



Being Speech by the Executive Vice Chairman (EVC) of Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Prof. Umar Garba Danbatta at Stakeholders Forum for ITU Telecom World 2016, Sheraton Hotel and Towers, Ikeja, Lagos, September 5, 2016.

Honorable Minister of Communications, Heads of Departments and Agencies here present, Telecommunications operators, industry players, Gentlemen of the press, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Let me thank you for coming.

We are gathered here for a simple reason today: To chart a new path, interact and collaborate with a view to creating a template that will form our narrative at the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Telecom World 2016.

Although the ICT sector has recorded very significant growth in the last 15 years when we moved from a little below 500,000 active lines to the current 157million and surpassed the 100 percent threshold for teledensity, it stands at 107%, internet connectivity climbed up from 50,000 in 2001 to its current 97million, we have over \$35b from Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) and local investments are also in billions of dollars. Our story of successes is very long but we as regulators are not resting on our oars believing that we are already there.

No, we are not there yet. What we have is work in progress.

Why are we here?

We are here to re-strategise on how we can attract more meaningful investments into our country. We are here to fine-tune our story about the growth and attraction of our sector. We are here to think of ways to convince would-be investors on the potentials and capacity of our country.

We are here to agree on the future growth of the telecom industry.

Why now?

Several investors have been here and many more are on their way. We will tell them that Nigeria is safe for investors and Return on Investments (ROI) is assured.

We will tell them that our regulatory processes are open, effective and transparent.

We will tell them about the growing demand for fast, stable and reliable internet connectivity, we will tell them how the country has been receptive to investors through policies that include tax incentives and holidays, and that investors have been so encouraged that those who invested heavily in our Digital Mobile Licences (DMLs) since 2001 have never known a better yesterday.

We will also tell the would-be investors that the regulator has ensured it conducts its business according to international best practices and standards through regular interactive sessions at consultative fora with stakeholders before arriving at directions and regulations that guide the smooth operations in the sector.

Broadband Revolution

We will tell them about the revolution that is brewing in broadband, since 2013 when the National Broadband Plan (NBP) was inaugurated by government, there have been spirited efforts by the Commission to raise the level of broadband penetration.

As we speak, we have 14% penetration and over 100 percent thirst for internet. We are convinced that by 2018, the anticipated 30% penetration is not impossible to achieve.

Bitflux Consortium has rolled out on its 2.3GHz services. Two Infrastructure Companies (Infracos) have been licenced for Lagos and North Central including Abuja. Five more licences are underway for North West, North East, South West, South South and South East. Our processes are being fine-tuned to actualize the licensing rounds. You are invited to join the revolution.

There is a gap, no doubt which these would-be and existing investors will bridge.

The Quality of service is not robust yet, but we are assured that we will get it right with more investments.

ITU

This is the story we are taking to ITU Telecom World 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand from November 14-17, with the theme “Collaborating in the Digital Economy.”

Entrepreneurs will share their experiences, operators will tell their stories and interact with policy makers and government officials in a frank manner that no one attends ITU Telecom World and remain the same.

Honorable Minister, distinguished ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your attention.

Prof. Umar Garba Danbatta, FNSE

EVC, NCC

Lagos, September 5, 2016.