



OPENING SPEECH BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF NEITI, DR. ORJI OGBONNAYA ORJI, AT THE NSWG RETREAT ON “ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF ENERGY TRANSITION ON NIGERIA’S ECONOMY” HELD ON MAY 7, 2025, AT SUN HAVEN HOTEL, UMUAHIA, ABIA STATE

Protocol

The Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Sen. George Akume

Your Excellency, the Executive Governor of Abia State, Dr. Alex Otti,

Distinguished Members of the NEITI National Stakeholders’ Working Group (NSWG),

Senior Government Officials, Development Partners, Civil Society,

Representatives of Extractive Industries,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with deep appreciation and a strong sense of purpose that I welcome you all to this important NEITI National Stakeholders' Working Group Retreat here in the historic city of Umuahia.

Let me begin by extending our profound gratitude to His Excellency, Dr. Alex Otti, the Executive Governor of Abia State, and his entire team for the warmth, generosity, and hospitality extended to NEITI and to all our delegates. This serene setting, the deliberate planning, and the cooperation extended by the Abia State Government have created the ideal atmosphere for serious national reflection and policy dialogue.

We are equally honoured by the presence of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) and the Chair of the NSWG, the NEITI Board, whose decision to fly down to Umuahia to be with us today is a powerful testament to the importance the Federal Government attaches to transparency, energy governance, and national economic resilience. We thank you, sir, for your leadership and your unflinching support.

To all our NSWG members—drawn from diverse regions, sectors, and constituencies across this country—thank you for showing up. Your presence here reaffirms our collective resolve to confront Nigeria's energy future with honesty, courage, and clarity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This retreat is not a ceremonial gathering. It is a working session convened at a time of profound global change. The topic before us—**Assessing the impact of energy transition on Nigeria’s economy**—goes to the very heart of our national development agenda.

This retreat is also unique in many respects. It brings together, for the first time in this structured format, members of the NEITI National Stakeholders’ Working Group and the Senior Management Team of the NEITI Secretariat from all departments. This joint platform has been deliberately designed to foster greater synergy, mutual understanding, and alignment of vision between the governing board and the Secretariat. It offers an opportunity for reflection, strategic review, and unified direction.

The world is shifting, inexorably, from fossil fuels to renewable and low-carbon energy sources. For Nigeria—Africa’s largest oil producer and one of the continent’s most hydrocarbon-dependent economies—this transition presents a complex challenge. It threatens our revenue base, fiscal planning frameworks, employment in extractive sectors, and the viability of energy infrastructure and investments. But it also presents an opportunity for innovation, diversification, and repositioning.

To respond intelligently and strategically, NEITI, under the guidance of the NSWG, commissioned a detailed study on the impact of energy

transition on Nigeria's economy. The rationale is simple: policy without data is guesswork. We must understand the scope, depth, and dynamics of the transition. What assets are likely to become stranded? How should Nigeria sequence its fossil fuel phase-out while expanding clean energy access? What are the implications for host communities, jobs, and subnational governments?.

This study is expected to provide that much-needed insight. It will offer data-driven guidance to policymakers, inform public debate, support civil society advocacy, and enrich NEITI's contribution to the global EITI discourse.

The role of this Board—the NSWG—and the NEITI Secretariat is therefore critical at this juncture. We need your inputs. Your technical guidance. Your reviews of the work done so far. And above all, your bold ideas on how NEITI can reposition itself as a thought leader on energy transition governance in Nigeria.

So far, the study has made commendable progress. Baseline assessments have been conducted. Data is being gathered across sectors. Early findings are being synthesized. But we must now move from analysis to recommendations, and from recommendations to institutional action. Your deliberations over the next two days will help sharpen the direction, validate assumptions, and guide the next phase of this important work.

Our expectation is that this retreat will deliver clear, actionable outcomes that will guide NEITI's strategic engagements going forward, especially in our policy dialogue with government, industry, civil society, and global partners.

In conclusion, let me once again express our appreciation to the Abia State Government for hosting us, to the SGF for his gracious presence, and to all of you—our esteemed Board members—for your commitment, insight, and passion for a transparent and sustainable extractive sector.

I welcome you once again to Umuahia and pray we have an insightful deliberation.

Thank you.