**SPEECH OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN/CEO, NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (NCC), DR. AMINU MAIDA, DELIVERED ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2023, AT THE “NCC SPECIAL DAY” DURING THE 45TH KADUNA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR ORGANIZED BY THE KADUNA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY MINES AND AGRICULTURE (KADCCIMA)**

*The President, Kaduna Chamber of Commerce, Industry Mines and Agriculture (KADCCIMA),*

*CEOs of Companies here present,*

*Directors and Other Officials*

*Indigenous and Foreign Exhibitors and Entrepreneurs,*

*Telecom Consumers,*

*Gentlemen of the Press,*

*Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.*

It is with great pleasure stand before you today on this special occasion of the NCC Special Day at the 45th Kaduna International Trade Fair. This years’ trade fair is particularly significant as the theme, “Sustaining Economic Recovery through Deepening Local Content Value Chain” is extremely important, as it resonates deeply with the principles and objectives of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) on the promotion of local content development in the telecoms industry.

The NCC is an Independent National Regulatory Authority that oversees Telecommunication Services in Nigeria. Our vision at NCC is to create a dynamic regulatory environment that ensures universal access to affordable and equitable service and supports the nation’s economic growth. As a regulator of the telecommunications sector in the country, the Commission carries out its functions to ensure service availability, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability for all categories of consumers, who are leveraging on ICT/Telecoms to drive personal and business activities.

The Commission is fully committed to the advancement of local content and the overall development of the Nigerian economy. We recognize the importance of deepening the local content value chain as a critical driver for economic sustainability and growth. The NCC remains dedicated to fostering an enabling environment for telecommunications industry, where local content and innovation can thrive as this is one of the most critical thrust of the Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy. We cannot overemphasize the fact that robust local content value chain will not only create economic opportunities but also contribute to technological advancement, job creation, and skills development within the country.

In line with our commitment to supporting local content, the NCC has implemented various initiatives to promote indigenous participation in the telecommunications sector. The Nigerian Office for Development of Indigenous Telecommunications Sector (NODITS), a critical unit in our Digital Economy Department and our Research and Development Department, encourages local manufacturing and assembly of telecommunications equipment, promotes local software development, and supports initiatives aimed at enhancing digital skills and entrepreneurship among Nigerian youth. The Commission has sponsored a number of Hackathons to encourage and promote Nigerian innovator expanding the frontiers of the Digital Economy. **In 2023, three winners emerged in three critical thematic areas of innovations; Blockchain-enabled Data Protection Solutions for Enhancing Regulatory Compliance; Assistive Technology Solutions for the Elderly and People with Disabilities and Technology Solutions for Renewable Energy in Rural Areas.**

Furthermore, the NCC has continued to prioritize consumer protection and empowerment, ensuring that consumers have access to high-quality telecommunications services and are well-informed about their rights and responsibilities. We believe that an empowered consumer base is essential for driving demand and sustaining the growth of the local content value chain.

As we participate in this trade fair, we urge all stakeholders, including telecommunications operators, equipment manufacturers, software developers, and consumers, to embrace the ethos of promoting local content. By working together, we can create a more vibrant and inclusive telecommunications industry that contributes significantly to the Nigeria’s economic recovery and growth. **It may interest you to know that as at Q3 of 2023, the telecoms industry’s contribution to the nation’s GDP stood at 13.5% *(Source – Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report, November 2023 - A publication of the National Bureau of Statistics)***

Conversely, as we promote economic growth through development of local content, we must also address the challenges faced by consumers and NCC is committed to protecting their rights while ensuring their satisfaction. We therefore encourage businesses and service providers to prioritize customer satisfaction and uphold the highest standards of service delivery.

With our keen interest and commitment to consumer protection, the NCC has implemented measures to safeguard the interest of consumers and businesses alike. We have established a robust regulatory framework that promotes transparency, quality of service, and fair competition. Additionally, we have set up channels for consumer redress, ensuring that consumers can resolve disputes in a timely and efficient manner. We have also established seamless programs that will Protect, Inform and Educate (PIE Mandate) telecom consumers through various consumer-centric initiatives such as:

* **Consumer Education Outreach Programmes:** These programs include the Telecom Consumer Parliament (TCP), Telecom Town Halls on Radio (TTR), Telecom Consumer Conservation (TCC), Professionals’ Dialogue, Market Square Conversation, Village Square Dialogue, Television (TV) Dialogue, and Trade Fairs such as this one today.
* **Consumer Complaints Management (CCM):** The Commission created various channels of lodging complaints which include:

       NCC Toll-Free 622 Contact Centre which is available between 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. daily except on Sundays and Public holidays.

