

**COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE 46TH MEETING OF THE NATIONAL
COUNCIL ON INFORMATION (NCI) HELD AT EVENT CENTRE,
ASABA DELTA STATE FROM THURSDAY 27TH TO FRIDAY 28TH
OCTOBER, 2016.**

PREAMBLE

- 1.0.** The Meeting of the National Council on Information (NCI) was held at the **Event Centre, Asaba, Delta State, from Thursday 27th to Friday 28th, October, 2016**, with the theme: ***“Leveraging on Information and Digital Technology to Sustain the Change Agenda of Government”***. It was attended by 548 delegates from 29 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Goodwill Messages were presented by Mr. Festus Okubor, former Commissioner for Information, Delta State, and Mr. Nobert Chiazor, Chairman Delta State Chapter of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), as well as Comrade Alex Akpu, Chairman, Radio, Television and Theatre Workers Union (RATTAWU) Delta State.
- 1.1.** A welcome address was delivered by the Executive Governor of Delta State, Senator Dr. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa, who declared the meeting open. He observed that the reality of our fast-paced, high tech global world dictates that information is classified as a valuable asset. When governments suffer from credibility crisis, the problem is often traceable to improper, inadequate and inefficient information management that creates a chasm and fuels distrust between the governed and their leaders. Hence, information management should be given the same professional, skillful handling and strategic deployment accorded other valuable assets, to maximize its value in public administration and corporate governance.
- 1.2.** He also observed that “we live in an information age; information technology is revolutionizing the way we live, work and do business. It has also

impacted significantly on the way governments are run. The social media and other digital platforms have empowered the citizens, and significantly altered the media landscape. It is a welcome development to the extent that it promotes citizen participation in government”.

- 1.3. In his keynote address, the Hon. Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, welcomed dignitaries and participants to the 46th Meeting of the National Council on Information. He observed that the theme, **“Leveraging on Information and Digital Technology to Sustain the Change Agenda of Government”** was very apt, adding that it however evokes a sense of paradox in relation to the great challenges posed by the social media, in circumstances where users’ excesses are increasingly becoming a daunting challenge to information managers. He emphasised that digital technology would undoubtedly facilitate the work of Information Managers but regretted that rabble-rousers and emergency purveyors seeking to distort information also have online access to the same technology, in circumstances where the latter is faster at attracting readers’ attention and sympathy.
- 1.4. The Minister further noted that this explains why the Social Media would create and report unfounded rumours to the effect that **“Change Begins With Me”**, the National Re-orientation Campaign project that was launched by Mr. President in September, 2016 costs the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture **3.4 billion Naira**, whereas the Ministry’s entire capital budget for 2016 was under 2 billion Naira.
- 1.5. With regard to the specific question of what the administration’s **Change Agenda** is all about, he said; “It is the change from impunity to accountability, change from corruption to transparency, change from a mono-product economy to a diversified economy, change from unemployment to

job creation, change from moral decadence to moral revival, change from lost values to restoration of time-tested values, change from reliance on imported goods to made-in-Nigeria products and change from gender insensitivity to gender sensitivity, just to mention a few examples”

- 1.6. The meeting of officials to prepare the framework for the Council meeting was held from Thursday, 27th October, 2016, under the Chairmanship of the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Mrs. Ayotunde Adesugba.

After exhaustive deliberations, Council resolved as follows:

- 1) That both the Federal and State Ministries of Information and Culture should mount aggressive campaigns through relevant media messages aimed at making people, especially the youths, to embrace the acquisition of skills as a gainful means to make a living and thus, contribute to the economic development of the country. Also, the National Directorate of Employment should be involved in the campaign as well as other relevant MDAs e,g, Education, Youths Development.
- 2) That all State Ministries of Information should collaborate with the National Film and Video Censor Board (NFVCB) centres nationwide to carry out massive National Sensitization Campaign against unwholesome movies.
- 3) To encourage States to activate their all media platforms as veritable tools to promote government policies, programmes and key into the **“Change Begins With Me”** Campaign.
- 4) To urge the Federal and States Governments to fast-track action on rural internet connectivity and organize training in all the 774 Local Government Areas on the use of e-media to facilitate rural and urban connectivity.

