

**Roundtable on Nigerian Federalism  
and  
Nigerian Governors' Forum Strategic Thinking Session  
Abuja, Nigeria  
April 6 and April 10-12, 2002**

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### Roundtable on Nigerian Federalism

On April 6, 2002, the Forum of Federations was involved in a roundtable session on Nigerian federalism held on April 6, entitled "Federal Governance in Nigeria: The Role of Intergovernmental Cooperation in Strengthening Democracy."

Timed to coincide with Prime Minister Chrétien to Nigeria, the roundtable brought together twelve practitioners and experts from Nigeria, as well as Canada, Germany, India, and the United States.

Those attending the roundtable were:

- Alhaji Muhammed Liman, Special Assistant to the Honourable Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
- Prof. Akhtar Majeed, Hamdard University
- Uwe Leonardy, former ministerial counselor
- Prof. Thomas Hueglin, Sir Wilfrid Laurier University
- Clement Nwankwo, Constitutional Rights Project Nigeria
- Prof. John Ayoade, University of Ibadan
- Fred Whiting, South Dakota State Senator
- Raoul Blindenbacher, Executive Director of 2002 International Federalism Conference
- Gary Filmon, former provincial premier
- Dr. Victor Adetula, University of Jos
- Hon. Farouk Lawan, member of the House of Representatives and Chair of House Committee on Inter-parliamentary Relations
- Dr. Alex Ekwueme, former Vice-President of Nigeria
- Ralph Lysyshyn, President and Roundtable Chair
- Paul Morton, Project Manager

The first purpose of the roundtable was to assess the current state of intergovernmental relations in Nigeria, as it compares to that in other federal countries, in the broad areas of constituent units' roles, social policy, informal/formal mechanisms for intergovernmental cooperation, and accommodating diversity. The roundtable produced a lively discussion, as well as a good opportunity for both Nigerian and international participants to gain from each other's experiences.

The second purpose of the roundtable was to provide substantive input on how the Forum of Federations should be active in Nigeria in the coming years. As the Forum changes over to on-going programmatic activities, it is important that these be developed with as much initial input as possible. To this end, the roundtable generated ideas on our activities in Nigeria.

### **Nigerian Governors' Forum Strategic Thinking Session**

The Nigeria Governors' Forum Strategic Thinking Session, April 10-12, was organized in cooperation with the Abuja office of the National Democratic Institute. The session brought together between four and twelve state governors (as a result of their differing schedules over the course of the meetings) for a two-day working session on the direction of Governors' Forum, and of their soon-to-be-commissioned secretariat. While the governors are particularly pre-occupied at the moment with a number of critical issues, the Forum was nonetheless successful in creating an environment for the governors to reflect on how to best use their collective resources through the forum. The meeting was facilitated by Dr. Doug Champion, a long-time senior advisor to the U.S. National Governors' Association, and chaired by Governor Abdullahi Adamu of Nasarawa State. Dr. Champion's role was supportive rather than active in setting the agenda for discussion, resulting in more active participation from the governors themselves.

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