       Consumer Portal http://consumer.ncc.gov.ng

       E-mail: Consumers can send mail to (consumerportal@ncc.gov.ng)

       Consumer X account @Consumersncc

       Written complaints submitted to NCC Head Office here in Abuja or any of our Zonal Offices in Lagos, Ibadan, Port Harcourt, Enugu, and Kano States.

* **Development of the Do-Not-Disturb (DND) 2442 Short Code**: this was established in 2016 for telecom consumers to stop unsolicited text messages and nuisance calls. To activate the FULL DND service to stop all unsolicited messages & calls, Text “STOP” to 2442 and for PARTIAL DND service, Text “HELP” to 2442 to select the type of messages you want to receive.
* **Development of Mobile Number Portability (MNP):** It ensures that telecom consumers can switch from one network to another without changing their original Phone Number.
* **The Commission partners with Law Enforcement agencies to protect Telecom Infrastructure:** The Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)with law enforcement agencies such as the Police and National Security and Civil Defence Corps to help protect telecom infrastructure from vandalization.
* **Campaign against Sales & Buying of Pre-registered SIM Cards**: Telecom Consumers should be aware that buying pre-registered SIM cards is a criminal offense in Nigeria.
* **Direction on Roll-Over of Data:** Service Providers have been directed to Roll-Over unused data at the expiration of a data plan provided it is renewed within the stipulated time frame as approved below:

1.     One (1) day data plan has one (1) day to renew.

2.     Above one (1) day but less than thirty (30) days has a grace period of three days to renew.

3.     Thirty (30) days has seven (7) days to renew.

* **Telecom Consumer Assistance, Resolution and Enquiries (TELCARE) Desk** at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport Abuja: The TELCARE desk was set up to further provide additional platform to make enquiries on consumer issues; receive and facilitate the resolution of telecom consumer complaints. The TELCARE Desk is also for advocacy on any thematic telecom consumer issue or concerns and most importantly, an avenue for enhancing awareness of the Commission’s activities.
* **Harmonized Short Codes: T**he Nigerian Communications Commission had on **May 17, 2023,** directed all licensed Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) to commence implementation of approved Harmonized Short Codes (HSC) for providing services to Nigerian telecom consumers. The measure initiated by the Commission is a bid to improve the Quality of Experience (QoE) of consumers across all mobile networks. The new initiative is enabling consumers using the over 224 million active mobile telephone lines in Nigeria to use the same codes to access services across all networks. ***For instance, the same code \*310# will be used for checking airtime balance across all the networks.***
* **Campaign on National Identification Number – Subscriber Identification Module (NIN-SIM) Linkage –** *NIN-SIM Linkage is a process of connecting your NIN to your phone number to authenticate and protect your identity.*
* To link your NIN to your SIM, a subscriber needs to submit his/her NIN to their respective Service Provider to complete the process of NIN-SIM linkage. For subscribers who do not have the National Identification Number (NIN), they can obtain theirs from National Identification Management Commission (NIMC) Enrolment Centres or Your Service Providers Customer Care Centres, and you need a valid ID Card and BVN for enrolment. A subscriber can also link his/her NIN to his/her SIM by sending **NIN- your 11 digit NIN to 996 or Dial \*996\* Your 11 Digit NIN# and follow the prompts.** *A telecoms subscriber can link his/her NIN to as many as 4 mobile phone numbers per Mobile Network.*
* One major objective of linking subscribers’ **NIN to SIM** is tohelp improve and enhance national security in the country. **AS A MATTER OF CRITICAL NATIONAL SECURITY,** Telecom Consumers must link their NIN to the SIM. To this end, the Commission has directed all telecommunication operators to bar phone lines of subscribers whose lines are not linked to their NINs on or before February 28, 2024.

Permit me to conclude by expressing our gratitude to the organizers of the 45th Kaduna International Trade Fair for providing this platform for fruitful engagement and collaboration. I wish to implore all participants to take full advantage of the opportunities presented here to deepen our collective commitment to sustaining economic recovery through the promotion of local content in the telecommunications sector.

Finally, I also encourage you to take time to visit the NCC Pavilion at the exhibition ground to make inquires, know more about the activities of the Commission, and meet face-to-face with representatives of Service Providers, who are ready and willing to attend to your complaints or enquiries concerning their network.

Thank you, and I wish you all a successful and productive trade fair.

**Dr. Aminu Maida**

**Executive Vice Chairman/CEO**

**Nigerian Communications commission**