



**AN ADDRESS PRESENTED BY HIS EXCELLENCY, THE GOVERNOR OF  
CROSS RIVER STATE, SENATOR LIYEL IMOKE ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE ONE-DAY SENSITIZATION WORKSHOP ON SAFE AND  
RESPONSIBLE USE OF AGROCHEMICALS AND OTHER PESTICIDES AT  
THE ASBURY HALL, MIRAGE HOTEL, CALABAR ON MONDAY, 9<sup>TH</sup>  
JUNE, 2008**

Your Excellency, the Deputy Governor of Cross River State, Barr.

Efiok Cobham

Honourable Ministers

The Director General of the National Agency for Food and Drug  
Administration and Control, (NAFDAC), Professor (Mrs.) Dora  
Akunyili

Members of the State Executive Council here present

Chairmen of Local Government Councils here Present

Resource Persons

Distinguished Invited Guests,

Gentlemen of the Press, Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me begin by formally welcoming all our distinguished guests who  
have come from all over the country for this one-day sensitization  
workshop, holding here in Calabar.

Calabar, our capital city offers a unique blend of cleanliness and hospitality, even as it is ideal for workshops such as this. I urge you all to make out time and savour the warmth and serenity which it offers like no other city in Nigeria. You are indeed welcome.

Today, we begin yet another process of improving our agricultural produce with the aim of not only improving farm yields but also taking a critical look at our storage facilities. Crop Protection Products are essential inputs in our efforts to increase yields by protecting crops from weeds, insects, pests and diseases as well as preserving harvested crops in storage.

A couple of months ago, we had reported cases of chemical contamination of food stuff which resulted in the demise of some persons while several others were hospitalized in the northern axis of the state.

That incident underscores the importance of this sensitization workshop, which seeks to equip all concerned with the requisite knowledge on how to minimize the wrong use of agrochemicals, which are contributory factors to the production of unsafe food.

Instances abound where dangerous chemicals have been wrongly used to store crops with disastrous consequences on the populace.

Safe and responsible use of agrochemicals is therefore important to all who are responsible for food production, its storage and sale. It is my fervent hope that this assemblage of agricultural extension workers contract farmers, grain merchants, students as well as Chairmen of Local Government Councils, would come up with proactive measures on the treatment and storage of foodstuff.

While our farmers seeks to maximize profit, they must be conscious of the heavy responsibility on their shoulders and endeavour never to compromise the safety of food they produce or trade in. Practices like re-treating agrochemicals approved for storage use must conform with proper frequency so that residues do not become unacceptably high in our foodstuff.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, at this juncture, let me pay glowing tributes to the Director-General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Professor (Mrs.) Dora Akunyili and her entire staff, for their spirited battle against counterfeit drugs, unwholesome food and other

consumables in our society. Their patriotism and the achievements so far attained are a confirmation that we can change our society positively, if we are determined to do so.

Let me however urge the Agency to redouble its efforts as the months ahead may even be more challenging, following escalating food prices and more attraction being accorded to farming. Efforts should also be geared towards research in line with global standard.

I am of the hope that the Resource Persons chosen for this workshop would justify the confidence reposed in them, even as I urge all the participants to avail themselves of this opportunity and pass on the message thereafter. It is our responsibility to ensure that every Nigerian has access to safe and quality food, drugs and other related products. The time to get fully involved is now.

On that note, I now have the pleasant task of declaring this **Sensitization Workshop on Safe and Responsible Use of Agrochemicals and other Pesticides**, officially open.

I thank you for your attention.