



**WELCOME ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MR. D. I. ARABI,
ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL OF BUREAU OF PUBLIC
SERVICE REFORM (BPSR), AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF
THE STAKEHOLDERS TECHNICAL MEETING OF PILLAR 1 OF
THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC SERVICE REFORMS
(NSPSR) HELD AT OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION, SHEHU SHAGARI
COMPLEX, THREE ARMS ZONE, ABUJA ON
TUESDAY, 10TH APRIL, 2018**

PROTOCOL

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be part of this Stakeholders' Technical Meeting of Pillar 1 of the National Strategy for Public Service Reforms (NSPSR). Let me say that I am glad, and feel very much honoured that you are here, and for us at the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) to be part of this Stakeholders' Technical Meeting of Pillar 1 of the National Strategy for Public Service Reforms (NSPSR), which could not have come at a better time than now, especially against the background of the current Administration's efforts to re-position the Federal Public Service for optimal performance. It is my sincere hope that at the end of this forum, lessons learned from the stakeholders' meeting will help to enhance the capacity of all stakeholders in the implementation of the strategic objectives of Pillar 1 of the National Strategy for Public Service Reforms (NSPSR).



In 2008, the Federal Government identified the need to develop a National Strategy for Public Service Reforms (NSPSR) as a coordinating strategic framework for public service reforms. This was informed by the realization that many reforms were on-going across the public service, but not all of them were known outside the lead MDAs. Furthermore, there was no central monitoring or evaluation of reform, no means of coordination to ensure that reform efforts were not at cross-purposes with each other and little opportunity to learn and replicate lessons from reform activities. Bringing together all the separate strands of public service reform under a strategic coordination framework would make for better linkages, establish an effective mechanism for monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and ensure that the reforms are effectively communicated.

The preparation of a comprehensive and long-term National Strategy for Public Service Reform (NSPSR), therefore, was commissioned by the National Steering Committee on Reform (SCR) chaired by the Secretariat to the Government of the Federation. The Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (HCSF), Vice-Chairperson of the SCR, championed the strategy development process. The Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) facilitated the development of the Strategy, and an Inter-Ministerial Team (IMTT) of senior public servants, with the support of internationally experienced advisers and consultants, were saddled with the responsibility of drafting the strategy. The



development of the NSPSR started in 2008 and was completed in 2009. For a variety of reasons, the Steering Committee on Reforms did not meet in 2009 to consider the NSPSR and transmit it to the Federal Executive Council (FEC) for approval. However, the strategy document did form the basis for a number of reforms undertaken since that time.

In 2013, the NSPSR was updated and refreshed so that it fully reflects the Nigeria reform environment and priorities with the objective of securing its formal adoption. However, with the coming in of the Administration of the President Muhammad Buhari, there was the need to carry out further reviewing and updating of the NSPSR in 2017 to fully reflect the current Administration's stronger reform focus, particularly in the areas of anti-corruption, its socio-economic priorities through the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), and the imperatives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The reviewing and updating process involved visits to the four lead agencies charged with the coordination of the four pillars and getting their fresh input. Furthermore, the NSPSR was validated by key MDAs, citizens groups and civil society organizations. Some of the additional inputs from them proved very useful. The updated NSPSR integrated the current administration's Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP, 2017 - 2020) and massive social investment programme. In the updated version also, the essential aspects of the Civil Service Transformation Strategy



(an in-house Strategy of the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation) was integrated into Pillar 4.

The overall NSPSR implementation leadership and management framework is headed by Mr. President with the SCR providing technical leadership and the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Honourable Minister of Finance, and Budget and National Planning; and Head of the Civil Service of the Federation saddled with direct responsibilities of the NSPSR and leading each of the four NSPSR Pillars. The Secretary to the Government of the Federation has forwarded the NSPSR as a Memorandum of Mr. President to the Federal Executive Council for approval.

The approval of the National Strategy for integrated public service reform, is based on clear and comprehensive strategies to ensure that all actors involved in reform efforts are working towards the same goals and objectives, and reforms are progressing in a coordinated and effective way. A clear roadmap will ensure that gaps are filled, there are no duplication of efforts and the policy environment is taken into account resulting in a clear reform path. For the Short to Medium Terms, the updated NSPSR is focused on providing the administrative capacity for implementing Nigeria's ERGP 2017 – 2020 and ensuring consistency in service delivery across the public service.



This then is the background to this Stakeholders Technical Meeting of Pillar 1 of the National Strategy for Public Service Reforms (NSPSR) today, which brings together the key stakeholders under Pillar 1 of the NSPSR for brainstorming. The primary purpose is to build stakeholders' capacity on the implementation of the strategic priorities of the NSPSR. It is also to promote basic understanding of the provisions of Pillar 1 for overall ownership and ease of implementation by all stakeholders under Pillar 1 of the NSPSR. Let me use this opportunity to earnestly urge all the participants at this meeting to contribute actively in all the essential elements of Pillar 1 of the NSPR. It is the full expectation of Government that you would reciprocate this good gesture by being diligent and committed participants, and utilizing the knowledge gained when you get back to your offices to implement the relevant provisions of Pillar 1 of the NPSR under your purview.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, over the years, the Federal Public Service has diligently and relentlessly served the government of the day and it has been instrumental in the process of nation building. The profound changes which are presently underway should further inspire us to look to the future with more assurances and optimism. We need to contribute on this path to reinforce the Federal Public Service to continue to be indispensable instrument for the implementation of government policies. I am, therefore, confident that the deliberations today will prove to be useful and beneficial to us all.



I thank you for your attention.