

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS DELIVERED BY DAVID I
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NEPC AT THE DIAGNOSTIC WORKSHOP ON THE
STRATEGY FOR THE EXPORT OF NIGERIA'S
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AT NEPC ZONAL
OFFICE LAGOS, ON 8TH MARCH, 2010**

PROTOCOL

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen it is my honour and pleasure to welcome you all to this august occasion of the diagnostic workshop for the development of the National Strategy for the Export of Services from Nigeria. I will start by commending everybody present here today for the co-operation accorded the validation workshop for the development of the Framework of a National Strategy for the Export of Services from Nigeria, from the

attendance of the participants to individual conducts during the workshop

My sincere appreciation goes to the Commonwealth Secretariat for agreeing to assist the NEPC in particular and Nigeria in general to develop and promote its services sector. Prior to this initiative the country never had a documented strategy aimed at uplifting the services sector.

2. As you may be aware, the service sector is booming with the pace of service export growth far outstripping that of goods. In 2004 for instance, service exports grew by 16%, over twice the rate of growth of goods exports. This trend has been driven by advances in transportation and communication technology, which has facilitated the provisions of services across borders. Nigeria as one of the most dynamic countries in communication technology has recognized this pattern and the potential it creates for economic development in the country.

3. As you may recall, following the project launch in September 2009, five priority sub-sectors were selected for inclusion in the strategy. The service sub-sectors selected are Finance, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Professional Entertainment (Music & Film), and Education. This report we are discussing today presents the results of findings and analyses the specific opportunities for Nigeria.

4. The invitation sent out to all stakeholders here present therefore is borne out of the Council's realization of your efforts as partners in progress and stakeholders in the non-oil export business and your keen interest in the development of our national economy as a whole. We sincerely believe in your contribution in this respect.

5. Copies of the project document have already been sent to you for the purpose of this deliberation, your subsequent meaningful contributions and inputs would be highly appreciated.

It is our belief that by the end of this forum, our collective inputs would have produced a suitable and perfect `working document` that will stand the test of time and impact greatly on those it is meant for.

6. While once again expressing our appreciation to the Commonwealth Secretariat for their assistance and the Honourable Minister of Commerce and Industry for his support, I wish to thank all the stakeholders here present for finding time to attend this workshop and wish everyone fruitful deliberations.

10. Thank you all and God Bless.

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8TH MARCH, 2010