Special Address by Dr Orji Ogbonnaya Orji, the Executive Secretary, Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) at the Nigeria Mining Week Held at the Abuja International Conference Centre (ICC) on 1-3 November 2022

Protocol

On behalf of the National Stakeholders Working Group (NSWG), the management and staff of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), I feel greatly honoured and delighted to be invited as one of the special guests at this very important Conference.

I wish to felicitate with the organisers of the Nigeria Mining Week, Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, Miners Association of Nigeria and Price Water House Coopers (PwC) for organizing an event of this magnitude, bringing together key stakeholders in the nations mining industry.

I consider this year's Mining Week's focus on Profiling Nigeria's Strengths and Achievements in the mining sector as very timely. Nigeria is looking at alternative opportunities to mobilise resources that it will deploy towards national development and the solid minerals sector readily provides these opportunities.

For instance, the NEITI 2020 Solid Minerals industry Report disclosed that out of the N3.42 Trillion total revenue generated from the extractive sector and remitted to the Federation Account, the solid minerals sector contributed about N116.80 Billion. Currently, the sector contributes about 0.5% to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 0.3% of national employment and 0.02% of exports.

Though, the above statistics may appear negative, when compared to the sector's historic 5% contribution in the 1960's and 70s when the economy was largely sustained by agriculture and solid minerals, a comparative analysis of the past 5 years reveals that the sector is crawling back in terms of revenue generation, but at a snail's speed.

NEITI has conducted 11 cycles of solid minerals audit report in the sector from 2007-2020 and the tabular representation of these revenues show that the sector has generated around N624.1 billion naira.

Year	Total solid minerals revenue to the Federation N Billion
2007	8.19
2008	9.58
2009	19.43
2010	17.37
2011	23.67
2012	31.45
2013	33.86
2014	55.81
2015	63.98
2016	43.22
2017	52.75
2018	67.92
2019	79.96
2020	116.91
Total	**624.1**

These increases are encouraging and underscores the importance and resilience of the mining sector to economic shocks around the world and a gradual return to the afore mentioned years of mining dominance in revenue growth and development.

NEITI as a multi-stakeholder organisation and a member of the global Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) has the mandate to ensure transparency and accountability in Nigeria's extractive sector. Since Nigeria signed up in 2003 and started implementation of the EITI in 2004, NEITI has recorded major contributions to the progress of the mining sector, aligning the EITI principles with the economic reform policies of government and triggering increased public demand for more reforms in the extractive sector.

The NEITI reports have provided ground-breaking public disclosures; timely information and data on revenues earnings and management; physical and process issues and incentives as well as recommendations to remediate the issues.

The Nigeria Mining Cadastre Office has supported NEITI to ensure that the Beneficial Ownership disclosures required by the global EITI is mainstreamed in its systems. BO disclosures has led to the MCO recording incremental revenue annually which can be seen as additional revenues to the country. Also, in the areas of contract transparency disclosure, the MCO is working actively with NEITI to ensure that the Community Development Agreement (CDAs) made by licence holders are publicly available. It is therefore a win-win for the country when agencies synergise for the good of the country.

In line with the EITI standard, NEITI is also committed to the global energy transition which has significant positive implication for the solid minerals sector.

Minerals such as lithium, copper, lead, cobalt and other Rare Earth Element (REE) which are used for the manufacturing of batteries and other components of electric vehicles provide immense opportunities for revenue diversification.

I am pleased to inform you that NEITI, working with the international EITI Secretariat has commissioned a study to examine the actual implications and impacts of the energy transition on Nigeria's extractive sector and her economy in general. The report of this study will soon be published and will be widely disseminated to all the stakeholders.

NEITI through its reports has also encouraged minerals beneficiation and ban on the export of raw ores and calls on Government to intensify efforts at the development and exploitation of the identified 7 strategic minerals through the development of mineral corridors, clusters and partnering with competent investors.

The NEITI Reports has over the years drew attention to the need to formalise the Artisanal and Small-scale Miners (ASM) into Consortiums and Co-operatives which we know is currently on-going. We however want to urge the handlers of this programme to introduce Key Performance Indicators to evaluate the progress made especially with the Artisanal Small-Scale Gold Miners (ASGMs) and the Mineral Sector Support for Economic Diversification (MinDiver) initiatives.

Despite these milestones, Nigeria needs to intensify efforts to attract investments, improve the beneficiation of its minerals and review the progress it has made with the Road Map for the sector. These will help to shape the nation's mining sector and refocus attention to the quick wins and long-term goals for the country.

From the work we have done so far in the sector, NEITI wishes to call for the review of the 2007 Nigerian Mineral and Mining Act. The call has become necessary in view of the urgency to have in place a law that allows for easy access and participation of private sector, attractive to equity investments by corporate organizations through flexible legislation that harmonizes and unites the interests of the three tiers of government.

NEITI is also renewing its call that part of the reform should include government-private sector collaboration to float a state/private owned enterprise that will serve as a catalyst to drive investment in the sector.

As a critical stakeholder in this sector, I hope that this Mining Week will be able to identify the challenges faced by the sector and proffer outstanding recommendations that will address them.

I strongly believe that the panel discussants will see the NEITI solid minerals reports as a repository of knowledge that will bridge the data gaps and improve investment competitiveness in a post covid era.

Let me use this platform to renew our appeal to all stakeholders to use the contents and findings of the NEITI reports for constructive engagements and advocacy on extractive revenue governance and drive the necessary reforms in the sector for the good of the citizens.

On this note, I thank you all for your audience and wish you all successful deliberations.