

**A BRIEF ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF IMO STATE, PRINCE EZE MADUMERE ON BEHALF OF HIS EXCELLENCY, THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF IMO STATE, OWELLE ROCHAS OKOROCHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2016 NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT FORUM IN NEW CONCORD HOTEL, OWERRI, IMO STATE.**

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PROTOCOL

I warmly welcome you all to Imo State, the Eastern Heartland and a State known for its resourcefulness and peaceful disposition.

Our major business is education and Imolites have benefited from the power and influence education has to offer. My leader and the Governor of Imo State in his wisdom realized this in time and made it practical in his offer of free and qualitative education to all the students and pupils of this great state. I am glad to mention today that the Rescue Mission Government led by Owelle Rochas Okorocha is celebrating five years of free and qualitative education this year.

I want to thank God for journey mercies to you all to Imo State for 2016 Niger Delta Development Forum. I call for future collaboration of y State with the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND), which kick-starts today October 19, 2016. Areas like electricity and other infrastructural developments are areas we can co-operate in with you.

This Forum has remained a veritable platform where development strategies are put in place for fostering economic corporation among the people of the Niger Delta region. Congratulations to Chevron for helping to make this possible. The Forum avails us the opportunity for information sharing. It also helps to enlighten participants on the unique local content of pursuing development initiatives in the Niger Delta.

We believe that this year's deliberation is not only timely but will go a long way to bring about a model that will spark-off the need to address important issues affecting the region, especially at this time of economic melt-down.

Distinguished guests, let me briefly remind us of the main discourse of the day, which boards on security, conflict mitigation, regional cohesion, climate change and initiatives towards achieving economic diversification in the region. I wish us all a very productive deliberation. On this note, on behalf of my leader, our Governor, Owelle Rochas Okorocha, I hereby declare the Niger Delta Development Forum open to the glory of God.

Thank you and God bless.