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**REMARKS BY THE EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (NCC) AT THE PUBLIC INQUIRY ON E-WASTE REGULATIONS AND DISASTER RECOVERY GUIDELINES HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2019, AT THE COMMISSION'S HEAD OFFICE**

Executive Commissioner, Stakeholders Management, Directors here present, Distinguished Stakeholders, Gentlemen of the Press, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, may I, on behalf of the Board & Management of the Commission, welcome you to the Public Inquiry on e-Waste Regulations and Disaster Recovery Guidelines.

**E-WASTE REGULATIONS**

According to a recent report by the World Economic Forum (WEF), electronic waste (e-waste) is now the fastest-growing waste stream in the world. It is estimated that this waste stream spiked by about 48.5 million tonnes in 2018. In Africa, the challenge is even more dire. In a fast-paced telecoms industry where speed and capacity define the networks, rapid advances in technology make it easier and convenient to change malfunctioning gadgets than to repair them. Also, the illegal and predatory e-waste value

chain, which encourages the movement of e-waste from developed to the developing countries, adds another layer to the global challenge of handling e-waste.

In Nigeria, due to low GDP per capita/low income, and the desperate quest for information, it is estimated that 75% of electronics imported into the country are irreparable and toxic junk.

Generally, e-waste refers to electrical or electronic equipment that is waste, including all components, sub-assemblies and consumables that are part of the equipment at the time the equipment becomes waste. Apart from their solid and non-biodegradable nature, some of the toxic elements found in e-waste include lead, mercury, lithium and other ozone depleting substances.

The global concern for the regulation of e-waste is two-pronged. Firstly, is the acute awareness of the hazardous properties and the potential risk on human health, as well as their capacity to degrade the environment. Secondly, is the business case and vast potential for wealth creation in recycling e-waste into more benign and productive uses.

In line with its regulatory mandate and to keep pace with efforts at managing e-waste-related issues, the Commission has developed a draft Regulations on e-waste. The draft Regulations represents a holistic intervention aimed at providing clarity and delimiting the responsibilities of various stakeholders in the e-waste value chain within the

telecommunications industry. While the draft Regulations is industry-specific, it nonetheless keys into other initiatives at national and international levels.

## **DISASTER RECOVERY GUIDELINES**

In line with its commitment to sustain the phenomenal successes recorded in the industry, the Commission is issuing proactive containment measures that will mitigate disasters likely to affect business continuity, in the event that they occur. The United Nations defines *a disaster as a serious disruption of the function of a community, society or business*. Disasters often involve widespread human, material or environmental impact, which exceed the ability of the entity to cope using its immediate resources.

The Guidelines on Disaster Recovery therefore, ties into the Commission's wider risk management initiatives introduced by the Code of Corporate Governance launched by the Commission in 2014, which are aimed at protecting telecoms companies from the threat of emergencies in their operations. It covers subjects such as disaster profiling, disaster preparedness, disaster relief and disaster recovery.

In line with the Commission's participatory rule-making process and in the best tradition of regulatory transparency, the Commission uploaded these instruments on its website on January 21, 2019 and requested stakeholders to submit their comments. Although no comments were made on the instruments, indicative of their general acceptance, the Commission has nonetheless convened this Public Inquiry as required by law and to allow stakeholders who missed the opportunity to now make comments

which, as usual, will be taken on board and duly considered in producing these robust regulatory instruments.

On this note, I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.

**Prof U.G. Danbatta FNSE, FRAES, FAEng**

**March 5, 2019**

