



SPEECH DELIVERED BY DR. EUGENE I. JUWAH EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION AT THE GSM/IFC GREEN MOBILE FORUM

Distinguished guest, ladies and gentlemen, let me thank the organisers of this forum for inviting me to be part of this dialogue and to also share my thoughts on some key industry issues as highlighted in the letter of invitation.

As you are very much aware, the NCC is the regulatory agency for the telecom industry. The Nigerian Communication act NCA 2003 requires NCC to facilitate investment and entry into the Nigeria market for the provision of telecoms services as well as the supply of equipment's and facilities. The act also requires NCC to license companies to provide communication services and also to create the much needed conducive environment for investors in the telecoms environment while ensuring fair competition amongst players in the industry and ensuring subscribers are protected from unfair practices by telecommunications providers.

To this extent I would like to say that the NCC has done credibly well. The Nigerian telecommunications industry has experienced remarkable and exponential growth in the past 10 years.

The country has transformed from monopoly to a very robust competitive environment. The number of players in the market rose from one national carrier, that is government owned and a few PTOs to a multiplayer environment with various products and services being offered to consumers.

In terms of statistics, we have moved from only 500,000 subscribers in 2000 to over 110 million active subscribers by November 2012. There are also a number of other operators offering a bouquet of value added services ranging from Voice, Data and other ICT services.

- Teledensity has grown from 0.73% to 76.7%
- Contribution to GDP has grown from 0.85% to 6%
- Local and foreign investment was approximately USD25 billion in 2011
- Internet penetration has grown from 0.1% of the total population in 2000 to 26.5% in 2011

Today, Nigeria remains one of the most competitive and fastest growing ICT and Telecom market in Africa.

With regards to the extension of Infrastructure to remote un-served locations, the NCA act 2003 which created the NCC also provided for the establishment of a Universal Service Fund with the mandate to promote wide spread availability and usage of network services and application services throughout Nigeria especially in areas that would have otherwise been unprofitable for operators in the industry to provide services.

Consequently, the NCC has set aside a significant resource to the USPF annually to achieve the mandate stated above.

From its creation in 2006, the USPF has facilitated the deployment of over 100 Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) and co-location towers to extend voice and internet/ data coverage to remote (un-served/underserved) locations across the country. This has provided access to over 200 communities, some of whom would have been excluded without the intervention from the USPF.

The USPF also supported the establishment of about 200 Community Communication Centres (CCC) to provide access to ICT facilities on shared basis in different parts of the country. This has tremendously helped in creating

awareness amongst the populations in these remote locations thus making them become part of the information society.

Currently the USPF is working in partnership with some network operators to extend about 1500 km to different locations across the country. This is expected to open up the affected communities for ICT and broadband access.

The Board of the USPF has just approved a new 5 year Strategic plan for the Fund. The major thrust of the new Strategic plan is infrastructure extension and broadband penetration.

To ensure broadband penetration into most remote locations over the next five, the USP Fund is organising the entire underserved/ unserved communities/ locations in the country into clusters which would then be bid for the provision of broadband and other integrated ICT services.

During the bidding for the clusters, companies proposing Green power would be given preference and the most subsidies. This is because aside from the need to protect the planet, the use of traditional power will make deployment in these areas uneconomic as the operational cost will outstrip the revenues that may be generated from these areas. The low operational cost of green power e.g. Solar or wind power makes it viable to deploy in these areas over the long term.

As part of its short term strategy for reducing carbon emission by players in the telecom industry, the NCC and the USPF would continue to give preference to companies and operators bidding for its projects. On the long term, the NCC will work with the Ministry of Communications Technology and other government agencies on different initiatives to promote adoption of renewable energy in our industry. Example of this will be granting tax breaks to operators that are importing equipment's that will enable adoption of renewable energy in the telecoms industry.

In closing, I want to thank you again for the opportunity to be here and let me promise you that lessons learnt from this forum will be very handy as we plan for the year ahead. We expect so much to happen in this year and we ask for your cooperation and support to make the country's telecoms industry even more robust and competitive.

Thank you and God bless.

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Lagos.

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