



**ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION ON THE OCASSION OF THE INAUGURATION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE NATIONAL IDENTITY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION HELD ON THURSDAY, 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2017, AT THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION, THREE ARMS ZONE, ABUJA.**

**PROTOCOLS**

I wish to formally welcome you to this inauguration ceremony of the Governing Board of the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC).

The Federal Government established the NIMC as the primary Institution charged with the responsibility of providing and managing the identity of adult Nigerians through the issuance of the National Identification Number (NIN) and National Identity Cards. The NIMC is also expected to harmonize and integrate all existing identification databases in Government Agencies into the National Identity Database (NIDB).

From inception, NIMC had been tasked to rise up to the challenges of providing an efficient and effective identity management system for the country. The Commission has successfully fulfilled a good percentage of this mandate by rolling out the system and infrastructure for data capture of

adult Nigerians, issuance of the NIN and electronic ID Card and provided a system of authentication verification to enable such registered persons assert their identities in a dependable manner. However, there is still much more to be done.

As members of one Government, we must engage one another the more, work closely together, build synergy and support one another. If the desired results must be achieved, the full cooperation of all stakeholders becomes indispensable.

The Board of Directors of NIMC is expected to focus its energy on ensuring that the remaining components of the National Identity Management System (NIMS) roll out – alignment and switching over by the MDAs through the harmonization and integration framework – are successfully implemented.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm glad to inform you that it is in the pursuit of the vision to bring about a change to the existing order that His Excellency, **President Muhammdu Buhari, GCFR**, graciously approved the composition and appointment of the Members and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the NIMC, which is being inaugurated today. I congratulate you all on your appointments.

It is hoped that your appointment to the Board of the NIMC will bring your much needed wealth of experience and professionalism to bear on the work of the Commission and ensure that the Commission achieves its objectives.

I call on the private sector to invest promptly in this project. This will add value to the National Identity Database. With this, NIMC will be properly equipped to provide services to all sectors and aspects of our economy and nation.

In this regard, the Board of the NIMC must act decisively to increase investors' confidence in the project in a very professional way, so that the various opportunities can be rapidly identified and exploited for the good of our economy.

At this juncture, I call on the Management and Staff of the Commission to welcome and support the Board throughout its tenure so as to enable it accomplish the onerous task ahead.

Finally, reputable Members of the Board, I congratulate you once again for being afforded the privilege of serving at this capacity and to be part of the NIMC success story. It is my hope that you will rise to the Presidential call to national duty by working assiduously to assist the Commission and by extension, the Federal Government, achieve its objective of delivering a vibrant, effective and efficient National Identification System to the Nigerian populace.

It is now my honour and privilege to formally inaugurate the Governing Board of the NIMC.

Thank you all and God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

**Dr. (Mrs.) Habiba M. Lawal**

Acting Secretary to the Government of the Federation

**21<sup>st</sup> September 2017.**

**ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
FEDERATION ON THE OCASSION OF THE INAUGURATION OF MEMBERS  
OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE NATIONAL IDENTITY  
MANAGEMENT COMMISSION HELD ON THURSDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER  
2017 AT THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF  
THE FEDERATION, THREE ARMS ZONE, ASOKORO, ABUJA, NIGERIA**

**PROTOCOLS**

Good afternoon distinguished Ladies and gentlemen. I wish to formally welcome you to this inauguration ceremony of the Members of the Governing Board of the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC).

The Federal Government established the NIMC as the primary Institution charged with the responsibility of providing and regulating identity management in Nigeria, the issuance of the National Identification Number (NIN) and ID card to all registrable persons, as well as the harmonization and integration of existing identification databases in government agencies and integrating them into the National Identity Database (NIDB).

Identity is a cross cutting issue in Nigeria and is key to planning, development and sovereignty of a country. We all need identity to function, transact, move around, and access basic services. Even accessing this building required knowing the people, identifying who they are and confirming if they are allowed to be here.

Let us learn from the countries that have successfully issued unique identity to its citizens and have utilized identity to transform their society and economy. The Indian experience is a typical example. We need change, positive change in our identity eco system. The change starts with all of us agreeing to make the sacrifices and commitment required, defining clear policy direction and taking collective actions to achieve our common goal.

In the past, the NIMC had been tasked to rise up to the challenges of providing an efficient and effective identity management system for the country. The Commission has successfully met this challenge by rolling out the system and

infrastructure for data capture of registrable persons, issuance of the NIN and electronic ID card to registered persons and provided a system of authentication and verification to enable such registered persons assert their identities in a dependable manner. However, there is still much more to be done.

The proliferation and duplication of efforts at biometric based identity systems is neither cost effective, nor security smart. Aside from being unwieldy, the cost of operating multiple discordant databases and infrastructure is unsustainable. From the on-going work at the NIMC, it is hoped that the regime of duplicate biometric based databases gives way to harmonization and unification with the electronic identification system being operated and managed by the Commission.

As members of one government, we must engage each other more, work closely together, build synergy and support one another to function effectively. Cooperation of all stakeholders is the only way we can succeed.

The NIMC must now focus its energy on ensuring that the remaining component of the National Identity Management System (NIMS) roll out – alignment and switching over by the MDAs through the harmonization and integration framework – is successfully implemented.

Therefore, the speed of data collection must have to be improved upon, and this will reduce justifications given by MDAs, as reasons for duplicated biometric options. Hopefully, the Harmonization programme, being spearheaded by the Office of the Vice President, will help to achieve this, especially, by the Commission ensuring that MDAs switch or at least align their existing infrastructure as data collection agents to the NIMC System.

It is in this regard that His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, graciously approved the composition and appointment of the Chairman and Members of the Board of the NIMC, which I shall inaugurate today. I congratulate you on your appointment.

Your appointment to the Board of the NIMC will bring the much needed experience and perspective to the work being done at the Commission and ensure that the Commission achieves its objectives. This is even more so for the

institutional members of the NIMC Board, whose membership is drawn from the Harmonization programme of the Government.

I call on the private sector to invest promptly in this project. This will help achieve the objective of populating the National Identity Database, which in turn will ensure that the NIMC is properly equipped to provide services to all sectors and aspects of our economy and nation. In this regard, the Board of the NIMC must act decisively to increase investor confidence in the project in a very professional way, so that the various opportunities can be rapidly identified and exploited for the good of our economy.

I also call on the Management and Staff of the Commission to welcome the Members of the Board and support them in the weeks and months to come. There is much work to be done.

Finally, to the Members of the Board, I congratulate you once again for being found worthy to be part of the NIMC journey. It is my hope that you will rise to the Presidential call to national duty by working assiduously to assist the Commission and by extension, the Federal Government achieve its objectives for a vibrant, effective and efficient identity sector.

It is now my honour and privilege to formally inaugurate the Members of the Governing Board of the NIMC.

Thank you all and God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

**Dr. (Mrs.) Habiba M. Lawal**

Acting Secretary to the Government of the Federation

**21<sup>st</sup> September 2017.**