

**Keynote Address By The Executive Vice Chairman,
Nigerian Communications Commission, Professor
Umar Garba Danbatta, FNSE, FRAES On Service
Delivery For A New Nigeria At The 11th Annual
Conference Of The Academy Of Management
Nigeria, 25th – 26th October, 2017 At Nnamdi
Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State**

Protocols:

Professor Umar Garba Danbatta, FNSE, FRAES is honoured to be invited to deliver a keynote address at this august gathering of scholars, practitioners and critical stakeholders of Management Science who are driven by a common interest in scholarship, research, and development of management theory and practice. Engineer Danbatta is unavoidably absent at the 11th Annual Conference of the Academy of Management Nigeria due to an intervening national assignment. Consequently, the Executive Vice Chairman of the Communications Commission tenders his sincere apologies to the entire gathering of respected stakeholders at this 11th Annual Conference of the Academy of Management Nigeria. However,

Professor Umar Garba Danbatta appointed the Head of Human Capital, Nigerian Communications Commission, Matthew I. Maganda, to present his keynote address. For avoidance of doubt, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen, all expressions of the first person singular pronouns conveyed in this keynote address are referral to Professor Umar Garba Danbatta, FNSE, FRAES. The address runs thus:

Introduction: The theme, Service Delivery for a New Nigeria, at the 11th Annual Conference of Academy of Management Nigeria congregating scholars, practitioners, students and admirers is very apt and indisputably timely. It elicits sober reflection. It is a patriotic call for national rebirth, and conscious change in the way resources are managed for better socio-economic attainments in the country. It calls for efficient management of all the sectors of the economy for impactful integrated growth. It is robust to stimulate engaging conversations, and I foresee considerable additional managerial perspectives and insights for improved Management practice in the country and beyond. I salute you, members of the academy of

Management Nigeria for your patriotism in crafting the theme of this conference which has the potential to rekindle the consciousness of compatriots to make concerted efforts in all spheres of life for a greater Nigeria that we all shall be proud of.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I should underscore the ingredients for successful service delivery generally. An institution that formulates a clear vision, mission, set of values, and operational principles supported by an appropriate structure, motivated workforce, and value adding processes that are guided by a strategic plan implementation, adequate resources and committed leadership can always guarantee good service delivery in any formal outfit. More so, when members of professional bodies amongst the workforce uphold the code of ethics of their careers in the dispensation of their responsibilities. The New Nigeria that we infer at this conference, critically needs the foregoing focused organisational culture. However, it must be recognised that the aforementioned ingredients need to be managed as a chain. Any

weak component in the link exposes the institution to mediocre service delivery.

Without sounding patronising, I want to state that some institutions are performing superlatively. However, there are others that need to reconsider their commitment and strategies to meet the expectations of their stakeholders. Also, I should add that in the light of the theme of this conference, all institutions whether performing or non-performing should review their output in relation to their mandates and re-strategise for optimal service delivery which should traverse all sectors of the economy. At this conference, I see a multitude of great, refined and vibrant minds with enormous experience who are united in a common goal of lifting Nigeria to the envy of the World.

My keynote address will therefore, highlight my experience in academics, administration and telecommunications over the past thirty years within the context of two institutions whose affairs, I have been privileged to steer. The managerial strategies I believe in and have always deployed as a former Acting Vice Chancellor of the

then nascent Kano State University of Science and Technology, Wudil, and as the current executive helmsman at the Nigerian Communications Commission amongst other public institutions that I have managed, have convinced me beyond doubt, that the thin line between laudable and despicable service delivery lies in disciplined leadership.

Later, in the summation of my keynote address, engaging questions will be posed to stimulate discussions and engage the Academy of Management Nigeria to continue to chart the pace of Management discourse and development in the country. I shall not proffer any solutions to the challenges undermining effective service delivery in the country, rather, I shall complicate the anti-thesis of the theme of the Conference to elicit beneficial debate from our respected scholars and practitioners at this gathering.

Experience at the Kano State University of Science and Technology: Ladies and gentlemen, at the Kano State University of Science and Technology, I took advantage of the vantage position of my

Chairmanship of the Steering Committee for the establishment of the institution when I was transmuted to its acting Vice Chancellor to guide the council in the development of strategic drivers that eventually launched the University vibrantly in record time. Stakeholder consultation, and collaboration with local and foreign partners drove the institutional vision, mission, values and well monitored strategic plans for the university. In less than four years, the institution recruited two hundred (200) academic staff made up of one hundred and twenty (120) professors and eighty (80) doctorate degree holders. Also, one hundred and forty (140) courses of the University were fully accredited by the National Universities Commission. Four (4) monotechnics across the State were affiliated as campuses of the University to address special developmental needs of the State Government. Similarly, strategic collaboration between the University and 5 first-generation Universities in the United Kingdom, Poland, Russia, and China, amongst other things, was established.

Over View of Telecommunications Growth: The history of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) is strikingly fascinating. Between 1992, when the Commission was established, and 2000, the telecommunications industry grappled with less than 500, 000 telephone lines. However, with a clear Government policy and commitment to its implementation, by the end of 2001, the sector witnessed a quantum leap of mobile telephone lines of over 2,000,000. Since then, the telecommunications industry has continued to grow to attain its current subscriber base of 139,000,000; a teledensity of 99%, a mobile internet connection of 96,000,000 subscribers; a broadband national penetration of 21%, foreign capital investment in the economy of \$68,000,000,000; a sectoral contribution of N1.545 trillion to the economy; and a contribution to the gross domestic product of 9.5% as at 31st June, 2017. Also, the Commission has in the last two years, remitted over N133.53 billion to the Federation Account. Meanwhile, the broadband national penetration target of 30% in the country by the end of 2018 is being pursued vigorously.

On assumption of office at the Nigerian Communications Commission, I discovered pleasantly that the institution already had a formidable functional structure that was built on clear vision, mission, principles and core values. These strategic drivers are supported by productive strategies, value-adding processes and a motivated workforce. I only needed to latch on the existing structure and remain focused on the corporate mandate while underscoring team spirit, and consultative engagement with critical stakeholders. In addition, adherence to the Communications Act, the Telecommunications Policy, the Strategic Management Plan, and faithful performance reviews have been indispensable for the current achievements in the areas of core regulatory and corporate social responsibility projects in the telecommunications sector.

8-Point Agenda: Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, my humble contribution to the scheme of things in the Nigerian Communications Commission to ensure enhanced pervasive universal access in the country, is summarised in an

8-point agenda. The ultimate goal of the initiative is to enhance availability, accessibility and affordability of ICT services and e-applications across the length and breadth of Nigeria. The agenda is achievable through faithful execution of the following strategies:

- i. Facilitating broadband national penetration across the country;
- ii. Improving quality of service and the experience of consumers;
- iii. Optimising the use of spectrum;
- iv. Promoting ICT innovations and investment opportunities;
- v. Facilitating strategic collaboration and partnerships locally and internationally;
- vi. Protecting and empowering the consumer;
- vii. Promoting fair competition and inclusive growth amongst licensees; and
- viii. Ensuring regulatory excellence and operational efficiency.

It is pertinent to observe that the pursuit of the agenda is vigorous, comprehensive and executed along with other regulatory roles that are conveyed in the Nigerian Communications Act

2003, the National Telecommunications Policy and the Strategic Management Plan which are clearly defined and cascaded as functional contributions from departments. Again, deliberate engagements with stakeholders in politics, business and the academia, locally and overseas, are managed to enable desired synergy that will maintain growth in the sector. Continual strengthening of the regulatory structure, processes, capacity building, compliance monitoring and enforcement of licensing obligations remain cardinal in telecommunication regulation.

Multiple Taxation on Telecommunications Infrastructure: The Nigerian Communications Commission has been engaging State Governments and relevant agencies of Federal and State Governments to appreciate the negative implications of multiple taxation and excessive rates on Right of Way of Communication infrastructure across the country, quality of service issues, and roll-out challenges for the service providers. The initiative has yielded commendable results. There is improvement in the appreciation of the negative impact of multiple taxation on the

growth of the telecommunications industry occasioned by the three tiers of Government in their drive for internally generated revenue.

Spectrum Farming: The Commission has embarked on aggressive spectrum farming to optimise its usage. Licensees who have idle spectrum are profiled and charged to use or sell to operators who are interested in the scarce frequency resource for the benefit of consolidating the gains of the industry.

Quality of Service: A taskforce is dedicated to monitor compliance of network operators with internationally developed technical and consumer-experience related parameters for measuring quality of service of telecommunications in the industry. Reviews are made periodically and shared amongst operators for the purpose of improvement of their services.

Collaboration with Bilateral Telecommunications Institutions: A key feature of the Communications Commission is collaboration with bilateral institutions on ICT management. The engagement

enables peer reviews, setting up of operational standards, capacity building and domestication of best practices in the industry. It also, helps harmonisation of regional telecommunications policies, amongst other things.

2017 Year of the Consumer: The Commission has dedicated 2017 as the year of the consumer to project the needs of the consumer in the areas of his education and rights. The campaign ensures that the consumer will be acquainted with his bill of rights and obligations to the use of mobile services in addition to the opportunities to interact with service providers through the ‘Consumer Parliament, Consumer Outreach and the Consumer Town Hall’ Programmes.

