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CITATION OF HIS EXCELLENCY SENATOR (DR) ALI MODU  
SHERIFF, THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF BORNO STATE  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Before you today, stands an African, in the true sense of the Word. His love for people is expressed, in the most outstanding manner, through unique leadership and selfless service.

One cannot but wonder from which source, he derives his rare, aggressive, energetic zeal and tenacity, in his efforts, at touching the lives of society's most down trodden.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Executive Governor of two worlds, one dry and, the other lush and green, of a North Eastern, Nigerian State, called Borno, was born in Nqala 16th June 1956.

His amiable and respected, business tycoon father, Galadima Modu Sheriff and loving mother. Hajiya Aisa Modu, had little choice on the matter, when his dotting grandfather, Sheriff, lay his eyes on the cute baby and said, he wanted him.

So, as fate would have it, he was raised by Sheriff, who did not bother to hide the fact, that the boy Ali was the apple of his eyes.

In his wisdom, Sheriff, though accompanied by the boy Ali in his caravan trips, all over Africa, as a wealthy merchant, did somehow; enroll young Ali, into Ngala Primary School, in 1968. A combined Islamic learning, together with western education, due to the value, his grandfather had for it, and he finished his Primary education in 1974. Exposed to the world and horizons widened, through perilous, trans-saharan travels, at a tender age.

moulded young Ali's character. With harsh toughness and practical. Worldly knowledge. Few get such opportunities.

From 1974 to 1979, he proceeded to Government Secondary School, Bama where he obtained his G.C.E. Ali Modu Sheriff, attended the Borno College of Basic Studies (BOCOBS) Maiduguri, where he did his remedial studies, in July 1979 to 1980 from there he went to London School of Business, in September 1980 to 82, where he majored in Insurance, Banking and finance In 1982, he was employed in his father's construction company, as a Director and he rose to become the Managing Director, due to his outstanding, business acumen.

In 1985, it was time to leave the comfort, of his father's nest and fly away. He registered his first company. Other companies, such as Merolla Organisation and Union Chase, which network into different sectors, of the economy, also emerged, due to Ali efforts and initiative.

Life of the 5<sup>th</sup> Governor of Borno, blossomed tremendously, in the late 80's and early 90's, as providence, rewarded his hard work, truthfulness and dependability.

As the saying goes, he had a Midas touch.

Dr. Ali Modu Sheriff, ventured into, the uncertain world of politics, as a green horn in 1990, when the National Republican Connection (NRC) and Social Democratic Party S.D.P, were founded, by the Federal Government.

He was initially, an S.D.P member, but later became, a card carrying member of the N.R.C. He contested his 1<sup>st</sup> ever, election for Senator, in 1992, as an underdog, no one would bet on. But, against all odds, in a politically dynamic and unpredictable state like Borno, he emerged winner.

After the fall of the 3 Republic, Senator Ali Sheriff, still politically active, was nominated, as a Federal Government Delegate, to the

Constitutional Conference Though young, his leadership qualities did not go unnoticed and he was elected, as Chairman of the powerful and successful Committee on States and Local Government creation.

At the Constitutional Conference, his political sagacity and singular efforts, ensured the passage, of over 2 thirds, of the bills, on the floor of the House.

Ali Sheriffs raising political profile widened his leadership potentials, tremendously.

He was appointed Chairman, African-American Summit, held in Dakar Senegal in the mid 90 this was attended by the world black race.

When Nigeria, was suspended from the Commonwealth, Senator Sheriff was appointed member, along with Chief Richard Akinjide, Aihaji Bello Maitama and Yusuf Sule, among others, with the delicate, impossible looking, task of reconciliation and high profile, diplomacy.

Despite all odds, the committee's hard work, paid off, eventually.

He also, was among a selected few, by the Federal Government, to dialogue, with the government and people, of the United States of America, on Nigeria's, pariah state, status.

When, it was time to return, to the electoral, battle field, once again, Dr. Ali Sheriff, was elected Senator, under the UNCP, in 1998 and then in 1999, won the Borno Central, Senatorial Zone, for a record 3 time, on the platform of the APP.

