

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE FEDERATION
MR. BOSS GIDA MUSTAPHA

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THE OPENING CEREMONY OF
2018
PROCUREMENT OFFICERS' CONVERSION TRAINING
ORGANIZED BY
THE BUREAU OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT (BPP)

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LAGOS HALL, DIGITAL BRIDGE INSTITUTE (DBI),
LAGOS STATE.

Date:

MONDAY, 17TH SEPTEMBER 2018

Protocols

Distinguished Participants, I welcome you all to this edition of the 2018 Conversion Training exercise holding right here in the heart of Lagos.

This training as we are all aware is aimed at increasing the knowledge and understanding of participants of the provisions of the Public Procurement Act 2007, and to further build and develop capacity in the civil service to ensure that professionalism in the service is given the centre stage that will translate to the betterment of Nigeria and its citizenry. It is therefore important to note that this training for conversion of fresh entrants into the Procurement Cadre is one of the important activities that the Bureau organises regularly in line with its mandate.

The participation of the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (OSGF) in this opening ceremony underscores Government's commitment to the ongoing procurement reforms. It is also a measure of the confidence that the Office has in the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) to coordinate implementation of the public procurement reform. In furtherance, Circular Ref. No. 59780/S.I/T/117 dated 14th June, 2017 from the OSGF reaffirmed the compulsion to ensure that only Officers employed as Procurement Officers or converted to the Procurement Officers cadre are permitted to conduct procurement functions and the same are made to undergo compulsory induction procurement training programme organised by the Bureau and other such relevant training exercise to develop capacity in the cadre. And that no Officer in any other cadre should be posted or transferred to the Procurement Department/Unit and assigned procurement functions particularly when career Procurement Officers have been employed by, or posted to any MDAs.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me point out that the Bureau is vested with the responsibility of managing the careers of officers in the procurement cadre of the Federal Public Service. This is to further ensure that only BPP-trained and certified procurement officers can henceforth be posted to function in the procurement cadre in the MDAs. I will like to underscore the fact that my Office is committed to ensuring that only officers who have been trained and certified by the Bureau can remain

or function in this professional cadre. In the light of this, I strongly urge participants in this exercise to take interest in what they will be taught during this training in order to pass the relevant BPP examinations required for conversion to the procurement cadre.

Indeed, let me use this opportunity to remind all stakeholders that it was in the spirit of this commitment that the Federal Ministry of Justice was designated as Champion for the implementation of the registration, categorisation and classification of current and intending contractors, consultants and service providers to Government and its Agencies on a national database by the Bureau. In fact, the Version 2 of the Contractors, Consultants and Service Providers (CCSP) is on and running. The objective is to ensure that only competent and capable firms are selected to tender for Government contracts. This will also ensure transparency in contractors' pre-qualification and selection processes and, hence, minimize the incidence of collusion and disappearance of contractors after collection of mobilisation fees.

Ladies and gentlemen, you all appreciate the unwavering commitment of the present administration to transparency and accountability. Remarkably, the importance that BPP attaches to this training shows its disposition to align with government priorities. Public procurement officers have a crucial role to play in national infrastructure development, in terms of the skills and competencies that are critical to delivering a transparent and efficient public procurement system that guarantees good value for money.

Since Mr. President is leading the change agenda, he considers Public Procurement to be central to good governance, particularly in a situation, as we currently have, when the economy is going through serious challenges. Regardless of these challenges, people's expectations of services and infrastructure do not reduce. Government is also aware of the calls for the procurement system to hasten the process of delivering critical services and infrastructure to the citizenry. However, this will not be at the expense of transparency and accountability.

At different levels of government, there is still resistance to reform and Government has continued to receive reports of malpractices in the

procurement processes of Government Agencies who have chosen not to follow Due Processes in conducting their procurement.

All government agencies must comply with the provisions of the Public Procurement Act and avoid short cuts that undermine government's anti-corruption posture. I urge all government anti-corruption agencies to step up their collaboration to decisively deal with perpetrators of corruption, including collusion amongst bidders, use of fake documents, false claims by contractors & suppliers and manipulation of the procurement process.

Let me state also that those of you who will join the procurement cadre after this training to be professional in your conduct. It is important to spend time on your lesson notes to gain mastery of the steps and procedure germane to the public procurement process so as to gain expertise. It is at this point that confidence can be built and the nation can therefore trust your judgement in the procurement process. Remember, Government is investing huge resources on training, capacity building and development.

Finally, while wishing you all a very successful training, I hope that with more officers now getting trained and converted to the procurement cadre, we shall continue to notice significant improvements in our public procurement system through increased competition, transparency, accountability and value for money in the government contracting and procurement process.

Thank you and I wish you success in your training and examinations that follow.

God Bless you all!

I hereby declare this Training Session open!!!

BOSS GIDA MUSTAPHA

Secretary to the Government of the Federation