Code of Corporate Governance for the Telecommunications Sector: Besides the foregoing efforts of the Commission in ensuring meritorious implementation of its mandate, it is determined to propagate service excellence in the telecommunications sector by enforcing the Code of Corporate Governance on major licensees in the telecommunications industry. The code draws

generously from the company and Allied Matters Act and the Nigerian Communications Act to enforce supervisory standards that network operators are required to observe for business sustainability. Boards of network operators are required to uphold ethics of good governance and ensure Management and the workforce of their institutions comply with the standards of ethical behaviour, avoid conflict of interest and multiple directorship, measure and compensate performance appropriately, protect the interest of shareholders, and establish a whistle blowing mechanism, amongst other industry best practices.

The code was introduced in 2014, after consultation with stakeholders. Its enforcement commenced in June 2017. This means that standards of leadership and management have been raised to sustain economic growth in the country, and mitigate risks through transparency and accountability by the Board, Management and the workforce in the telecommunications sector.

Corporate Social Responsibility: This secondary role of the Commission has enabled it to impact

favourably on the educational sector and security management across all the States in the Country, including the Federal Capital Territory. The Nigerian Communications Commission encourages the promotion of telecommunications-based Research and Development from the academia on projects that have potential to develop the industry. In addition, the Commission sponsors the Advanced Digital Appreciation Programme for Tertiary Institutions (ADAPTI), as well as, the Digital Awareness Programme (DAP) for designated secondary schools in the country. These interventions and the commendable regulatory performance by the Commission over the years have accounted for numerous awards from local and foreign institutions in appreciation of commendable service delivery by the Nigerian Communications Commission.

Security: Security in any society is the back bone of socio-economic development. This explains the intervention of the Commission in the thirty-six States, including the Federal Capital Territory where Emergency Communication Centres are built, equipped and released to States for

monitoring of threats to life, law and order by designated security agencies.

Furthermore, the Nigerian Communications Commission co-sponsored the registration of unregistered Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) cards by consumers to profile telephone service users and monitor unwholesome acts in the society. The initiative has enabled Security Agencies tackle criminality that is perpetrated through misuse of the mobile phone SIM cards.

Key Challenges of Telecommunications Regulation: There have been significant achievements recorded in the telecommunications industry over the years in respect of socio-economic enablement in the country. However, there are a plethora of challenges that the sector is grappling with. Some of the impediments still comprise tenuous multiple taxation by some State Governments, non-recognition of telecommunications infrastructure as critical national assets, Right-of-Way issues across the country, vandalism of telecommunications infrastructure, inadequate investment in the

sector, legacy encumbrances, over-the-top service issues, online scams, inadequate local content, etc.

Distinguished guests ladies and gentlemen, success in every sphere of endeavour is achievable even with marginable resources when leadership is courageous, focused and committed. Repeated allegations of abuse of office with impunity by some career practitioners in the country obviously, emphasise an urgent need for professional bodies to strictly enforce their codes of ethics. If this feat is achieved optimal service delivery in the country will resonate pervasively across all sectors of the economy. Once again, it's all about discipline, determination, possession of key strategic drivers, required resources and a monitoring mechanism.

In the face of ubiquitous institutional governance deficit, it has become incumbent on the Academy of Management Nigeria to develop effective management theories and models for the management of investments and resources for sustainable service delivery in the country. In addition, the Academy needs to consider embarking on aggressive advocacy for adaptation

of its management models in conducting public and private concerns.

Sectors like the Information Communication Technologies, Agriculture, Education, Transport, Tourism, Commerce, Health, Banking, Public Service, Security, Infrastructure, Power, Mining, Manufacturing, the Military, Construction, Politics and Public Policy Management, Small and Medium Enterprises, the ecosystem, etc visibly need the expertise and management models of the academy to optimise service delivery and growth in the new Nigeria that we all dream to have.

Conclusion: Esteemed academics, practitioners, student members of the Academy of Management Nigeria, ladies and gentlemen, I have a couple of rhetorical questions. How would you reorient compatriots to believe in and champion the much desired discipline required of public and private office holders in the provision of optimal service delivery for a new Nigeria? What is the scope of your role in building confidence in the citizenry to believe in the new Nigeria? How would you raise an army of managers of public resources to be

committed to the growth of the Gross Domestic Product? What managerial models will you propose to propagate sustainable best practices in service delivery for a new Nigeria? How would you get this laudable call of the Academy resonate in all the sectors of the economy? How would this patriotic advocacy be monitored and measured for sustainable service delivery in a new Nigeria? These questions and many more will hopefully, be addressed by our erudite scholars and hands-on practitioners gathered at this 11th Annual Conference of Academy of Management Nigeria.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you very fruitful deliberations and God bless you all.

Thank you