



MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
PRESS CONFERENCE /PRESS RELEASE

DELIVERED BY

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ON THE OCCASION OF
WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION AND
INFORMATION SOCIETY DAY (WTISD 2017)

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Today, Wednesday May 17, the global community is celebrating the 2017 World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD). This annual event was instituted during the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) plenipotentiary conference held in Antalya, Turkey in November, 2006. The annual World Telecommunication and Information Society Day is aimed at raising awareness on the possibilities that the use of the Internet and other Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) can yield powerful societies and economies, and also help to bridge the digital divide.

2. The theme for WTISD-17, "**Big Data for Big Impact**," focuses on the power of Big Data for development and aims to explore how to turn imperfect, complex, often unstructured data into actionable information in a development context. The insight brought on by advanced analysis can strongly complement the evidence-based nature of decision-making that can be leveraged at national, regional and international levels to drive success towards attaining all 17 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030.

3. On, 2017, the Secretary General of the ITU, **Mr. Houlin Zhao** called for a deliberate action by member nations to ignite a global dedication to leveraging the insights provided by Big Data for new opportunities to address development challenges. Consequently, the theme for WTISD-17 is expected to highlight the technological developments that have facilitated the emergence of Big Data, developing standards related to Big Data and identifying sources and uses of Big Data, including use of Big Data technologies for developing, monitoring and measuring improvements in information societies. Member nations are therefore expected to build political momentum to embrace Big Data and leverage insights to identify new opportunities to creatively address sustainable development challenges.

4. Every day, an unfathomable amount of data flows through the Internet. This data contains information ranging from simple everyday conversation to complex and highly sensitive personal and monetary transactions. Each piece of data leaves behind electronic trails of user activities. When properly collected, stored, and processed, the data allows organizations to understand behaviours and preferences. Such knowledge is valuable in customizing and personalizing products and services to meet consumer needs, thereby equipping companies with competitive advantage. In fact, data these days is the backbone that supports the current trend of Big Data, analytics, and Internet of Things. Therefore, Big Data is the propeller of the knowledge economy that is built on a global telecoms and ICT ecosystem.

5. Big Data is an extremely important technology development. Big Data is an umbrella term for the large amounts of digital data continually generated from various devices being used by the global population, often including emerging technological capabilities in solving complex tasks. The technology offers telecom operators a real opportunity to gain a much more complete picture of their operations and their customers, and to further their innovation efforts.

6. The ICT industry as a whole spends far less on R&D than any other technology-oriented industry as a percentage of sales, and its efforts to change its ways have not yet proven broadly successful. Big Data demands of every industry is a very different and unconventional approach to business development. The operators that can incorporate new agile strategies into their organizational DNA fastest will gain a real competitive advantage over their slower rivals. Telecommunication companies can no longer afford to NOT make use of their Big Data. Big Data has the potential to place telcos in a prime position to win the battle for customers and create new revenue streams. It provides them with a wealth of information about their customers' behaviors, preferences and movements.

7. This year's World Telecommunication and Information Society Day Celebration (WTISD-17) also marks the 152nd anniversary of ITU, therefore providing the opportunity to reflect, exchange ideas and debate on the theme: Big Data for Big Impact, adopted by the Council towards formulating national positions on the issue and thereafter report back to ITU. Government, through the Federal Ministry of Communications is poised to support stakeholders in the Nigeria ICT ecosystem to create and strengthen a national data ecosystem for sustainable development where data being generated would be captured, shared and analyzed in innovative ways, thus increase the value of data and analytics in our development context process. The Ministry would also encourage cross-sector, cross-agency and cross-border data collaboration, by developing unified standards for emerging data sources and data interoperability. Efforts are also being made to establish a data-driven decision making, service delivery and operational efficiency culture by developing national policies and data strategies to promote open data and Big Data analytics as well as an unambiguous regulatory framework for enhancing data transparency and utility.

8. Government is also poised to provide equitable data protection and strategies for information release, and implement an inclusive and open process to foster privacy, security, public trust and the ethical use of data involving a variety of stakeholders. Efforts are also being made to support and scale up research and development in the sector to provide the opportunity for exploring the possibilities to leveraging big data for improving the national landscape for data education and training in response to the increasing demand for both deep analytical talent and capacity for the broader areas. Government will also ensure continuous international collaboration to foster innovation using Big Data.

9. Today, the digital economy holds huge potential for entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). New digital trends such as cloud computing, mobile web services, smart grids, and social media, are radically changing the business landscape, reshaping the nature of work,

the boundaries of enterprises and the responsibilities of business leaders. Therefore, adopting digital technologies is one strategy that businesses have adopted to optimise processes and drive new and improved measurable business results. As the digital and mobile revolution continues to accelerate, new technologies – Big Data, artificial intelligence, robotics and the Internet of Things, promise great benefits but also continued disruption resulting from the digitalisation of many industry sectors.

10. The Ministry of Communications is committed to forward-looking policies to enable citizens, businesses and societies to prosper, improving lives and livelihoods, while mitigating the possible adverse effects that can accompany economic change. This we are sure, will encourage investment and promote development of digital economy while building an inclusive digital future for its citizens.

11. Government has a critical role to play in creating an inclusive digital future by establishing a policy framework that incentivises network investment, by ensuring that laws and regulations reflect the realities of today's digital world, and by promoting digitalisation across the economy and society. Telecommunications companies have a unique advantage in the modern marketplace: by controlling the communications infrastructure, they have more data than any other industry on where their customers are, how they interact, and how they transact business. But leveraging that customer information requires telcos to transform a 19th-century business model into one that meets today's demand for real-time business and consumer insight

12. Big Data is the next frontier and is the way to go in this age and the whole world is embracing it for insights and business value. Big data promises to promote growth and increase efficiency and profitability across the entire telecom value chain. Big data can even open up new sources of revenue, such as selling insights about customers to third parties. Driven by an ongoing digital revolution, the amount of data generated is growing exponentially. This growth can be found in the range of application

domains that invest in collecting data for information and analytic purposes.

13. As the world commemorates the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, I call on all stakeholders, government at all levels in collaboration with other concerned bodies to put up a stiff measure that would address the various ongoing questionable acts taking place on the internet and in the sector including propaganda, fraud, and all forms of immorality.

14. In conclusion, Big Data is undoubtedly a multidimensional and multipurpose phenomenon; therefore, I implore you to further explore the **DESCRIPTIVE, DIAGNOSTIC, PREDICTIVE AND PRESCRIPTIVE** benefits of Big data in your daily activities for information, hindsight, insight, foresight and optimization.

Happy Celebration.

Gentlemen of the press, I thank you

Long live ITU

Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria