

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE e-GOVERNMENT SUMMIT 2022 HELD ON TUESDAY  
SEPTEMBER 27, AT THE SHERATON HOTEL AND TOWERS, IKEJA, LAGOS**

**1.0. Preamble**

The Nigeria eGovernment Summit was organised by DigiServe Network Services, in partnership with the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), the Association of Telecommunications Companies of Nigeria (ATCON) and the Association of Licensed Telecom Operators of Nigeria (ALTON) with the theme: *Promoting eGovernment in Election Year for Improved Governance*.

The Summit attracted politicians, industry stakeholders and government officials. Issues around the use of technology to drive electoral processes in an election year, how to enhance governance and how to make government services accessible to the citizens, were discussed at the summit and solutions were proffered.

Running for the fourth consecutive year, the Summit has become a yearly programme, designed to bring together, government and technology providers, including politicians and the citizens who are the beneficiaries of technology, to discuss the adoption of emerging technologies in e-governance, for the benefit of the citizens and for the growth of the Nigerian economy.

**2.0. Keynote addresses**

After the welcome address by the convener, Engr Lanre Ajayi, Executive Chairman of DigiServe Network Services, several keynote speeches were presented by industry experts who were physically present at the summit. Some of the keynotes were also delivered from remote locations, using the video conferencing technology. The keynote presenters are: Mr Muhammad Nami, Executive Chairman, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and Chairman Joint Tax Board (JTB) who was represented by the Director of Intelligence, Strategic Data Mining and Analysis Department at FIRS, Mr Kola Okunola; Mr Hakeem Dickson, Lagos State Gubernatorial Candidate, Accord Party; Mr Babatunde Ogala SAN, Former Legal Adviser, All Progressive Congress (APC); Engr. Farouk Ahmed, Authority Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) who was represented by Dr Mustapha Lamorde, Executive Director, Health, Safety, Environment and Community, NMDPRA; Dr Ayotunde Coker, Chief Executive Officer, Open Access Data Centres; Dr Vincent Olatuji, National Commissioner/CEO, Nigeria Data Protection Bureau; Mr Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, CCIE, Director-General/CEO, National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) who was represented by Mr Bernard Ewah, Ag Director, e-Government Development and Regulations, NITDA and Engr Gbenga Komolafe (FNSE), Commission Chief Executive,

Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulator Commission (NUPRC) who was represented by Mr. Abel Nsa.

### 3.0. **Panel Sessions**

At the summit, four different panel sessions were held namely: the Connectivity Panel - Positioning Telecoms Infrastructure for eGovernment Deployment; the Big Tech Companies and Multinational Organizations Panel - International Best Practices in eGovernment; Power and Petroleum Panel - Energy as a Critical Recourse for eGovernment Deployment and the People's Parliament Panel - People's Expectations in a Technology Driven Society.

Each session had its panel chair lead paper presenters and panel members, drawn from across industry stakeholders and government agencies. Each panel presented lead papers that were centered around the theme of the summit and each panel discussed the lead papers that were presented and solutions proffered. Participants were given opportunity to ask questions and make contributions, all through the four panel sessions. The panelists were able to give satisfactory responses to each question and concerns raised by the audience, during the panel sessions.

### 4.0. **Observations**

Participants at the 2022 eGovernment Summit raised some observations and concerns about the unwillingness of government and the preparedness of industry stakeholders to make eGovernment accessible to the people.

1. The Director, Intelligence, Strategic Data Mining and Analysis Department at FIRS, Mr. Kola Okunola, who delivered one of the lead papers in one of the panel sessions at this year's summit, observed that citizens were the best assets for national development, and that citizens would voluntarily participate in national development activities once they are empowered. "Citizens will voluntarily and effectively contribute to national development when government creates an enabling environment," Okunola said.
2. Dr. Kenneth Okereafor observed in his paper that Nigeria is faced with a lot of challenges ranging from kidnapping to killings to corruption, but decried a situation where government is not fully utilizing technology to address challenges, even though technology has been identified as a great enabler that can solve diverse challenges.
3. Participants at the summit observed lack of accurate and insufficient data of citizens that would help government have good knowledge of the number of people living in certain locations, in order to have even distribution of government services to the people.

4. The summit also observed that most government agencies still operate manually with lots of paper work and file carrying, instead of leveraging on emerging technologies to provide quality services to the people.
5. The participants observed that rural communities are largely un-served and under-served, a development, according to them, calls for more collaboration between government and the private sector in order to develop rural communities with technology tools and solutions. They also observed that government has not fully deployed technology in agriculture to boost food production.

#### 5.0. **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were arrived at from the keynote speeches and panel sessions:

1. eGovernment will enhance accountability, transparency, inclusiveness, effectiveness and accessibility of information at national, state and local government. It should therefore be adopted at all levels of government.
2. In order to promote eGovernment services, government should license more players for additional service rollout, regulate reforms for the modern digital ecosystem, and avoid fiscal and taxation policies that are sector specific.
3. Government should encourage affordable access to devices, and make use of regulatory fees to recoup costs, without maximizing revenues.
4. Nigeria should adopt Open-Source technology, which guarantees opportunities for the poor people to have access to technology tools for innovation.
5. Government should adopt technology policies that will encourage automation.
6. Education/Capacity building should be of utmost importance because human beings are the most important resources.
7. Conventional and unconventional innovators must be encouraged and empowered.
8. Government must focus on delivery of digital skills to the citizenry and also design campaigns to promote access to digital ecosystem.
9. Government services must be fully digitalized from access to service delivery.

- 10.** Digital literacy must be promoted to develop citizen's capacity in understanding and using technology.
- 11.** The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) must embark on continuous improvement of its technology in line with cybersecurity best practices to maintain data protection.
- 12.** Citizens should be convinced with veritable evidence that the technology is secure and adequately protected from cyber-attacks.
- 13.** Political leaders must be technology savvy in order to leverage technology in providing quality service that will impact the lives of citizens in the digital era.
- 14.** Political parties should include digital technologies in their manifestoes and tell Nigerians how they intend to apply them.
- 15.** Participants were of the view that technology adoption in elections, would help reduce rigging and enhance real-time election results.
- 16.** As the 2023 general election come close, government should ensure that e-voting is implemented and made a standard for the voting process.
- 17.** Government must protect the existing telecom infrastructure with enabling laws.

#### **6.0. Closing**

During the vote of thanks, the convener, Engr. Lanre Ajayi, thanked participants for their active participation in the Summit, and promised to make the report and communiqué available to industry stakeholders and the government. He promised that the next year Summit would be better and bigger.

The Summit, which started at 8am, came to a close at about 5pm and participants were satisfied with the quality of presentations and issues discussed at the various panel sessions.