In both cases, he faced formidable opponents, but his uncanny, natural ability, to connect firmly, with the hamlet dwellers, of rural and urban Borno, gave him victory.

His gifted ability, to solve the most complex problems, at the Snap of a finger, his selfless leadership qualities, which radiates confidence and

experience, saw him elected, Senate Minority Leader and Chairman, Committee on Defense.

His Excellency's, dynamism and tenacity in the face of adversity, ensured that, even as a legislator, he single-handedly, brought to the limelight, his consistency's plight. He, got funds released, by the Federal Government, for the 1<sup>st</sup> ever, electrification and connection, to the national grid, of remote, rural Mafa, Dikwa and Ngala towns. Not done, precious water, was made available, to each of the un-hospitable, 4 arid, local governments, within his zone, through borehole drilling. Also, the critical 130km, Gomboru-Ngala road, difficult to construct, due to thick, clay, soil, but gate-way, to North and Central Africa, was a challenge, he conquered.

The Federal Government was, persuaded by Senator Sheriff's practicality and tenacity, to construct the road, in the mid 90s, the significance of this road, to international trade and links, to Nigeria 's ports, is appreciated by land. Locked, African Countries.

The secret, to Ali Modu success, in human relations, can be traced, to the African generosity, he grew-up watching, his grandfather, Sheriff displayed, to the down trodden and those, in need.

His crowd-pulling magnetism, which is a unique phenomenon, that has baffled opponents, was responsible, in persuading him to run, as Governor, against his will, in 2003, under the ANPP.

This became necessary, as the incumbent, inertia plagued, negligent, government, which Sen. Ali Modu and others struggled, to put in power, derailed, abdicated responsibility, from the party's

Humanitarian manifesto, which Led, to its acute unpopularity, due to, untold hardship, suffering and even deaths, of the poor. Looting and

cancerous corruption, stench the air, in this UNDP classified, backward state, in all human indices.

This terrible, unacceptable situation was redressed, at the polls, where Governor Ali Modu Sheriff won, with a record margin of over 500,000 votes.

The abyss, Borno was free from falling into the most unviable State, in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Water, Health, Education, Agriculture, and all social services, had collapsed, as government, completely shut-down, in the midst of grinding poverty.

Governor Ali Modu Sheriff took over this unenviable; war-zone like, ravaged State, in deep shock, but has swiftly recovered and focused his deepest, inner energy, in rebuilding it, aggressively and tirelessly.

Undaunted, where others have failed, miserably, he has turned things around. With the strength of Hercules and the wisdom of Aristotle.

The merge amount. He receives from the federation account. Is the most. Miraculous and prudently manage. In Africa have indeed the world blocking corruption and leakages. In fact apart from paying heavy questionable debts inherited he has shown his finance massive people oriented. Sustainable development projects through strict and disciplined 100% savings. There are no white elephant projects. In Borno today, where Gov. Sheriff has set impossible and standards of leadership and a model of good governance.

In fact, the only unprecedented records, left to break, in touching the lives of the people, are his very own.

Today, history is made in Borno, by Ali Modu Sheriff, to the extent that, he has obliterated, any form of lame and cowardly opposition. Many are paying the price, for his fresh, vibrant, innovative, leadership style, which has made them, impotent and irrelevant. His unequaled achievements, in all sectors, you can imagine, of highly practical, sustainable, development, is so bewildering, to the extent that, one cannot mention any at all, without being, grossly unfair, to countless others.

However, to be fair to our recipient, let me attempt to touch on some.

Sheriff has at last broken the myth of perennial water shortage, due to the exhaustion of the 1 and 2 aquifer in arid Borno and Maiduguri, Africa 's fastest growing city, according to CNN.

He sought South African Technology and acquired 3 giant, super rock crushing rigs, mounted on 4 wheels all terrain Mack Trucks, capable of drilling as deep as 1, 500m. If it does not hit oil, it should hit water.

