

**KEYNOTE SPEECH DELIVERED BY DR. AMINU MAIDA,  
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NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION AT THE 94TH  
TELECOMS CONSUMER PARLIAMENT (TCP) HELD AT THE  
FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON HOTEL, LAGOS, OCTOBER 14, 2025**

**Protocols**

It is a great honour to address you at the 94th edition of the Telecoms Consumer Parliament—a flagship platform where regulators, operators, and stakeholders converge to deliberate on issues of critical importance to our telecommunications industry.

The concept of a “*parliament*,” when viewed broadly, is rooted in the idea of discussion. Historically, it has been a forum for debate, dialogue, and consultation between the governed and those who govern—a space where public policy is examined, refined, and aligned with the will of the people. At its core, the parliament embodies the very spirit of democracy: a government of the people and by the people, built on the pillars of transparency, participation, and accountability.

Our Telecom Consumer Parliament mirrors this essence. It serves as a vital platform through which the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), as the regulator of the telecommunications industry, brings together key stakeholders—regulators, operators, and most importantly, consumers—to engage in constructive dialogue on the pressing issues shaping the sector.

As the regulator, we intend to use this platform not only to highlight the challenges we have identified, but more importantly, to share the concrete steps we are taking to address them, especially as they relate to our consumers.

Consumers remain at the heart of our regulatory mandate. That is why the theme of today’s Parliament, “**Addressing Network Quality for Improved Consumer Experience**,” is both timely and significant. It aligns closely with one of the key focus areas of the Commission’s Strategic Vision Plan—that is, enhancing the Quality of Experience (QoE) for consumers across Nigeria.

In the past, the Commission's efforts were largely centred on ensuring that operators complied with defined Quality of Service (QoS) key performance indicators. However, we have since expanded this scope to encompass all consumer touchpoints across the telecom service consumption chain. Today, our focus extends beyond measuring service quality—it is about ensuring a holistic Quality of Experience (QoE) for every consumer.

For us, QoE captures the entire journey of the consumer—from choosing a network and completing the onboarding or registration process, to the actual usage experience, which includes faster speeds, wider coverage, fewer dropped calls, and tariff transparency, all the way to customer support and even the offboarding process.

As the regulator of this dynamic sector, let me restate that **quality of service delivery is non-negotiable**. Consumers have the right to reliable, efficient, and high-quality telecommunications services.

And since this is a “parliament” where we must remain accountable to the “constituents” we serve, it is only right that we acknowledge both the challenges we continue to face and the efforts we are making in addressing them.

Quality of Service today is not yet where we want it to be—but it is equally true that we are no longer where we used to be. Nigeria's telecom sector has witnessed remarkable growth. From about 500,000 active lines when the sector was first liberalised to over 169 million active mobile subscriptions and a teledensity of 78.11% as of July 2025, the industry has made tremendous strides. However, such growth must be matched by corresponding improvements in service quality to ensure that consumer expectations are met. The NCC remains fully committed to this goal, working hand in hand with all industry stakeholders.

## **Recent Regulatory Initiatives to Enhance Network Quality**

To safeguard Consumer interests and strengthen service delivery standards nationwide, the Commission has introduced several initiatives, anchored on transparency, accountability, and consumer protection. I will take a moment to share five of these key initiatives:

### **1. Updated Quality of Service (QoS) Regulations**

Last year, the Commission issued an updated Quality of Service (QoS) Regulation, setting clear and measurable performance benchmarks for operators. These benchmarks cover key indicators such as call setup success rates, call drop rates, network and power availability.

A major update in the revised Regulation is the expansion of the Commission's regulatory scope to include other service providers in the service value chain such as the Co-Location Providers, who play a critical role in the Service delivery value chain. Under the updated regulations, co-location providers are now held by similar accountability frameworks as mobile operators, ensuring stricter performance standards across the board, and holding all players in the value chain ensuring accountable for service reliability.

To reinforce compliance, the Commission has established a service committee, which meets as frequently as twice a month to evaluate operators' adherence to their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) under the updated QoS Regulations. The Committee's current priority is to drive a measurable improvement in service quality before the end of the year. It is also addressing issues of network interference by removing illegal signal boosters and ensuring operators implement their network expansion and optimisation plans in full compliance with approved standards.

## **2. Tariff Reforms and Significant Investments into the Telecom Industry**

You recall that in February this year, the Commission, in line with its economic regulatory mandate, approved a tariff adjustment designed to ensure that rates across the telecommunications industry are nearer to being both cost-reflective and competitive. This strategic intervention—though initially met with public hesitation—has since strengthened market stability, enhanced competitiveness, and most importantly brought back investor confidence in the Nigerian telecommunications sector.

So how is this going to translate into better Quality of Service for consumers?

Collectively, the operators have committed over \$1 billion—that is over N1 trillion—in new investments aimed at upgrading network infrastructure,

modernizing equipment, and expanding coverage nationwide. Over the past six months alone, tower companies and operators have deployed more than 2,700 additional capacity and coverage sites across the country. These sites will directly improve network strength, service reliability, and ultimately user experience for millions of Nigerians.

