



WELCOME SPEECH BY THE EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION AT THE 2016 ANNUAL WORKSHOP FOR JUDGES ON LEGAL ISSUES IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS HELD AT INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL, LAGOS, OCTOBER 31ST TO NOVEMBER 1ST 2016

Protocols

I am happy to welcome you to this year's edition of the Judges' Workshop organized annually for the last 12 years, by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) with collaborative support from the National Judicial Institute (NJI).

The programme was conceptualized to bridge knowledge gaps in topical and emerging areas of telecommunications with a view to keeping the judiciary abreast of key relevant issues in the industry. Such vital knowledge of the telecommunications industry will ensure that the judiciary is able to competently navigate relevant legal issues presented for adjudication. Distinguished members of the Bench who have attended previous conferences have attested to the beneficial impact of interactions at the Judges' workshops on a personal level and in the exercise and discharge of their duties. As the Chinese proverb says, "Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere".

The emergence of Over-The-Top services (OTTs) which is a non-traditional means of communication has left telecommunication regulators all over the world grappling with the issues of whether to regulate or not to regulate, whilst balancing the expectations of relevant stakeholders in the industry. The NCC, in January 2016, conducted a study which culminated in the production of a Report aimed at addressing salient issues relating to OTTs. Previously, the Commission's Guidelines on International Gateway Access and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) acknowledged the rising popularity of VoIP services in the telecommunication space. Closely linked to OTTs is Big Data, another dividend of the fast paced technological advancement worldwide. An in-depth consideration of OTTs, Big Data and the regulatory issues generated therefrom will be examined at this workshop.

The proliferation of e-payment systems following the Federal Government's adoption of the Cashless Policy has led to a massive increase in mobile and online transactions in the

last few years with a resultant increase in financially related cybercrime. Cybercriminals continue to develop new strategies to circumvent cybersecurity models regardless of their sophistication. We are hopeful that in the continuing course of implementation of the Cybercrime (Prohibition Prevention, etc.) Act, 2015, cybersecurity will be strengthened. These related issues and more will also be examined in the course of our deliberations.

The workshop shall also be examining regulatory and legal issues bordering on the very topical and important issue of deployment of infrastructure and associated challenges in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria.

Our immense appreciation goes out to the National Judicial Institute for its continuous support in actualizing this vision of capacity building for distinguished members of the Bench on trending and emerging issues in the Nigerian telecommunications industry.

I call on you, my Lords, to actively engage presenters and discussants, exchange ideas and obtain clarifications on nagging questions and issues relevant to deliberations at this workshop. We will pay particular attention to your comments and contributions as these will be valuable in assisting the NCC in the actualization of its mandate of achieving regulatory excellence, operational efficiency and the development of a technology-rich Nigeria.

Thank you for honouring this invitation, I wish you fruitful deliberations.

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