin, Niger and Chad. What are we getting back from sister African nations after we sent peace-keeping forces everywhere in West Africa; and hosted Charles Taylor of all men? As Governor, I will remind the Federal Government of these and other Nigerian overtures with the hope of getting something back for Akwa Ibom State. After all, we share common maritime boundaries with Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, and Sao Tome-Principe. I believe if we insist, we shall be given their co-operation.

Industrialization can be pursued in Akwa Ibom State with the same zeal as infrastructural development; with equally tangible results. If the State could set up 50 Housing Units in each Local Government Area, it could, with a little more input establish one successful agricultural industry in each Local Government Area.

Farmers Support Schemes and Extension Services will be result-oriented in the following areas:

- Fertilizer subsidy / supply
- Animal feed production / subsidy
- Improved crop varieties
- Land Management System
- Produce evacuation
- Produce preservation
- Purchase of excess produce (Buyer-of-Last-Resort Scheme)
- Processing facilities
- Creation of Farmers' Associations, etc.
- Establishment of year-round crop planting and total elimination of traditional bush fallow and shifting cultivation.
- Commercial cultivation of banana and plantain; raffia; coconut; new vegetables; adoption of new crops (e.g. melon, cocoyam).

A modern Plastic Industry for Sundry Commercial Uses including Jumbo Sanitation Bags for Refuse Collection.

Although this should be treated under industries, we consider it here among new ideas that can make the difference to several economic sectors, particularly manufacturing, which government must facilitate.

For a larger-scale packaging industry, the product demand could be limitless in Nigeria; especially with so many cities, mountains of refuse; and ever-increasing products diversity to meet very large national and regional markets. The markets and scope for packaging products consumption is limitless, ranging from industrial uses (e.g. plastic containers, bags, pallets) domestic jumbo waste disposal bags for sanitation. Nigerian cities are awash with refuse on streets, roadsides, drains; with blocked drainage causing urban floods disasters; and all sorts of health hazards and dirt. "FESTAC" bags, "Ghana-must-go", industrial bulk containers (for cement, etc.) will be manufactured. We must not forget other plastic containers for companies involved in printing and packaging food and beverages, chemicals and agrochemicals, petroleum products, soap and detergents, household consumer products, industrial products, paper, toiletries, pharmaceuticals; cosmetics and horticulture.

In Akwa Ibom State the Ikot Ekpene-Essien Udim industrial axis will be our location for plastic bags manufacturing because of proximity to Aba, etc.

Akwa Ibom Refinery and Petrochemical Complex

But first we will press on for the local production of the basic raw material, polyethylene, from our Natural Gas. For this, my Administration will ensure that the proposed Akwa Ibom Refinery and Petrochemical Complex starts off at Eket, thanks to the deregulation policy of the downstream petroleum sector by the Federal Government.

As you may realize, polyethylene is produced in petrochemical industries from the inflammable gas ethylene and used for the manufacture of the plastics we have been talking about, containers, tubings, insulations, etc. Akwa Ibom will follow the footsteps of similar Third World economies, notably Thailand and Egypt. Phillips Petroleum Company entered into a joint venture with the Petrochemical Company of Thailand and established a factory that produces 200,000 tonnes of polyethylene annually. Yet Thailand does not possess the natural gas endowment that Akwa Ibom State has. Its only advantage is the guaranteed enormous regional market, Thailand being strategically located in the rapidly expanding business frontier of the Asian Pacific Rim. Phillips Petroleum Company also partnered with Egyptian General Petroleum Corporation to build a petrochemical facility at Alexandria, Egypt for production of high density polyethylene (HDPE). This material is used for the manufacture of industrial containers and other products, as mentioned above.

With the appropriate focus and high-level negotiations, Akwa Ibom State Government can secure the backing of the Federal Government for the sort of joint venture mentioned here.

My Administration will undertake the Feasibility Study for plastics production based on the Akwa Ibom Refinery and Petrochemical Complex, already approved by the Federal Government.

This being such a basic industry, I thought it deserves the separate emphasis it has been accorded here.

Build-and-Privatize Model

An industrialization model that appeals to me most has been recently demonstrated by Edo State. Usually governments privatize ailing abandoned industries and public enterprises because of lack of profitability and poor management. But the Edo State Government established the following industries and then turned around and sold them to local private investors.

