FEDERAL MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

OPENING SPEECH

BY

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AT

THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF
NIGERIA E-GOVERNMENT MASTER PLAN

VENUE:

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PROTOCOL…

PREAMBLE

I am quite happy to be here today on this auspicious occasion of the official launch of the "Nigeria e-Government Master Plan 2020".

I am particularly delighted that, my friend and brother, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), who is also the Chairman of the Presidential Committee on e-Government has made time to be here with us at this event despite his busy schedule – especially during this period when he is coordinating several events and activities in preparation for the Presidential inauguration.

We also appreciate the presence of our colleagues, friends, partners and everyone that has made it here today, despite the relatively short notice. This I am sure is due to the importance you place on e-Government and the Information and Communications Technology sector.

There are several advantages to be derived from purposeful implementation of e-Government programs, such as:
- Cost savings, resulting in Efficiency in service delivery

- Enhanced transparency & accountability

- Improved public administration

- Growth of the ICT sector, leading to employment opportunities

- Improved economic development

OPENING SPEECH

The Federal Government believes that given our current realities as a nation, e-Government implementation is an essential policy that will help the government improve efficiency in the Public Service, block financial leakages, improve transparency in government dealings in order to reduce corruption to the barest minimum, while also bringing government closer to the people.

2.	This is reinforced by the fact that at the onset of this administration, when there was talk of reduction in the number of Ministries, His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari retained the Ministry of Communications as a stand-alone with marching orders for the Ministry to ensure growth of the sector contribution to the economy and adoption of ICTs to improve government services and administration.

3.	One of the Mandates of the Ministry of Communications is to "*Utilize ICT to drive transparency in governance and improve the quality and cost effectiveness of public service delivery in Nigeria*". This essentially implies that the Ministry is expected to implement and facilitate the adoption of e-Government across board.

4.	Furthermore, several programmes in the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) reference the use of ICTs to improve government administration and services and identify the Ministry of Communications as the responsible entity.

5.   In recognition of the several benefits accruable from the adoption of e-Government practices, the United Nation's Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) encourages member nation to not only adopt e-Government practices, but to continually strive to improve the quality and scope of e-Government adoption. This culminates in the bi-annual publication of the UN E-Government survey since 2003.

6.   Evidence from this bi-annual survey, has established that there is a positive correlation between the national income of a country and the level of e-Government development. Hence, it is our fervent believe that a holistic adoption and implementation of the e-Government Master Plan will inevitably result in an increase in the sector contribution to the nations GDP.

7.   Against this backdrop, the Federal Ministry of Communications embarked on the process of developing an all-encompassing framework that would outline the policies, strategies, platforms etc. that all other Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) as well as other relevant stakeholders can key into to ensure that we have a robust e-Government implementation. Thus, the Nigeria e-Government Master Plan.

8.   While there have been some e-Government services implemented, I daresay, for Nigeria to fully harness the promised benefits, there is still a lot more work to be done both at the Federal level as well as by the various State governments.

9.   Consequently, we have developed the Nigeria e-Government Masterplan to guide the adoption and implementation of e-Government programs across government MDAs.

10.   The plan, which intends to make best use of Information and communications technology (ICT) was developed through research, collaboration and extensive engagement with other relevant stakeholders and was largely made possible with the support of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

11.   The effort involved several stakeholder engagements, Technical working group meetings, analysis of several case studies of other countries and discussions on various e-Governance approaches as well as use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools and resources for the advancement of government operations.

12.   We are eternally grateful to His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari for being a champion of e-Government, this is signposted by his unwavering commitment and the approval of the E-Government Master Plan given by the Federal Executive Council in August 2018.

13.   In order to achieve our desired outcomes, one of the Critical Success Factors is the need to have a committed and visible Leadership through the establishment of a "Presidential Committee on e-Government" as well as identification of e-Government Champions in the top-hierarchy of government to

drive the implementation and adoption of the various e-Government initiatives.

14. We are happy today that the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, who is the Chairman of the Presidential Committee, is here in person at this official Launch. This is a sign of committed leadership and he has shown himself as a visible champion of e-Government

15. The Presidential Committee om e-Government consists of Ministers of some key Ministries, heads of a few relevant government agencies as well as private sector stakeholder representatives. Amongst other functions, the committee will provide the requisite 'political will' to ensure consistency and institutionalization of e-Government in our nation.

16. We are not oblivious of the fact that such a huge undertaken, as the holistic implementation of e-Government might encounter resistance to change amongst a few recalcitrant public servants. To reduce such encumbrances, we have put in place a robust "Capacity Building Programme", again with the support and in collaboration with the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

17. To ensure effective implementation of the Master Plan, several e-Government courses have been instituted (ranging from Introductory to intermediary and professional). So far, well over 1,200 officials drawn from across the Public Service have been trained. In order to institutionalize the e-Government training,

an e-Government Training Centre has been situated at the Public Service Institute of Nigeria (PSIN) to facilitate continuous e-Government training and reorientation for all public servants.

18.   In conclusion, it is my considered opinion that if properly implemented, the e-Government master plan will launch Nigeria among the top 50 leading countries as measured by the UN e-Government Index.

19.   Finally, we welcome the support of all development partners and our various stakeholders to join us as we embark on this journey, which we believe will be a major contributor to redeeming our country and help improve employment opportunities for our teeming youth population.

Thank you for your kind attention.