



COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE CPN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS' FORUM ON LEVERAGING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY HELD AT THE SHERATON HOTELS AND TOWERS, IKEJA-LAGOS ON TUESDAY 7TH NOVEMBER, 2017

THEME: LEVERAGING IT FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

PREAMBLE

The idea of the IT CEO roundtable is long overdue because of the need for the CEOs to share their experiences, challenges and aspiration so as to serve as a guide in the decision making of Government and for the benefit of the industry and the nation at large. Taking cognizance of the immense potentials of the Information Technology in revamping the economy and harnessing the potentials of our teeming youths positively, it becomes imperative for the industry to have a forum where discussions can take place and solutions proffered to the challenges facing it.

INTRODUCTION

The forum for Information Technology Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) was convened to look at specific issues and discuss the myriad of challenges which the Information Technology industry is facing and the need to address these challenges and ensure that Information Technology industry takes its rightful position and delivers its capabilities optimally as a veritable tool for Nigeria's economic recovery.



The event which was chaired by Chief (Dr.) Leo Stan Nnamdi Ekeh (*OFR*), Chairman – ZINOX Group had several captains of industry as well as several stakeholders in the Information Technology industry in attendance. In his opening remarks, the Chairman emphasized on how the country can take advantage of the huge ICT market opportunities in the Africa and global IT environment and Ecosystem and effectively deliver the benefits of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to Nigeria and her people,

The keynote address was delivered by **Mr. Adedotun Sulaiman (*MFR*)** who talked on the relevance of Government in facilitating the Development of Information and Communications Technology in Nigeria as well as the critical role of ICT in the economic development of the country. Futhermore, he dwelt on the ICT aspect of the **Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP)** and enjoined the profession to play a lead role as well as key into it by assisting the Government in the implementation of the highly commendable strategic items stated in the plan.

The roundtable was moderated by Mr. Chris Uwaje and paraded many quality speakers such as (NIWIT, Precise Financial Systems, HIIT, ISPON, NAMA, Computer Warehouse Group, Sidmach Technologies Limited, Ibiz Nigeria Limited, Future Software Resources Limited, Paradigm Initiative, NNPC and SystemSpecs Limited) held discussion on the multi-faceted challenges facing the IT profession in Nigeria. Discussants made contributions and brought out perspectives on how to effectively engage the monumental challenges that stirs us in the face of rapid growth of unemployment of our Youth: **Retooling National Workforce, e-Government:-Policy & Strategy, Education. IT Industry Empowerment Bailout Fund, Special IT Development Funding, IT Curriculum, IT-Lecturers' Training, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Coding & Software Development, Security, Intellectual Property and strategies for Local Content Adoption, Patronage and Protection. Startup & Incubators, e-Health, Youth Employment, Women Empowerment, State Security, Research & Development, Technology Innovation Investment Funding, Venture Capital & Angel Investors.**



The vote of thanks was delivered by the CPN Registrar, Mr. Allwell C. Achumba, *FNCS, MCPN*.

Summary of contributions and endorsements proffered by the IT Industry CEOs and Expert Stakeholders group include, but not limited to the following:

SN	ITEM	DESCRIPTION	TASK OWNERS
1.	PROMOTING NATIONAL INTEREST IN IT DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGING KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY	To effectively promote national Interest in the emerging knowledge society and new economy, there is need for constructive policy framework and strategies for the development and growth of local content in Information and Communications Technology (ICT).	Federal Government. Ministry of Communication CPN & IT Professionals Media
2	DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL INFORMATON TECHNOLOGY FRAMEWORK BILL	Nigeria needs an IT Development Framework Bill. IT Experts group should be assembled to urgently formulate and draft a strategic national Information Technology Framework Bill. Presently, Nigeria does not have a holistic national Information Technology Framework Bill as a fundamental legislative vehicle to organize, galvanize and cement together all other existing ACTs in isolation of each other.	Federal Government. Ministry of Communication CPN & IT Professionals ISPON, NCS, ITAN, NITDA, Stakeholders and Others
3.	RETOOLING THE NATIONAL WORKFORCE AND ENCOURAGING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY.	IT intervention for retooling the National workforce is a strategic imperative. Intellectual Property in Science, technology and promotion of indigenous Research should be encouraged as fundamental to the development, progress, wealth creation and survivability of the nation.	Federal Government CPN/NCS/ISPON Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Science and Technology