They are:

- Ikpeshe Marble Company

- Fertilizer Plant, Auchi
- Cassava Plant, Uromi
- Fruit Juice Company at Ehor (bought by Coca-Cola)

The doctrine that government should not own business should not be carried too far. Government could start and then privatize. In their documentary titled: "Public Enterprises & Parastatals in Akwa Ibom State", produced by the Akwa Ibom Investment and Industrial Promotion Council (AKIIPOC), we have learnt enough to know our next steps.

Maintenance Culture: Ethical and Technological Challenges

Road maintenance poses an headache to men and women of integrity, who would want to see durable Nigerian roads, built with the best designs and materials, to last. But to the corrupt, a road contract is a bonanza, and the gateway to the Nigerian goldmine and windfall called "empowerment".

With the recent collapse of Benin-Ore Expressway and many highways across the country; after colossal sums of oil money had been generously or recklessly sunk into rural Nigeria under the former Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), with nothing to show for it now, except mere historical recollections of our wasted years, I have nothing new to tell Nigerians except Saint Paul's question to the Romans:

What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? By no means" Romans6:1

Road maintenance has always been a thorny problem throughout the federation. Roads don't last; they get washed away; highways become impassible; communities are cut off from each other; accidents result with heavy casualties. Urban trunk highways are affected, not to talk of rural roads.

The emphasis in my Administration will be to re-introduce and institutionalize the road maintenance culture of the past. In colonial days there were the ubiquitous Road Camps of the PWD (Public Works Department), now Ministry of Works. They undertook routine repairs, clearing of roadsides and whatever measures were needed to maintain roads in good condition. Those were the days when winding up-hill, down-valley roads with less asphalt and more gravel, snaked their way across the country; while rural roads, altogether untarred, linked everywhere. By comparison and by far Akwa Ibom today is served with better roads, especially being a new and urbanizing State.

Over the years, there have been many federally funded schemes designed to improve rural networks, notably, as we saw earlier, the defunct Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI). The benefits of such programs did not materialize and the roads were allowed to deteriorate through lack of funds and absence of an organizational structure that would guarantee proper

maintenance. Yet, year in and year out, road construction continues to gulp the budget of our Ministries of Works.

Apart from what are evidently cases of unscientific road designs, the common causes of road failure and washout remain poor drainage. An efficient drainage system is essential to minimize damage to the road and surrounding land, hence series of drains will be provided for water discharge along our roads, given our heavy rainfall condition.

The level of our road maintenance is very low because of the non-availability of equipment. Machines brought in for initial construction are usually deployed elsewhere, hence for lack of necessary repairs the state of the roads can deteriorate disastrously.

We know that regular routine maintenance and speedy repairs are the best cost effective strategy, but this needs an organizational set-up which actually does not function in our system. We shall create this set-up for our road maintenance in my Administration.

We shall, therefore, re-introduce the Road Camp concept of colonial days. The Road Camps will be manned by Road Overseers under whom will be road labourers in charge of road maintenance over a specified length of our roads. They will be supplied with tools and paid as contract workers. Tasks they will be expected to perform will include filling of potholes, edge maintenance, patch repairs, minor re-shaping and clearing out of culvert. Local civil engineers of the Ministry of Works will organize and supervise these Road Camps for all roads throughout the State both urban and rural, as well as federal roads.

Rather than concentrate only on the more glamorous construction of new networks, except where necessary, my Administration will achieve more for less expenditure through infrastructural maintenance. To maintain access for all part of the State will entail budget resources allocation to repairs, improvement and general maintenance of the existing road network. However, new tarred roads opened through high population density areas that have hitherto not been served, will also be a matter of priority for my Administration.

Other public utilities such as electricity, water supply and public buildings, hospitals, schools and sanitation works will have maintenance programmes, introduced for them. These programmes will also provide a means of gainful employment to many people.

