

**Nigerian Governors' Forum  
Abuja, Nigeria, August 2000**

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**FORUM OF FEDERATIONS HELPS ORGANIZE AN IMPORTANT CONFERENCE IN  
ABUJA, NIGERIA, AUGUST 23 TO AUGUST 26, 2000**

The Forum of Federations was part of a team that organized a major conference to bring together the majority of state governors in Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa.

The Forum, an organization devoted to sharing information and best practices on federalism around the world, was founded in 1999. It organized the International Conference on Federalism in Mont-Tremblant (held in October 1999), where the Nigerian Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka was one of the featured speakers. (Among other speakers were U.S. President Clinton, Prime Minister Chrétien and Mexican President Zedillo).

Helping strengthen democratic institutions in countries such as Nigeria is one of the Forum's principal goals. One of the aims of the Abuja conference is to establish an organization of state governors in Nigeria and in that way strengthen state-level government.

For this conference the Forum collaborated with the National Democratic Institute (based in Washington, D.C.). Among the participants from Canada and the United States were:

Gary Filmon, former Premier of Manitoba,  
Jim Florio, former Governor of New Jersey,  
Carole Hillard, Lt.Governor of South Dakota.

There were also a number of speakers from Nigeria and other African countries, including Mathole Motshega, former Premier of Gugentang Province in South Africa.

The sessions all dealt with practical issues of federalism from resource distribution and revenue allocation, to formulating policy in a multi-ethnic environment.

Alex Ekwueme is a former Vice President of Nigeria and a member of the Forum's Board of Directors. He applauds the Forum's participation in this event.

"Sharing ideas and experiences on the daily realities of governing in a federal and democratic country is exactly why we need a body such as the Forum of Federations," he says, "I hope this conference is the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship with Nigeria."

The conference took place in Abuja, Nigeria from August 23<sup>rd</sup> to August 26<sup>th</sup> 2000. U.S. President Bill Clinton addressed the final session on Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup>.

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