- 5) That the recommendations on the memo on the menace of herdsmen were more of security issues and our role is to emphasise on what unites rather than what divides us.
- 6) That in line with its mandate the Nigerian Film Corporation (NFC) will provide necessary guidelines to states in their effort to set up the film offices and listed benefits accruable to states.
- 7) To adopt the “***Change Begins With Me***” as a way of life and support the campaign for its successful implementation and sustainability.
- 8) To carry out coordinated enlightenment campaigns on government efforts to rehabilitate the North-East in order to counter negative media reports on the welfare of displaced persons in the IDP camps.
- 9) To encourage the media to make attractive, the agricultural sector by promoting mechanized farming and showcasing successful farmers, promote the creative industries and the uniqueness of tourism as an important sector which is evident in its ability to employ skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manpower.
- 10) To sponsor public enlightenment campaign programmes through radio, television, newspapers, and social media in the area of mineral resources exploration and exploitation in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Steel and Solid Mineral Development.
- 11) To urge Federal and State Government authorities to fast-track action on rural internet connectivity and organize training in all the 774 Local Government Areas on the use of e-media to facilitate rural and urban connectivity.

- 12)** To encourage governments at all levels to enter into public/private partnerships to mitigate the economic burden on stakeholders affected by the Digital Switchover (DSO).
- 13)** To direct State radio and television stations to air jingles produced on the campaign against illicit drug use and trafficking provided by the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture free of charge as a social responsibility to the people.
- 14)** That both Federal and State Ministries of Information should mount aggressive campaigns to checkmate the spread of Haemorrhagic fever ailments. Council. That media should take the lead in collaboration with Ministries of Health and Environment.
- 15)** That the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and other relevant stakeholders should support the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture and State Ministries of Information in the financial inclusion campaign being championed by the bank for wider awareness.
- 16)** That Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of government should obey the Act (Decree 16 of 1990) establishing the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) and ensure that all Information Officers are properly registered with NIPR as a model for corporate bodies to follow.
- 17)** To encourage the Federal and State governments to embark on massive enlightenment campaigns on dry season farming in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.
- 18)** To ensure that broadcast challenges through technology are addressed through effective and transparent policies.

- 19) To endorse and support the collaboration of the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture with the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies to formulate a new National Information Policy.
- 20) The media should be involved in exposing ill-gotten wealth through investigative journalism and make public office holders give account of their stewardship through the media regularly.
- 21) To establish social media unit and project monitoring teams in the Ministries of Information for effective public enlightenment.

Council also noted as follows:

- 1) The invitation by the Nigerian Film Corporation to participate in the 2017 Nigerian International Film Festival.
- 2) The beneficiaries of the Nigerian Film Institute and Media Arts Studies (NAFIMAS) as being in position to be employers of labour thereby supporting the administration's efforts at job creation.
- 3) The need for the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) to assume a more robust and progressive role of empowering broadcasters and media managers to perform better for the development of the larger society than to impose sanctions and fines.
- 4) To encourage and endorse Public-Private Partnership arrangement to ensure the proposed Multi-Media Centre in the FCT and all states of the Federation.
- 5) The progress so far recorded and encourages the states to put in place infrastructure for digital switch over before June, 2017.

- 6) Thank the Government and people of Delta State for their hospitality.
- 7) That the date and venue for the next meeting of Council was scheduled for September, 2017 to be jointly hosted by Borno and Yobe States in Maiduguri.

COMMUNIQUE COMMITTEE

Federal Representatives

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|----|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Mr. E. N. Agbegir | - | Federal Ministry of Information |
| 2. | Mr. J. K. Lawal | - | Federal Ministry of Information |
| 3. | Mr. James N. Chinyere | - | Federal Ministry of Information |
| 4. | Mrs. Bolanle-George T. B. | - | Federal Ministry of Information |

State Representatives

- | | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Barr. Rosemary Achibong (Chairman) | - | Cross River State | -South South |
| 2. | Mr. Bonnie Iwuoha | - | Abia State | - South East |
| 3. | Mohammed B. Bulama | - | Borno State | - North East |
| 4. | Hamza Mohammed Brodo | - | Katsina State- | North West |
| 5. | Mrs. Toyin Niran-Onisile | - | Ondo State | - South West |
| 6. | Mallam Mohammad Nazif | - | Plateau State | - North Central |