Already, 22 of the 50 boreholes, for the densely populated city are gushing water as we speak. 2,000 boreholes will be drilled by the grace of the Almighty, before the end of next year in the most remote and inaccessible hamlets and villages, statewide.

After that, typical of the shrewd businessman, the rigs will assist other arid states of the North and the 3 million Euros for the equipment, will be recovered for Borno.

Neglect of education, particularly the girl-child has found a place in Governor Ali Modu sheriff heart. A campaign team is now busy, traversing this large state, the only one, bordering 3 countries. Trying to convince parents to send girls to school.

Dilapidated schools in rural and urban Borno are habitable and conducive for learning due to his massive, aggressive renovation of 30 or more years old, schools.

As if that was not enough Sheriff has introduced a high nutritional feeding initiative, for less privileged children, in all schools of the state. He gives free books and uniforms to students, who pay token school fees, all in a effort to ensure that, the challenge of the state's education backwardness, is faced squarely.

Densely populated slums in Maiduguri are no more, due to the never before seen 44 urban, road and drainage project initiative, that will be completed in few days time.

West Africa 1St Veterinary Hospital, fully equipped and staffed by over 50 doctors was built, within 6 months, and now combats and prevents exotic diseases that threatened humans from crossing into our borders.

A 777, high quality, housing estate has been completed, also within 6 months, while Sheriff is building another 500, within 3 months, both in Maiduguri. He plans to house all civil servants by 2007, in an effort to ensure a happy retirement for them, as well as combat the temptation of corruption, in them.

He has established a Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and youth Empowerment, thus curbing vices the young, able bodied may fall prey to, short, medium and long term strategies, have been put in place, while the I ever micro-credit scheme now operates in Rural Urban Borno. Thousand of motorcycles under another scheme, has relieved beasts of burden, in rugged, unmemorable, rural terrains.

Remote villagers, no more lose patients, through the rigors of traveling to Health centres, as Ali Modu Sheriff has built a network of these centres, statewide, especially near our borders, while more hospitals have been built.

Receiving in 7 months what oil rich states do in month, he has also been able to lure back, Nigerians who migrated to Chad and Niger , after the collapse of the desert Yau Irrigation Scheme.

Established in 1958, it was abandoned by bad leadership for 20 years.

Governor Ali Modu Sheriff is now greening the desert, with the second bumper harvest of Rice, Wheat and market garden Vegetables, in this fertile food basket.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is only the tip of the ice-berg, this is SAS for you! Indeed, development journalism, using, the most stringent criteria, cannot cover, or record, the tremendous, earth shaking and dreamlike, happenings, going on, in all nooks and corners of Borno, which, is being thrust, into a new, future assured, era, at a neck- breaking speed, hard to comprehend and cope-up with.

Gov. Ali Modu Sheriff was nominated, by the rare wisdom of, Justice Karibe White and Justice Maman Nasir, of the Constitutional conference. Whom, they only knew. through his actions, in mid 90s due to his humble, pace setting, service, to Nigerians and humanity, for an Honourary Law Doctorate, at the University of Nsukka. Recently, the University of Maidauri , just like us, persuaded this thorough, shy and silent archiver, to accept an Honourary, Law Doctorate.

He was one time, National Treasurer and member, Board of Trustees of the defunct, UNCP and Vice Chairman, Board of Trustees, Of the ANPP, among others.

Senator Ali Modu Sheriff, is happily married, to Mrs. Fatima Ali Sheriff, a child and vulnerable groups, crusader, and daughter, to another pillar of service, to humanity, late Dr. Mohammed Lawan and is blessed with 4 Children, Hadiza, Mustpha, Halima and Sadiq. His brothers, Mohammed Nur, Goni Mustapha, Abubakar Sheriff, Baba Mala, Mal Deribe and Mustapha Haruna, are all making their marks, in Business, today.

Senator [Dr] Ali Modu Sheriff made history in the April 2007 General Elections by beating two formidable political parties as an underdog to emerge as the first person to win the governorship race twice in the highly unpredictable political terrain of Borno state.