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Nigeria: Economic Summit Lists Solutions to Economic Meltdown

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The just concluded "Benue State Summit on Economic Meltdown", has suggested the development of the abundant agricultural and tourism potentials in the state as solution to the hard hitting financial recession.

All papers presented at the summit including the ones by Minister of State for Finance, Mr. Remi Babalola and the Executive Chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Mrs. Ifueko Omoigui-Okaru as well as a former minister during the regime of the late General Sani Abacha, Mr. Ambrose Feese said Governor Gabriel Suswam needs to boost agriculture and tourism in order to survive the biting economic crunch. Suswam while addressing the closing ceremony of the summit on Friday said he accepted the suggestions, adding; "The situation has given us an opportunity to look inwards and seek for better ways of boosting agriculture and tourism in the state".



Suswam said his administration would also adopt a prudent approach to incurring expenditure for public services in addition to divesting too much confidence in the oil sector and cut down on expenditure. He enlisted the support of the legislature, the judiciary, the public service, civil society as well as the entire citizenry in confronting the challenges posed by the global economic crisis.

The governor also agreed that Benue people must return to the land, saying his ongoing provisions in the area of agriculture was a promotion to attract the people back into farming since most farmers had fled the business for politics where there has been too much available free money. The governor also informed the people of some funds the Federal Government and some banks had injected into agriculture for farmers to access and return to high productivity, saying Benue people must take the opportunity to improve on farming in the state. He admitted that though Benue prides itself as the nation's food basket, it still has not had a concrete agricultural programme worthy of improving on the methods of farming, but disclosed that the ongoing implementation of the plans of the present administration will turn the sector from one of subsistent farming to commercial one.

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