On its part, the Federal Government should de-emphasize the culture of commissioning new infrastructure as the only indices of development in our States

Akwa Ibom Concerns as a Coastal State

- I. **Maritime Boundary:** Our maritime boundaries with neighbouring coastal states of the federation have not been well demarcated in ocean (offshore) depths shallower than 200m, where we collect oil revenue. Often times offshore oil wells that should belong to us have been assigned to neighbouring states for oil derivation revenue calculation. We shall, jointly with the Federal Boundary Commission, the Surveyor-General of the Federation, the Department of Petroleum Resources and certified international maritime survey consultants, define our maritime boundaries. Special co-ordinates, buoys and appropriate devices will be installed to define Akwa Ibom State Maritime Boundaries by international standards. For a region with very rich oil deposits a little boundary misplacement means colossal loss of oil revenue.

- II. **Marine Pollution and Coastal Protection:** During my Administration we shall convince fellow Nigerians of our ability to police, manage and protect our marine environment and coastal resources and ecosystems upon which our livelihood and future survival depends. Our waters - ocean, rivers and streams - have always sustained us; hence we shall protect and use them sustainably. We shall protect our marine life from oil in coastal waters and ocean vessels that clean up in the high seas.

Akwa Ibom State is entirely coastal with a small landmass but solid ground throughout, except for wetlands along the shore line and river courses. As such, the dense populations of nearly four million, are supported by the marine. and coastal ecosystems. Other ecological threats additional to high population density include pollution by municipal wastes, unplanned human settlements, soil erosion and sediment pollution, and poor infrastructure.

We should be aware of and participate, therefore, as important stakeholders in regional and international marine and coastal environmental protection programmes. My Ministry of Environment will ensure our full membership and awareness of, for example:

- The Pan-African Conference on Sustainable Integrated Coastal Management (Maputo, Mozambique, 1998).
- The Conference on Development and Protection of the Marine and Coastal environment in Sub-Saharan Africa (Cape Town, South Africa).
- The Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea.
- The Inter-Governmental Oceanographic Commission.
- UNESCO and the Co-ordination Office of the Global Programme of Action on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities.

- Partnership Conference of the African Process on Development and Protection of Marine and Coastal Environment in Africa (started in 2002 during meeting of African Environment Ministers where concrete strategies for sustainable development were evolved).

Our State will also, together with the Federal Ministry of "Environment be properly positioned to derive maximum benefits from the Gulf of Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem (GOG-LME). This actually began in 1994, but is now very active and expanded, involving Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria and Cameroon. Funding is provided by the World Bank Global Environmental Facility; while technical support comes from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and the United States Department of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The aims of the oceanographic investigation entail fish stock assessment, and water and sediment samples analysis to find out threats of fisheries habitat. Other concerns and programmes include:

- a) Strengthening regional institutional capacities to prevent and remedy pollution of the Gulf of Guinea LME and associated degradation of critical habitats.
- b) Formulation of an integrated information management and decision-making system for ecosystem management.
- c) Establishing a comprehensive programme for monitoring and assessment of marine resources, the health, and productivity of the Gulf of Guinea.
- d) Prevention and control of land-based sources of industrial and urban pollution.
- e) Increased coastal habitat destruction in Akwa Ibom State has been evident. This has resulted from agriculture, wood-cutting and increased human settlement along coastal areas. Consequently, the latest regional survey of the Niger Delta (Vanguard Newspaper, Friday, August 18, 2006) shows that Stubbs Creek Forest Reserve along the coast of Akwa Ibom has been de-listed from Protected Areas in the Niger Delta. This is an acknowledgement of the loss of the only major forest reserve in Akwa Ibom State, This entails a serious loss of biodiversity.
- f) At a time when neighbouring States are officially gazetted Coastal and Marine Protected Areas to boost Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICAM), steps must be taken to officially protect the long mangrove shoreline of Akwa Ibom State along standards acceptable to the international community, for example the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem Project, which succeeded the Gulf of Guinea LME.

Akwa Ibom State University of Technology:

The State University of Technology will be well funded, equipped, and positioned as a Nigerian centre of excellence in engineering, to support industrialization, our maritime interests and offshore petroleum technology ventures. Partnerships with similar institutions overseas will be pursued by the State Ministry of Science and Technology.

Ibom Science Park

Science and Technology Parks are envisioned in the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) as the means of developing and promoting enterprises for the industrial sector. We will highlight this modern knowledge-based technology for ushering the industrial revolution into Akwa Ibom State. It is a tribute to the vision of Governor Attah for him to establish the 6 billion Naira Ibom Science Park at Ntak Inyang in Uyo, first of such in Nigeria.

We intend to fully utilized and fast-track profitable ventures at the Ibom Science Park as one of the priorities of my Administration.

I was, therefore, thrilled when an eminent Akwa Ibom professor of economics, Professor John Ndebbio, recently declared that the creation of science and technology parks is imperative for positive economic change in Nigeria. In his recent Inaugural Address at the University of Calabar, Professor Ndebbio made the following disclosures which I will adopt as one of the tripods or cornerstones of my industrial policy.

"Nigeria should exercise no delays any longer in creating Science and Technology Parks. Without any further hesitation, Nigerians should start now to establish Science and Technology Parks in order to encourage US-style hi-tech clusters. A Science Park being more or less an 'innovative' centre as well as a high revenue yielding venture, Nigeria, with her huge population, if adequately trained, can benefit from yearly revenues from science parks much higher than from oil.

Stanford University Science Park, for instance gave birth to what is today called the 'Silicon Valley' or Internet Valley, with such end-products as Intel, Yahoo, etc. This also applies to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) science park in Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A. For Europe and Asia, the establishment of science parks for some time now has made the world to realize that the best way to exploit speedily what the 'knowledge economy' offers is to create the right environment for innovation to thrive.

As of 2003, the world had a total of 411 service parks with 144 parks alone from the US, 48 from the UK, 19 from Canada, 51 from France, 6 from Brazil, 4 from India, 15 from Australia, 8 from Italy and others. In Africa, science parks are in only two countries, namely South Africa (3 parks) and Senegal (1 park). It is sad that Nigeria has not made efforts up till date to establish one.

Our interest here encompasses sales revenue from hi-tech products, number of hi-tech business in operation in the cluster and number of people employed. For one science park out of a total of six in China, the sum of US \$25.92 billion revenue was realized in 2001; 9000 hi-tech businesses were in operation and a large number of 360,000 people were employed. Taiwan's revenue size of USD 120,000 billion in 2001 for only one Science Park is very impressive; 200 new hi-tech businesses sprang up with employment of 90,000 workers.

In the US with 144 parks the revenue realized in 2001 from one park was USD 450 billion; the new hi-tech businesses in the cluster were 7,000 with employment of 300,000 people.

In Nigeria, over 90 per cent of reliance is on oil revenue which averaged USD 18,239.7 billion between 2000 and 2003".

From Prof. Ndebbio's analysis and recommendations above, Akwa Ibom State Science and Technology Park will be developed as the best in Nigeria, with attendant revenue and employment benefits to our teeming population of university and polytechnic graduates. This is an opportunity and a challenge I am taking up fully as a former Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of a modern private hi-tech company.

The Federal Government, on its part has planned an Abuja Technology Village (ATV) since 2004. Located along the Abuja Airport Road. ATV will involve an expenditure of N5 billion seed funds by the Federal Government to create high class infrastructure for Information and Communcation Technology (ICT) companies to produce and export softwares. The softwares would be exported to countries like the United States and India which needs ICT experts. The Abuja Technology Village would create 40,000 jobs in four years after completion and would be earning N4 billion annually from software exports quite a modest start for Nigeria which generates 150,000 graduates, annually, with youths constituting 42 per cent of the country's population.

Outsourcing: Industrialization Attracted by Locally Available Skilled Manpower: A Challenge to Our Educational System.

Technical education involving skill acquisition, the thrust of education in our 21st century knowledge-driven global village, offers unusual opportunities today, for human capital, by itself, to attract industries. Termed outsourcing or international division of labour, companies in North America and Western Europe outsource the manufacture of clothing, cars and heavy duty engineering to China where the skilled labour, huge population, good infrastructure, good education and low income after incentives to manufacturers and investors. Other Western companies outsource their manufacturing to India, Brazil, Russia and Eastern Europe for similar reasons.

This is the advantage of investing in sound education that imparts the know-how, discipline and high and efficient productivity. This is real investment in human capital development through quality, focused education. My Administration will

re-direct our investment in higher education into empowering our large population to acquire the skills and competencies that will attract foreign industries. This is the advantage of the Ibom International Airport Cargo Terminal that would freight the goods we produce to any part of the world just over-night. That would be among the best strategies for arresting unemployment, generating wealth and alleviating poverty, the Millennium Development Goals.

