

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE 48TH MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON INFORMATION AND NATIONAL ORIENTATION (NCINO) HELD AT HOTEL SEVENTEEN, NO. 6 TAFAWA BALEWA WAY, KADUNA STATE, FROM WEDNESDAY 11TH – FRIDAY 13TH DECEMBER, 2024

PREAMBLE

- 1.0 The 48th meeting of the National Council on Information and National Orientation was held at Hotel Seventeen, Kaduna State from Wednesday 11th to Friday 13th December, 2024, with the theme: **“Enhancing Public Information Management for Inclusive Governance: The Renewed Hope Agenda in Focus”**. The meeting was attended by 77 delegates from 17 States of the Federation. The Directors and Chief Executives of Agencies of the Ministry of Information and National Orientation and its Agencies were in attendance. While the Nigeria Institute of Public Relations and other related professional bodies were adequately represented.
- 1.1 A goodwill message was presented by the Chairman Senate Committee on Information and National Orientation Sen. (Engr) Kenneth Emeka Eze with the Chairman House Committee on Information and National Orientation Hon. Olusola Fatoba in attendance.
- 1.2 In his keynote address, the Hon. Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris FNIPR. welcomed dignitaries and participants to the 48th Meeting of the National Council on Information and National Orientation. He expressed his profound gratitude to Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani for the warm hospitality and unwavering support in hosting the 48th National Council on Information in Kaduna State. He observed that the theme: **“Enhancing Public Information Management for Inclusive Governance: The Renewed Hope Agenda in Focus”** was very apt, adding that it underscores the critical role of public information in bridging the gap between government policies and the aspiration of the Nigerian people, a role that is at the very heart of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu’s Renewed Hope Agenda.

- 1.3 The Minister stated that Information Management is not merely a tool for administration but the lifeblood of democracy and development. He added that The Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is a clarion call for transformational leadership at all levels and people-oriented governance. He stated that the Agenda is firmly anchored on the time-honoured principle that governance must be inclusive, transparent and centred on improving the lives of Nigerians.
- 1.4 The Minister further noted that the responsibility of Information Managers as custodians of information dissemination is to ensure that the policies and programmes of both the national and sub national governments reach every Nigerian, regardless of location, language or social status. He mentioned the five guiding pillars crafted by the Ministry of Information and National Orientation for its mission for managing and disseminating information. He reminded Council delegates and participants of their immense responsibility as information managers, stating that the effectiveness of their communication strategies would largely be determined on how well government policies and programmes resonate with Nigerians and drive the change envisioned. He encouraged everyone to approach this task with dedication, innovation and a sense of national purpose to ensure that public information becomes the cornerstone of inclusive governance and a catalyst for national development.
- 1.5 The Executive Governor of Kaduna State, His Excellency, Senator Uba Sani, in his remarks stated that the theme of the 48th National Council not only reminds us of the critical role that information plays in democratic societies, but is reflective of our commitment to a process - led and participatory approach to governance. He posited that effective public information management is crucial for promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in governance.
- 1.6 He added that Information Managers have a responsibility to effectively communicate Mr. President's Reform Agenda to the Nigerian people and must fashion a robust Communications Strategy to carry out this important task. He stated that the people must be given background to the reforms of Mr President, what reforms are all about, and the benefits therein. He advised patience with the people

and recommended systematic break down of information to them. Messages should be crafted in a way that takes care of the peculiarities of different audiences. He emphasised the buy in of the people in whatever government is doing, bearing in mind that the people are government's pillar of support.

- 1.7 In conclusion the Governor urged Information Managers to rededicate themselves to the effective management of public information for inclusive governance and to reaffirm their commitment to promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in governance through effective public information management.
- 1.8 The meeting of officials to prepare the framework for the Council meeting was held on Thursday 12th December, 2024 under the Chairmanship of the Director Overseeing office of the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, Mrs Comfort Ajiboye.

After exhaustive deliberations, Council resolved and approved as follows:

- I. To adopt and implement the National Policy on Information document which aims to transform Nigeria's Information sector at all levels, giving necessary support to the country's democracy, economic growth and global influence. The implementation of the document will ensure an information management and communication system that is open, inclusive and development focused, fostering unity and enabling informed decision making by citizens.
- II. That in line with the approval of the Council on Establishment and implementation by the Head of Civil Service of the Federation, States should comply with the re-designation of Information Officer Cadre as Information and Public Relations Officer for Officers on GL 08-17 and Executive Officers (Information and Public Relations) on GL 06-14.
- III. That Nigeria Information Service Centres in 13 countries abroad with four regional/zonal headquarters within these Centres for the purpose of prompt decision making should be re-opened for reputation management as well as engendering positive image for the country globally. In addition the News Agency of Nigeria, Nigeria Television

Authority Voice of Nigeria should also open offices in some selected countries to complement the efforts of the NISCs.

