

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE FEDERATION, BOSS MUSTAPHA, AT THE 2018 DEMOCRACY DAY
LECTURE ON MONDAY, 28TH MAY, 2018 HOLDING AT THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE, GARKI, AREA 10, ABUJA**

PROTOCOL

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the 2018 Democracy Day Lecture organized as part of the series of events to commemorate the 19th Year of an uninterrupted Civil Rule in our dear country, Nigeria.

2. Democracy is a globally cherished and accepted practice for electing leaders, protecting our inalienable rights, preventing arbitrariness in governance, distributing wealth and public goods, enthroning good governance and bringing development to the people. In Nigeria, we have for almost two decades, experienced four consecutive and successful transition of power from one democratic dispensation to another. Most notable is the fact that we recently witnessed a transition from an incumbent to an opposition. That singular feat gives assurance that our democracy has taken root, the Nigerian people can now freely decide who their leaders would be and that their votes now count.

3. The Theme for the 2018 Democracy Day Lecture is **“Peace Building and Good Governance for Sustainable Development in Nigeria”**. The choice of the theme underscores the important role democracy and all

its attributes play in bringing about sustainable development. It restates the fact that development only thrives where there is peace, transparency and accountability, justice and equity, freedom of speech and choice, near absence of corruption, where nationhood thrives and the votes count.

4. Your Excellency, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, Nigeria, as a member of the United Nations, signed onto the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Commitments under the SDGs include keeping people safe, ensuring fair administration of justice in accordance with the rule of law and genuinely building inclusive institutions that will provide the people with a voice in the decision-making processes that affect them. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasized that ***“there can be no peace without sustainable development and no sustainable development without peace”***.

5. Nigeria is similarly a signatory to the Open Government Partnership and has committed to four key thematic areas namely:

- Promoting fiscal transparency;
- Access to information;
- Anti-corruption and Asset disclosure;
- Citizen engagement and empowerment

All these thematic areas remain critical ingredients for good governance and sustainable development.

6. Today we have in our midst as the **2018 Guest Speaker** the indefatigable **Prof. Attahiru Jega**. He is an academic of repute, a former National President of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), former Vice Chancellor, Bayero University Kano. He served as a member of the **Justice Mohammed Lawal Uwais Electoral Reform Committee** and later became the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). His tenure at the INEC supervised two elections in 2011 and 2015. The 2015 has been considered a free, fair and credible election globally.

7. Once again, Mr. President, the Vice President, Distinguished President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, members of the National Assembly, members of the Federal Executive Council, Members of the Diplomatic Corp, the Guest Speaker, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you all. Please seat back and enjoy this event.

8. Thank you and God bless.