

**Welcome Remarks by the Executive Secretary, Dr. Orji O. Orji at the
Send Forth Dinner for FOSTER Staff, Held on 24th April 2021 at Fraser
Suites, Abuja**

I am honored and delighted to welcome you to this important event, a send forth dinner in honor of an exceptional team/staff that managed Facility for Oil Sector Transformation (FOSTER) program. The event is being hosted by the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI)

FOSTER, a United Kingdom's Department for international Development (DfiD) sponsored program, now known as Foreign Common Wealth and Development office was set up to support transparency, accountability and reforms efforts of the Nigerian government. The program was targeted at promoting effective utilization of the country oil, gas and minerals resources to support national development.

As you are all aware, after over ten years of operations and impactful engagement in the Nigeria's oil, gas and mining sectors, FOSTER has now ended. Let me on behalf of Nigeria's government thank the people and government of United Kingdom for their interest in good governance in our extractive industries and the generous funding support to FOSTER program.

I wish to state that from onset, FOSTER team has provided support to NEITI in all the key areas of its operations. This support ranges from our regular extractive industries audits, dissemination of the findings of the audits, remediation exercise, stakeholders' engagement, and

manpower to our newly established department on Policy, Planning and Strategy etc.

I am aware that the team also extended similar support to country-wide reforms in the Nigeria's oil, gas and mining sectors through engagements with all stakeholders in the sectors, including key government agencies, legislators, civil society, media and extractive host communities. I can therefore boldly state that through FOSTER, this team has been instrumental to major reforms in these important sectors in the past ten years.

Accordingly, this event has been deliberately put together to celebrate this exceptional team and their partners for their services and commitments towards improving governance of the Nigeria's oil, gas and mining sectors. This event is also designed to celebrate the valued contributions of international development agencies and multi-lateral organizations on the ongoing anti-corruption campaign by government.

I wish to use this opportunity to call on international development agencies to sustain their interest and support to the work of NEITI. On our part, we will continue to push the boundaries of transparency accountability in our extractive industry and ensure that revenue from the industry support Nigeria's development and well-being of her citizens.

Let me assure you that NEITI under my leadership as the Executive Secretary shall not take for granted any support rendered to us and we will work to strengthen engagements with international development agencies, multi-lateral organizations and other critical stakeholders

towards ensuring effective implementation of the global Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in Nigeria.

On this note, I thank you for honoring our invitations, please relax and enjoy the evening.