Conclusion

In summary, the submission in this part of My Vision is that governance can be innovative, problem-solving, result-oriented and capable of instilling a maintenance culture. Funds could then be channeled into new business ventures and new investment opportunities. The Akwa Ibom Refinery and Petrochemical Complex, the Ibom Science and Technology Park, and the Akwa Ibom State University of Technology are all potential catalysts to accelerated industrialization. My Administration will utilize them maximally. Our coastal location, also, if well managed, will create new opportunities for networking effectively and profitably with the international community.

14. MY SECTORAL VISIONS

AGRICULTURE:

Details of my vision for the Agricultural sector are presented in the next chapter on Rural Industrialization. Akwa Ibom State is predominantly an agrarian community; just like the entire nation that employs 70 per cent of its population in farming and derives 88 per cent of non-oil foreign exchange earning from agriculture. Gains in the agricultural sector at the Federal level that I intend to directly utilize to boost agricultural productivity in Akwa Ibom State include:

- Cassava export potential of USD 3.0 billion annually from Nigeria into the World market; and the Presidential Cassava Initiatives.
- The Vegetable Oil Department Programme that will boost oil palm production.
- Presidential Initiative on Rice Production, Processing and Export.
- These federally funded programmes are backed with funds and other forms of support; hence my Government will boost cassava, oil palm, rice and the production of other priority food and cash crop and fisheries and allied processing industries, as shown in the next chapter, on Local Government Industrialization Plans.
- Other Presidential Initiatives and Federal agricultural programmes we hope to key our agricultural sector into are:
 - Catfish Production
 - Fisheries and Aquaculture
 - Rubber Production, Utilization and Export
 - Agricultural Credit Schemes and Micro-financing

At the State level programmes such as the Micro-credit and Integrated Farmers Schemes and our Life Enhancement Programmes will be expanded.

My Vision is that of Rural Industrialization based on agricultural products.

EDUCATION:

My Vision for education in Akwa Ibom State is that of a State with functional, qualitative education which will serve as the catalyst for development, job creation, poverty alleviation and as a foundation for our envisaged science and technology and industrial revolution.

To achieve the desired functionality and quality in our educational system, this sector which is the main determinant of our collective future must be totally re-organized. Our strategy for this aspect will be the production of quality teachers, expansion of our education infrastructure and increased funding.

To reorganize and re-position our educational sector, we will embark on the following:

- Re-design our curriculum to emphasize functional use of acquired knowledge to harness our natural raw materials (both agricultural and minerals) to produce tangible goods, services that will be in line with our proposed aggressive rural industrialization programme.
- Our educational system will be re-focused and repositioned towards science and technological development.
- Interventionist programme will be put in place to recruit a special crop of highly skilled and intelligent teachers that will form the nucleus of our educational revival programme.
- Efforts will be made to re-train all our teachers periodically to enable them appreciate and fit into our new thinking of functional and qualitative education.
- Our University, the Akwa Ibom State University of Science and Technology (AKUTECH) will be made to achieve its set objectives of providing solutions to our science and technological problems especially in the areas of oil and gas technology, marine resource utilization and industrial development.
- We will build more school and class rooms to reduce the high teacher: student ratio to 1:25 and below.
- Teachers will be motivated, trained and adequately supervised to justify the role we expect them to play in the evolution of our State into a modern industrial economy.
- Education will be given special consideration in budgetary allocation.
- We will employ more teachers, thereby reducing graduate unemployment.
- The illiteracy rate in our State will be forced down.

HEALTH

My Vision for Akwa Ibom State in the health sector is to build a healthy population through preventive health care programmes and the promotion of healthy living.

Currently, the life expectancy in Akwa Ibom State is 54 years after birth. The doctor: patient ratio is about 1:10,172 while the nurse: patient ration is 1:615. This is a far cry from the World Health Organization (WHO) doctor/nurse: patient ratio of 1:400 and 1:4 respectively. As at 2001, there were 479 medical institutions in Akwa Ibom State with a total bed space of 5,240 beds. With a population of over 3.4 million, this is grossly inadequate.

To nurture and develop a healthy population, if elected as Governor, we will adopt the following strategies to jump-start the delivery of an efficient, integrated health care system:

- Embark on an intensive preventive health programme through aggressive health education programme focused towards a healthy living, and fight against HIV / AIDS and malaria.
- produce quality doctors, nurses and other medical professionals to efficiently man our medical institutions.
- Build more General Hospitals and Primary Health Centers with a target of having at least one General Hospital per Local Government Area.
- Ensure that health establishments in the State are well equipped, funded and provided with essential drugs and consumables.
- Motivate health workers to achieve high productivity especially the rural health workers.
- Reduce to the barest minimum our high infant mortality rate (67/1000 life birth) and maternal death rate (800/100,000 birth) by the provision of interventional programmes and government subsidies.
- Cost of treatment of infants and pregnant women will be greatly reduced with an intention toward free medical service.
- Massive Immunization of infants and children.
- Assist our only tertiary health institution at the University of Uyo to play the role expected of it in our health delivery system as a specialist and referral institution.

ENVIRONMENT

The location of Akwa Ibom State has exposed it to several environmental problems. The State is rated as one of the fastest growing state capitals in Nigeria and as such with a high per capita waste generation. It is situated in the Niger Delta and is one of the oil-producing States; this implies the degradation of the fragile ecosystem especially in the coastal areas as a result of oil spills and other oil-related activities. Geologically, the State is made of sedimentary rocks and is within the tropical rain forest with high precipitation. These rock types

coupled with the high precipitation rate is responsible for intense erosion accounting for large network of gully erosion especially in Ibiono, Itu, Ini and Ikono Local Government Areas. In Akwa Ibom State, over 400 gully erosion sites have been identified. In the same measure, Local Government Areas adjoining the Atlantic Ocean (Ibena, Eastern Obolo, Oron, Esit Eket and Ikot Abasi) are constantly subjected to coastal erosion.

If elected Governor of Akwa Ibom State, environmental protection and management issues will be one of my main priorities. This is because of my strong believe that a clean and sustainable use of the environment and its natural resources will definitely support a healthy work force and will enable us to bequeath our God-given resources to our generations yet unborn. We will address frontally, the problems of waste management, gully and coastal erosion, oil spill and the environmental degradation of our fragile marine ecosystem. We shall use all available resources to ensure the protection and management of our environments especially those that have some bearing on our traditional economic mainstay (fishing. grounds, shellfish and other marine-derived natural resources). My blueprint to achieve a clean and sustainable environment in Akwa Ibom State will involve enforcement of regulations and introduction of sanitary inspectors; waste management; flood and erosion control; and the protection of our ecosystem.

WATER SUPPLY

My Vision for Akwa Ibom State is that of a State where all communities have access to clean, potable water. This is borne out of my personal conviction that water is life and plays a very important role in sanitation and healthy living. In Akwa Ibom State, only 2% of the population has access to portable drinking water. This we will achieve through the following strategies:

- Reorganize our Akwa Ibom State Rural Water Supply Agency toward an efficient unit that will ensure the provision of water in all our communities.
- Ensure scientific approach in bore hole drilling, rehabilitation of our water schemes. A situation where our boreholes fail in less than one year of commissioning will be a thing of the past.
- Ensure the completion of the ADP- assisted water projects to supply potable water to urban areas.
- Reorganize (if possible partially privatize) the Akwa Ibom Water Company Limited and Akwa Ibom State Water Sanitation Agency towards efficient provision of portable water to the public.

ENERGY: A NEW MINISTRY

Akwa Ibom State is endowed with enormous mineral and energy resources. My Vision for this sub-sector is to develop and utilize the mineral and energy resources as a vehicle for industrialization, wealth creation, employment

generation and poverty alleviation. The mineral resources of the State can be divided into two broad segments: the oil and gas and the solid minerals. The energy resources here imply the generation of electricity from our indigenous natural resources.

Akwa Ibom State is endowed with enormous oil and gas resources. It is rated the 4th largest producer of oil and gas in Nigeria with a daily production rate of 500,000 barrels of oil (Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, then Akwa Ibom State). This is a significant contribution to the national oil and gas output of 2.4 million barrels of oil daily; also in term of fiscal contribution to the national purse. Large oil and gas reserve have been found in Ibeno, Ikot Abasi, Esit Eket, - Onna, Eastern Obolo and Ikot Abasi. Exploitation of these oil and gas resources is being carried out by ExxonMobil, Elf, and Addax Petroleum Corporation.

The Obong Victor Attah administration has laid the required structures towards making Akwa Ibom State the hub of oil and gas activities in Nigeria both in the upstream and downstream sectors. These efforts have crystallized in the State establishing Universal Energy Resources Ltd; a marginal field operator and a refining and petrochemical company. My plans are to expand and ensure full operation of these joint ventures. Mineral exploration will be undertaken to attract mineral-based industries.

Energy is one of the most important requirements of any developed society. Availability and easy access to energy could transform any community because of its economic multiplier effects. My Vision for this sector is that of a constant and uninterrupted power supply. The administration of Obong Victor Attah is embarking on an Independent Power Plant (IPP) project in Ikot Abasi to make electricity available at all time. We will consolidate on this and ensure that we achieve the following:

- Completion of the Independent Power Plant (IPP) in Ikot Abasi and possible expansion.
- Explore the possibility of other unconventional sources of energy such as solar, wind, biogas, waste to energy project.

TOURISM

My Vision for the tourism industry in Akwa Ibom State is to develop it in a sustainable manner as a critical source of revenue and employment generation as well as wealth creation. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), tourism industry generated \$476 billion in the year 2000. I strongly believe that if well developed, Akwa Ibom State will have a fair share of this. With all the planned infrastructure in place: an airport, a seaport and rail lines, the State will be accessible and will definitely be a tourism destination in the sub-region. But the greatest potential is the world-class ocean beach at Ibeno and Eastern Obolo.

As Governor, I will upgrade to international standard, the natural beaches that abound in our 129 kilometer coastlines along the Atlantic at Oron, Ibeno, Ibaka and Ikot Abasi. Heritage sites and monuments will be conserved and commercialized. With the coming on stream of our Ibom 5-Star Hotel and golf course, we will as a deliberate policy encourage private investors to provide world-class hotels and hospitality outlets.

To complement our tourism drive, our indigenous cultural festivals, games and carnivals will be upgraded to international standard to attract tourists world wide. To show case our tourism potentials, we will embark on aggressive market intelligence and promotion, human capital resource development and proper documentation and backing of our tourism potentials.

WOMEN DEVELOPMENT

My Administration will empower women through:

- Giving them easy access to education and social amenities.
- Using all available resources to adequately empower women to facilitate their contribution towards family-building and stability.
- Using all available legal instrument to eradicate all forms of discrimination against women.
- Use education (formal and informal) to inculcate the right values which will enthrone women's dignity and fight against varnishing moral values among our women.
- Use all available resources to develop confidence and potential of women.
- Encouraging them to obtain small-scale loans or micro-financing for their enterprises,

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

My Vision is an Akwa Ibom State, where youths will have easy access to quality education, build adequate capacity for leadership, skills acquisition and opportunities to achieve their visions (in life) and grow into happy healthy, responsible and self-sufficient adults.

Youths constitute a very vibrant segment of our society. They are the leaders of tomorrow. The way we prepare them for the task ahead, will determine what the future holds for us all.

My strategies for achieving the above vision are to:

- Give all Akwa Ibom youth easy access to quality education.

- Organize periodic seminars/workshops for leadership, skills acquisition and social mobilization.
- Build Youth Resource Centers in all Local Government Areas complete with Libraries, games and recreational facilities.
- Mount war against harmful, risky behaviour in our youths, such as alcoholism, drugs, sex, tobacco, violence, and cultism.

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

Sports and other forms of recreation are very important to health in any community. A sporting community is a healthy, efficient and productive one. I believe in the wholesome development of sporting activities beyond the competitive sports engaged by a select few.

Strategies will embrace the following:

- Ensuring the springing up of jazzing clubs, community sports and construction of recreational facilities across the State.
- Promoting participation in sports competitions.
- Construction an Olympic-size *Ibom Unity Stadium* in the State Capital as our basic sporting physical infrastructure.

WORKS, INDUSTRIES , AND INFORMATION

My Vision for the Ministry of Works and Transport was presented in detail as part of my Strategic Governance and New Business Ventures in this document, under "Maintenance Culture: Ethical and Technological Challenges".

