

REMARKS ON “ACHIEVING VISSION 2020 THROUGH AN IMPROVED IDENTITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM” DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER/DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, SENATOR MOHAMMED SANUSI DAGGASH, AT THE FORMAL DINNER OF THE NATIONAL IDENTITY MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE HELD AT TRANSCORP HILTON HOTEL, ABUJA ON 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2008.

## PROTOCOL

It gives me great pleasure to deliver these few remarks on this important occasion of the National Identity Management Conference. The chosen topic “**Achieving Vision 2020 Through an Improved Identity Management System**” is no doubt auspicious. This is in light of our national efforts of joining the league of the first twenty (20) largest economies in the world by year 2020.

2. As you might be aware, the world increasingly requires an individual to be able to assert his identity in a secure and reliable manner. This expectation has led to near total overhaul of national systems of identity management, especially the process of authentication and verification of an individual’s identity. Apart from the need to facilitate commerce and enhance governance and other service delivery capacities, the need to curb spiraling growth in crime rate, especially those that are predicated on a successful identity related fraud,

remains the most important rationale for renewed attention on how to seamlessly achieve a delicate balance between the sphere of an individual's privacy and his ability to assert his identity in a dependable manner to third parties.

3. Historically, collection of personal information of individuals in Nigeria has been legislation-induced and therefore intended to achieve set statutory goals: Drivers License by the federal Road safety commission (FRSC), Voters Card by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Population Census by the National Population Commission, Health Insurance Card by the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), CERPAC by the Immigration Services, etc. In each case (which involved identity card), the database so generated is usually limited to the achievement of the specific statutory need that triggered the collection. Therefore, individuals provide personal information which are necessary for the purpose of obtaining a specific public service data, for obtaining a personal Identification Card etc.

4. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, it is pertinent to state that Government had since realized the growing need for proper identification of individuals, and had embarked on the reform of the identity sector to bring it up to date with the realities of socio-economic planning and development with the firm belief that this would lead a long term economic and social benefits to Nigerians. With the enactment of the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) Act No. 23 of 2007, which has been published in the Government Official Gazette

No. 90, Vol. 94, July 14, 2007, the process of implementing components of the reform initiative had reached a significant milestone. This Act established the NIMC with the responsibility for setting up a National Identity Management System Infrastructure and with the assumption of the assets and liabilities of the former Department for National Civic Registration (DNCR). Accordingly, the NIMC has since embarked on the implementation of various Government decisions as encapsulated in the NIMC Act and various approvals given by the Administration.

5. Government is desirous of implementing the new system of identity management because of its firm belief in the programme and revenue collection and generation while improving socio-economic life of Nigerians by year 2020.

6. In conclusion, let me congratulate the National Identity Management Commission for this initiative. The outcome of this conference would be useful to the Government in creating ICT community where the community at large can use ICT to improve the quality of their lives and actively contribute to the social and economic development of Nigeria and thus fulfill the objective of the Vision 2020.

7. I wish you all a very stimulating and rewarding session.

8. Thank you.