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**Report on the courtesy visit of the STRC to the Honorable Minister of Communication of Nigeria- Barr. Abdul-Raheem Adebayo Shittu on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016 at the Ministry of Communication Conference room.**

A courtesy meeting was held with the Ministry of Communication of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in the Conference room of the Ministry, with aim to introduce the African Union Network of Science to the Nigerian Ministry of Communication to have their buy in and support for the implementation of the project.

The meeting attracted the the following:

- Managing Director – Galaxy Back Bone Ltd.
- Ag Director of NITDA
- Representative from NIPOST- Mr C. Ndaye
- Representative from NICOMSAT – Engr Shehu Kaura
- The African Union Delegation

**Welcome address by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Communication:**

Arc. Sonny S.T. Echono gave his welcome remarks, stating the gratitude to have the delegation of the African Union Science Team in the courtesy visit. He gave a brief introduction of the Ministry of Communication and their commitment to development of projects. He further explained the objectives of the meeting and what is expected as outcome. He proceeded by asking the staff members and visitors present at the courtesy visit to introduce themselves.

**Briefing on the African Union Network of Sciences:**

Dr. Eng. Ahmed Hamdy gave a briefing on the Network of Sciences which includes: the rationale and needs for the network, how it stands to be of great benefit to the development of Science and Technology in Nigeria and Africa as a continent; the goals of the network and its objectives.

He also stressed that there is need for Intra Africa Research that African Scientist can come and research. The output of the research will be shared by African Scientists which is a new way for Brain Circulation, a paradigm shift to introduce

clustered thinking. He concluded the presentation by saying “*It is legitimate for Nigeria to give full support to the AUNS*”

### **Dialogue session:**

The dialogue that ensued after the presentation were;

1. The tone of the discussion was set by the Honourable Minister of Communication by stating that Nigeria and Africa as a continent and will need to leverage on the ICT to create jobs, solve problems which is the objective of this meeting.
2. The meeting was described as a crowning glory to all the visits and meeting the Honourable Minister had today not for business but for the development of Science and Technology to bring about networking across the continent of Africa.
3. A practical challenge was pointed out during the discussions that power supply has been a major challenge in the office and Nigeria hence they resort to the use of Solar panels to generate power for the office. It was then stress that Nigeria as a country don't need to continue dependence on the western nations to help- tackle this challenge, the power of science and technology advancement can play a key role to solve the problem.
4. It was pointed out clearly that the Ministry of Communication is in total agreement with the idea of the AUNS, hence the need to set up a small committee containing scientist and technologists to draw an action plan to quicken the realisation of the goals the AUNS is looking at. It was added that the Ministry has the political will to support the initiatives of the AU-STRC regarding the Network.
5. The visits to other countries was said to be an eye opener and it will be of great impact to has the people in leadership roles in Nigeria visit other countries to see how they have developed in science and technology and the digitization of government processes is necessary. It was also stated that even Kenya and South Africa have done better than Nigeria hence the need for Nigerians to look at countries which have made it to have lessons to learn from them, specifically people in top leadership position should key into this.
6. It was noted also that Singapore in the past one year with their challenges has transited from 3<sup>rd</sup> World to 1<sup>st</sup> World country.
7. The need to bring historical experts to Nigeria to teach the leader was deemed necessary.
8. Emphasis was laid on the need for Nigeria to be more prudent in the area of Science and Technology.
9. It was proposed that the outcome of the meeting should berth the convention of leaders, Heads of State across Africa to lead revolution of Science and Technology, Scientific Advancement like other countries; African Leaders need to imbibe these lessons. To allow Africa to meet with the pace of development in the world, and to realise the aims of the Network, it is expedient for the AU-STRC to work hand in hand with African Leaders.
10. The Ministry re-emphasized that they will partner with the AU-STRC on the Network.

11. The Director of Public Congress of the Ministry was nominated to create a team that will form a group together with the team from AU-STRC to quicken the realisation of the goals and implementation of the Network.

### **Concluding Remarks**

H.E. Bar. Adebayo Shittu ESQ, closed the meeting by telling the AU-STRC Science Team that the Ministry is happy to host them and they are excited with the whole idea of the Network and also copies of the STISA booklets should be made available to all the Directors and Representative of Agencies that were present at the meeting. The meeting formally came to close after the group photographs.

### **List of visitors from Agencies:**

- Managing Director – Galaxy Back Bone Ltd.
- Ag Director of NITDA
- Representative from NIPOST- Mr C. Ndaye
- Representative from NICOMSAT – Engr Shehu Kaura