- IV. To address the challenges associated with deployment protocols, limited career progression and resource shortages for Information and Public Relations Officers in MDAs at both state and federal levels.
- V. To reposition the National Institute of Public Information (NIPI) Kaduna, as a citadel for conduct of training and capacity building for Information and Public Relations practitioners in the country, other cadre of staff in the Public Service and Private Sector. In addition, the Nigeria Institute of Public Relations should consider adopting the Institute as one of its training centres.
- VI. To revitalise the completion of construction of the Federal Government Printing Press (FGP) in Asokoro, Abuja, thereby ensuring its statutory duty of printing and publishing official and confidential documents of Government and its Agencies. In addition, States should consider patronising the FGP for printing of official documents for security and archival purposes.
- VII. To strengthen the Nigeria Press Council for effective print media regulation in the country.
- VIII. To develop and promote strategic public information systems as a tool for inclusivity to address and mitigate political tension in the country.
- IX. To adopt the News Agency of Nigeria's initiative to expand its content production and dissemination to include indigenous Nigerian languages.
- X. To recommend to Heads of Information-based organisations to provide appropriate communication facilities/equipment/infrastructure, and a conducive working environment for their organisations. Media Houses should become fully digitalised for effective information dissemination and there is need for improved conditions of service, salary structure and regular training for media practitioners to enhance their performance.
- XI. To strengthen community-based media for effective operations in insecurity-prone areas, bearing in mind that they have the potential to

play a pivotal role in countering misinformation, promoting peace narratives and fostering trust.

- XII. In addition, there should be in place a security framework in form of insurance for media practitioners operating in insecure areas across Nigeria, in line with global best practices.
- XIII. To address the flagrant abuse and disrespect of the National symbols by implementing measures aimed at restoring the dignity and standardisation of these symbols of unity and identity.
- XIV. To ensure the implementation of the National Values Charter as approved by the Federal Executive Council as measures to revive Nigeria's value system as part of the National Identity Project.
- XV. To promote the role of radio in actualising the enhancement of Public Information Management for inclusive governance.
- XVI. To recommend collaboration by both Federal and State governments with the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) for nationwide media enlightenment and awareness campaign on the dangers posed by use of illicit drugs. There should also be enlightenment campaigns and sensitisation on the dangers of terrorism, banditry and kidnapping to national image and development.
- XVII. That there should be more awareness creation on the usage and management of the social media to address the menace of misinformation, disinformation and fake news
- XVIII. To sustain the role of the media on information management for national security, recognising that that the media faces challenges as censorship, ownership influence and limited access to critical data, in shaping public opinion and promoting national security.
- XIX. That in other to avoid the misuse of Artificial Intelligence, the Federal Government, through its appropriate institution, regulate AI use in the country in line with global best practices as well as mandate relevant Agencies involved in AI to address related challenges/threats.
- XX. That the Federal Government and States should ensure communication of government policies in local languages for better understanding and

effective buy-in by the public, particularly the rural and less literate population.

XXI. That Government at all levels should continue to provide a conducive regulatory environment for public information management.

XXII. That support should be mobilised for all States on building capacity of information officers on effective communication of government policies, establishment and resuscitation of moribund television and radio stations across the country to enhance public information management for inclusive governance.

XXIII. Additional funding should be provided to VON, NTA and FRCN in the face of today's challenges.

Council also noted as follows:

- I. The revival of the State Advisory Committee in Kano State which has been inactive for over a decade but revived by the State Governor to promote factual and accurate dissemination of public information, strengthen media government relationship, address media concerns and promote ethical journalism.
- II. Decried the incessant down grading as well as scrapping of Ministries of Information by some State governments. Council, through the Ministry of Information and National Orientation call on the State governments where these Ministries were severed to as a matter of urgency re-establish, re-equip and train personnel to take up the challenge of disseminating policies, programme of actions and advocacy at all levels of government in line with international best practice.

Council commended the Honourable Minister of Information and National Orientation for conducting the National Council on Information and National Orientation in just two years in office.

Council thanked the Government and people of Kaduna State for their hospitality

Council also approved Akwa Ibom State as venue of the next National Council on Information and National Orientation Meeting.

COMMUNIQUE COMMITTEE

1. Hon. Binta Mamman (Hon Commissioner of Niger State) – Chairman
2. Ibidapo Okunnu - Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation
3. Najaatu A. Hassan - Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation
4. Titilayo Osanyintolu - Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation
5. Udo John Sunday - Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation
6. Zome Bathsheba Gata - Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation
7. Abdullahi Amad - Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation
8. Towoju Raphael - Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation
9. Abdullahi Lawan - Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation
10. Chimezie-Ukachukwu - Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation