



**AN ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY,
THE GOVERNOR OF CROSS RIVER STATE, SENATOR LIYEL IMOKE
ON
THE OCCASION OF THE 2008 WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY
CELEBRATION IN CALABAR, ON THURSDAY, 5TH JUNE, 2008**

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

Efiok Cobham

Members of the State Executive Council here present

Chairmen of Boards and Commissions

Permanent Secretaries

Distinguished Invited Guests

Stakeholders

Gentlemen of the Press

Ladies and Gentlemen

The future of every society or nation is determined by a combination of many factors, among which include, the type of environment its citizens are exposed to. Any society or nation that toys with the maintenance of its environment, therefore, toys with its overall survival.

Which is why, in recognition of this fact, the Stockholm Declaration of 1972 on the Global Environment was made, urging all people, across the globe, to bear a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations.

Again, in recognition of the importance of a healthy environment, the United Nations General Assembly, set aside the 5th of June of every year as **World Environment Day**.

It is in this connection that I am indeed delighted to be part of this all-important celebration which will afford us the ample opportunity to reflect on our activities with regards to our environment, since the past twelve months when this celebration was last held in the state.

You will all agree with me that a good environment enhances our chances of attaining good health. And, as the saying goes, he who has good health has hope and he who has hope has everything. This is why any government worth its salt would continue to place high premium on the sustenance of its environment.

Good a thing, here in Cross River State, we have overtime, clearly demonstrated our unblinking commitment to the overall sustenance of our environment through the formulation of sound environmental policies, standards and programmes. Our Clean and Green City Development Programme has so far raised the consciousness of our people beyond the traditional means of cleaning up their environment, to a more pragmatic public participatory approach of maintaining cleanliness, especially in our urban cities.

The theme for this year's celebration - "**Kick the Habit! Towards a Low Carbon Economy**" is apt and timely, considering the network of our action plan on environment which is in consonance with global trends.

Already, we have gone the extra mile to implement programmes designed to achieve a low carbon economy in the state. And, in pursuance of our commitment to promote the development of an environment friendly and renewable energy source from easily available natural resources, we are embarking on the provision of raw materials for the production of biofuel. This has been scientifically proven to be more energy efficient and is achievable

through the establishment of our large hectarage of cassava farms across the state.

On the issue of environmentally friendly energy sources with limited greenhouse gas emissions, we have gone ahead to establish the State Electrification Agency (SEA) which is expected to generate electricity with the construction of small scale hydro power stations from the enormous water resources in the state.

We are optimistic of achieving before long, energy sufficiency in the state through this project, which would equally reduce our dependency on fossil fuel. And, we would also provide the carbon sink flaring in the area through our programme of tree planting, forest plantation development and biodiversity conservation, among others.

Ladies and Gentlemen, all that we require to make our environment safe and habitable is to be conscious of the fact that we have no other environment to keep clean, sustain and protect, other than the one we live in. This is why all hands must be on deck to salvage our environment from pollution, depletion and other harmful practices

that pose serious threat to it, in line with the Stockholm Declaration to which our beloved country is a signatory.

As we mark this year's celebration, I therefore charge all Cross Riverians to replant everyone tree cut down with two new ones.

On that pleasant hope, I wish you all a happy World Environment Day Celebration.

I thank you all.