### **3. Protecting Nigeria's Critical Telecom Infrastructure**

Most consumers today may not fully appreciate the significant role that telecommunications infrastructure—such as telecom masts, manholes and fibre optic cables—plays in ensuring the quality of network services they receive. In February last year, when one of the major operators experienced multiple fibre cuts, large parts of the country suffered severe service disruptions. Internet connectivity was either unavailable or painfully slow; calls failed to connect, and there was frustration nationwide. This is precisely what happens when telecommunication infrastructure is damaged or when service providers are denied access to maintain these facilities.

To address this recurring challenge, His Excellency President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, signed the Presidential Order on the Protection of Critical National Information Infrastructure (CNII) in June 2024, designating the assets and infrastructure of the telecommunications sector as Critical National Assets deserving of special protection. The Order targets vandalism, theft, and intentional obstruction of access to telecom facilities, with the goal of ensuring that network services remain stable and resilient.

Working closely with the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), which is tasked with the responsibility of operationalizing the Order, the NCC has taken decisive steps to implement the order within the telecommunications sector. An Industry Working Group has been established to oversee implementation, beginning with ensuring operators' compliance with site security standards.

The Commission has also intensified public sensitization through nationwide media campaigns and community engagement initiatives, while strengthening its collaboration with state governments, security agencies, and the judiciary. Our efforts at mediating in disputes has also led to the reopening of several sites locked down by landlords, communities and even government agencies.

In addition, in February 2025, the Federal Ministry of Works, the Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, and the NCC inaugurated a Joint Standing Committee to tackle the persistent issue of fibre cuts during road construction and rehabilitation. This Committee fosters coordination among stakeholders—particularly road contractors and network operators—to safeguard fiber cables passing through roads and prevent future disruptions.

The Commission’s ultimate objective in all these efforts is to safeguard critical telecommunications infrastructure and ensure that consumers enjoy uninterrupted quality network services.

#### **4. Mandatory Reportage of Major Network Outages**

The Commission firmly believes that when consumers are empowered with the right information, they are better equipped to make informed decisions. In line with this principle and our regulatory approach of transparency and information disclosure, we have directed all network operators to notify consumers of any major service outages or planned maintenance activities that may disrupt services.

These notifications must clearly state the cause of the disruption, the areas affected, and the expected timeline for restoration. In the case of planned outages, operators are required to inform consumers at least one week in advance. All major outages must also be reported through the Commission’s Major Outage Reporting Portal—accessible via our website—which provides the public with transparent information on the causes of service disruptions.

In addition, in instances where service outages persist beyond 24 hours, operators are mandated to provide proportional compensation to affected consumers—such as extensions of service validity—in accordance with the provisions of the Consumer Code of Practice Regulations.

#### **5. Tackling Failed Payment Transactions**

One of the most recurring complaints consumers have made to operators, and the Commission is that of failed electronic payments for airtime and data. To address this issue, a Joint Task Force comprising the Commission, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and financial institutions was set up. This Task Force has

developed a framework that is currently under review to standardize operations and improve the reliability of electronic transactions across our networks.

## Conclusion

Before I conclude my remarks, I want to emphasize an approach that the Commission has placed at the very heart of its regulatory mandate: information disclosure, transparency, and accountability.

Some of you may ask: how do these principles affect the delivery of Quality of Service? **They do, and in very practical ways.**

**Firstly, through transparency by the regulator.** By providing consumers with real-time performance data—through our forthcoming Public Coverage Maps and soon-to-be-launched Quarterly Public Reports—we aim to empower them to make informed choices based on actual network performance rather than marketing claims.

Secondly, when we publish information on fibre cuts and public network performance statuses, we spur both faster resolution of issues as well as drive healthy competition among operators to perform better. Like I often say, when discussions around transparency come up: **who wants to come last in any race? No one.**

Thirdly, by **strengthening corporate governance frameworks** that ensure operators uphold accountability and high standards, these operators are now better positioned to deliver quality services, comply with regulations, and prioritize consumer satisfaction.

Lastly, **our Tariff Simplification Guidelines**, which mandates operators to publish disclosure tables that clearly state the name, price, validity, add-ons and terms and conditions of tariffs in a uniform and user-friendly format for consumers, are designed to build trust between consumers and the industry while significantly reducing complaints.

The task of improving network quality is a shared responsibility. Regulators, Operators, Infrastructure Providers, and Government stakeholders must work collectively to address challenges. Even consumers have a role to play. At the

NCC, we are committed to fostering partnerships, leveraging technology, and implementing consumer-centric policies that will sustain the sector's growth while protecting the rights of consumers.

In conclusion, addressing network quality is central to improving Consumer experience and strengthening public confidence in the telecom sector. We remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that Nigerians enjoy world-class services, and we invite all stakeholders to join hands in this collective effort.

As the "Speaker of this Parliament", I encourage frank discussions and practical recommendations during today's deliberations. Your insights will help shape our strategies and further advance the cause of consumer protection and quality service delivery.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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