

Remarks by the Executive Secretary, Dr. Orji Ogbonnaya Orji on the Occasion of the Visit of Energy Correspondents Association of Nigeria (ECAN) to the NEITI Secretariat on 10th May, 2021.

On behalf of Management and Staff of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), I am delighted to welcome you to our Secretariat.

I commend your initiative to pay us this visit. The work you and members of your Association do on a daily basis by covering and reporting the oil and gas sector, including NEITI's activities is very important to our operations.

As you indicated in your letter, this visit will enable our two organizations strengthen our existing partnership and interacts on how best to deepen the ongoing reforms in the Nigeria's extractive industries.

I note that NEITI and your Association have common interests in the areas of information disclosures and dissemination to generality of our fellow citizens, particularly in the extractive industries for purposes of transparency accountability. This implies that we are natural allies.

Let me use this opportunity to acknowledge and thank you and all members of your Association for your support and enormous contributions to NEITI's modest achievements over the years. I urge you to sustain this unflinching support for the benefits of our dear country and her citizens. I like to assure you that NEITI will not take your support for granted.

As I stated during my inaugural press briefing, broadening and deepening the base of NEITI's communications and stakeholders engagement

remains part of our priorities, and Association like yours that specialized in reporting oil and gas sector is relevant in this direction.

In terms of capacity building, NEITI deems it of utmost importance to build your capacity as media professionals to understand the EITI/NEITI process in order for you to report the sector and drive the reforms that is so very crucial for the survival of the Nigerian extractive sector, particularly now that Nigerians and the world eagerly await the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) into law.

NEITI will also be setting up an annual civil society congress where it hopes to bring together all civil society actors working on the theme of sustainability in the extractive industries, transparency and accountability to harvest ideas and opportunities that will drive reforms in Nigeria's extractive sector. We hope to replicate a similar forum with similar objectives for the media. Together with you, we will develop and design these annual congresses to achieve their expected goals.

For us at NEITI, we shall continue to prioritize engagements with all stakeholders because we are clear that it is the only route to achieving the outcomes we all desired if all stakeholders are brought on board.

NEITI has since joined the debate to strengthen the voice that the future of the oil and gas industry in Nigeria depends on the passage of this Bill.

Once again, I like to ask for your continuous support and constructive engagement with NEITI, as we all collectively work to enthrone a regime

of transparency and accountability in the management our natural resources.

Thank you for finding time to visit us.