4.	TRANSFORMATION OF NIGERIAN ICT EDUCATION/ CURRICULUM AND TRAINING OF COMPUTER SCIENCE LECTURERS	ICT in the Nigerian education system should be radically transformed – ensuring that innovative IT Curriculum is deployed at all levels of education – with special focus on the training and re-training of lecturers and teachers of IT at all levels. This will assist in bridging the disconnect between the industry and academia	Federal Government Ministry of Communications Ministry of Education CPN, IT Professional & ICT Practitioners
5.	CREATING IT BAILOUT INTERVENTION FUND TO THE IT INDUSTRY FOR EMPLOYMENT EXPANSION AND ESTABLISH SPECIAL FUNDING MECHANISM FOR THE IT SECTOR	Government should intervene to empower and bailout the Entrepreneurs of the IT Industry who are presently approaching bankruptcy to enable them expand and create employment for Computer Science graduates. Also, it has become imperative that a special IT Development Funding mechanism is established to empower the IT Sector for global competitiveness. The current NITDEF development structure is not helpful to meet international competition and sustain local content.	Federal Government Ministry of Communications CENTRAL BANK CPN & IT Professionals ISPON, NCS, ITAN, NITDA, Stakeholders and Others.
6.	ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL “INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DAY” (National IT Day by the Presidency)	IT Industry CEOs and Stakeholders at the Roundtable agreed and endorsed the proposal of Professor Charles Uwadia (President, CPN) on the urgent need to establish a National Information Technology (IT) day as a Platform for advancing the national IT awareness drive and to celebrate activities and innovation in the Nigerian IT development Ecosystem.	The Presidency National Assembly CPN & IT Professionals ISPON, NCS, ITAN, NITDA, Stakeholders and Others
7.	MEDIA PROMOTION OF INNOVATION IN THE NIGERIAN IT INDUSTRY.	The Media should be encouraged, re-trained and empowered to report creativity, innovations, Cybersecurity and other critical IT developments and chronicling success attained by Nigerian IT Professionals and Practitioners.	MDAs Media CPN, IT Professional & ICT Practitioners



8.	FOSTERING CO-OPERATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND IT STAKEHOLDERS	There is need to sustain and promote the current relationship between government, the ICT Profession and industry and the Stake holders.	CPN & IT Professionals ISPON, NCS, ITAN, NITDA, Stakeholders and Others
9.	ADVOCACY FOR IT LEGISLATION	The IT industry needs a strong voice for advocacy to accelerate required legislation for constructive IT development and growth.	ISPON, NCS, CPN, NITDA IT Professional & ICT Practitioners
10.	GOVERNMENT REMAINS THE BIGGEST FINANCIER OF NIGERIAN IT SECTOR	Government Automation is crucial in order to enhance the local content patronage of Indigenous ICT Solutions. All over the world, Government is recognized and remains the biggest spender in the IT sector.	Federal Government Ministry of Communications, CPN, NITDA, NCC, IT Professionals & ICT Practitioners and Stakeholders
11.	BUILD LOCAL, DEPLOY INTERNATIONALLY	There is a need to develop solutions that are locally suited but globally competitive.	CPN, NCS, ISPON, ITAN NIWIIT, NITDA
12.	GOVERNMENT PATRONAGE OF INDIGENOUS SOFTWARE AND PROTECTION OF CITIZEN'S IP RIGHTS	Government should ensure the mandatory patronage of Indigenous Application Software and ICT Products, Research, etc. and encourage the protection of citizens Innovation IP.	Federal Government Ministry of Communications CPN, NCS, ISPON, ITAN NIWIIT, NITDA



CONCLUSIONS

After an extensive discussion on the various issues, the forum concluded that for Information Technology to take its rightful place as one of the veritable tools for speedy economic recovery as well as a foreign exchange earner for the nation, the implementation of the following suggestions will assist the industry tremendously:

- i. The enactment of Information Technology legislation will go a long way to assist the industry to grow and encourage investment in Information Technology.
- ii. Due to the huge potential of the Information Technology industry in Nigeria, there is need for the Federal Government to stimulate and scale up creativity in the industry through the provision of a special intervention fund. This fund will go a long way to accelerate youth employment, national security as well as our e-readiness and global economic competitiveness status.
- iii. All hands must be on deck to give appropriate support to Information Technology industry in Nigeria. Thus, the meeting supported the creation of a bigger forum for a much bigger discussion on the state of Information Technology in Nigeria to be tagged “**National Information Technology Day** “. The details will be worked out and necessary information on the recommendation will be disseminated.
- iv. The meeting agreed that there is need to review the CPN Act in order to make its membership recruitment to be all inclusive and carry all the stakeholders
- v. CPN should try to do more by visiting the CEOs in their offices in order to see how they are fairing and to have a feel of the challenges they are facing
- vi. Professionals agreed to key in into the Federal Government’s **Economic Recovery and Growth Development (ERGP)** Plan in order to assist in the acceleration of ICT growth in the country



- vii. The forum approved the creation of the CPN IT Youth forum and six people volunteered to work in the forum
- viii. The forum is concerned about the disconnect of teachers with IT competence and their delivery to students; therefore, the forum agreed on a special forum on retooling teachers in Information Technology.
- ix. The forum agreed that CPN should galvanize different stakeholders in the IT ecosystem for future developments
- x. Software developers should come up with solutions that can be deployed to assist women
- xi. The Roadmap on how to integrate technology with education should be created.
- xii. Proper marriage of research and academic community should be enhanced in order to produce graduates that are industry ready
- xiii. CPN and NCS need to provide more value to their members
- xiv. There is need for the establishment of the **Federal Ministry of Information Technology.**

Signed:

Prof. Charles O. Uwadia fncs, mcpn

President/Chairman-in-Council

Mr. Allwell C. Achumba fncs, mcpn

Registrar/Secretary to Council



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