

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN,
NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION AT THE 2018 ANNUAL
WORKSHOP FOR JUDGES ON LEGAL ISSUES IN
TELECOMMUNICATIONS HOLDING AT SHERATON HOTEL, LAGOS
ON OCTOBER 2 – 5, 2018**

Protocols.

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this Workshop organized annually for Judges on Legal Issues in Telecommunications by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) in conjunction with the National Judicial Institute (NJI).

The program was conceptualised to identify topical and emerging areas of telecommunications with a view to create an avenue for participants to brainstorm on potential legal consequences. Further to feedbacks received from previous participants together with the growing judicial intervention in telecommunication matters by our courts, the Commission believes this Workshop has immensely contributed towards capacity building for members of the Bench. This has invariably precipitated a robust telecommunications law regime and precedents in Nigeria.

The importance of telecommunication to any economy, cannot be overstated in any vibrant economy. The Telecommunication sector is an unalienable part of our national growth and development, hence the quest for evolution and excellence is unending. It has contributed about N15 Trillion to the Nigerian Economy since the liberalization of digital mobile communications nearly 17 years ago.

Digitalization is changing our lives more than any other technical revolution has done before. It affects our social and working life, our communication, competitiveness, property rights, fundamental rights and privacy. Alongside all the positive aspects of digitalization, our society is facing a rather important issue concerning Cybersecurity, Information and Data protection. Due to the proliferation of the Internet and the decreasing cost of technology, millions of users' have been provided access to enormous resources with a resultant increase in cybercrime. Cybercriminals continue to develop new strategies to circumvent cybersecurity measures regardless of their sophistication but for those who are apprehended, it is necessary that we discuss admissibility of Electronic Evidence towards the successful prosecution of such cyber criminals.

The Workshop intends to also examine Artificial Intelligence (AI) a technology that is transforming every walk of life. It is a wide-ranging tool that enables people to rethink how we integrate information, analyze data, and use the resulting insights to improve decision making. Our hope through this comprehensive exercise is to explain AI, and demonstrate how AI already is altering the world and raising important questions for society, the economy, and how it affects the Courts.

My Lords, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, the telecommunications industry has been identified as one of the key drivers to economic growth and development in the Nigerian polity. NCC however recognizes that no such reforms would stand the test of time without the foundation of due process and rule of law. That is the philosophy behind the bold step in exposing our judges to issues in telecommunications.

We thank our collaborator in this program – NJI for its role in ensuring the most conducive atmosphere for your Lordships to brainstorm and enhance professionalism and excellence.

Your Lordships, I encourage you to savour every resource made available to you at this Workshop. I also enjoin you to freely make contributions and raise issues that would assist the Commission in coming up with adequate regulatory measures that would enhance development in the communications sector. We assure you that every view expressed will be respected and considered.

Distinguished guests, participants, members of the press, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you all for your time and wish you happy deliberations.

Prof. Umar Garba Danbatta

October 2, 2018.