Industries, the mandates of the Ministry of Industries has actually become the object of my *Vision*, elaborated in this document.

Information, public awareness and ethical campaigns will continue to receive Government attention.

CO-OPERATION: ANOTHER NEW MINISTRY

This technical Ministry will be responsible for:

- Developing Inter-State Projects and Co-operation.
- Regional Programmes Participation e.g. Guinea Current Larger Marine Ecosystem, etc.
- Managing the Interface between Ministries at State and Federal Levels.

- Managing inputs / Participation in Programme by United Nations, UNESCO, World Bank and Foreign Agencies, etc.
- Co-operation with Oil Company Communities Projects
- Enhancing Prompt responses by our State Ministries to Federal Government Commissions' directives, etc.
- Strategies Alliances and Partnerships
- Foreign Trade/Economic Missions

15. LOCAL GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIALIZATION PLANS

Industrialization plans have already been discussed fully inside this book for the following Local Government Areas:

1. Uyo
2. Mbo
3. Ikot Ekpene
4. Essen Udim
5. Eket
6. Ibeno
7. Eastern Obolo.

These are not presented again in this section. Rather, we propose industrialization plans for the remaining LGAs.

LGA	PROPOSED INDUSTRY
Abak	Edible vegetable oil industry. Full reactivation of Pamil Industries Ltd (for Crushing and Extraction of palm kernel oil and production of pellets)
Asutan	With Champion Breweries already there, ancillary industries such as Plasto-Crown and Autopack, and the proposed Uyo Ethanol Factory, Ibesikpo-Asutan is destined to be the drinks production axis in Akwa Ibom State. A modern Distillery and Soft Drinks Factory are conceived in addition.
Esit Eket	Oil palm plantation. Coconut palm plantation. Palm nursery
Etim Ekpo	Large-scale cassava planting. Garri production. Banana/plantain plantation
Etinan	Modern brick industry. Locally produced ceramic wares. Commercial piggery production. Modern china wares industry.
Ibiono Ibom	Diversification of ceramic products manufactured from clays. Soap making from palm oil.
Ika	Livestock industry (cow fattening) . Commercial goat farm. Establishment of ruminant food production centre
Ikono	Vegetable production. Fruits processing. Cassava processing
IkotAbasi	Fertilizer factory. Soft drinks production. Fish market (to be improved)/Landing (to be modernized). Fertilizer manufacture. Rice cultivation

Ini	Cocoa processing and confectioneries manufacture. Swamp rice farm. Cassava production
Itu	Industrial raw material production. Clay (kaolin), gravel, fish / sea foods, palm produce, Cocoa, rice, cassava, rubber, forestry products, cocoyam, maize, ginger.
Mkpat Enin	Margarine production. Modernization of palm oil extraction for margarine and other vegetable oil products. Coconut plantation
Nsit Ibom	Nsit Ibom is the fruits and vegetables basket of Akwa Ibom State. This is evident from the year-round display of these produce at the Nfaha Nsit Road Junction where Uyo-Nung Udoe-Afaha Offiong Road meets Etinan-Eket Road. The plan here is for State-subsidized commercialized production to satisfy Eket and Uyo
Nsit Atai	Located on open land, within easy reach from Uyo, Eket and Ibom International Airport, Nsit Atai has ideal sites for raising birds and eggs in commercial quantities. We shall setup poultry industry there for cockerel, turkey, broilers and egg production.
Obot Akara	Vegetable oil industry. Cassava processing.
Okobo	Cattle fattening farm. Beef processing industry. Modern piggery farming
Ona	Ikot Edibang Brickworks. Commercial rice farming. Ibom Rice Research and Industrial Centre.
Oron	Modern furniture works. Catfish production with foreign partners. Commercial cold room facilities.
Oruk Anam	Establishment of large scale oil palm plantations in a region that is among Nigeria's foremost palm belt. Soap making will be expanded into commercial mechanized production
Udung Uko	Fisheries and seafood market (shrimps) and processing. Melon processing factory and commercial melon farming.
Ukanafun	Vegetable oil production
Uruan	Catfish production with foreign technical assistance. Commercial piggery production. Rice production from Uruan swamps. Establishment of modern fish market
Urue Offong Oruko	Rubber farming and processing. Rafia palm cultivation.