INFRASTRUCTURE CONCESSION REGULATORY COMMISSION

FACILITIES RESILIENCE AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: ENGINEERING RESPONSES TO CLIMATE CHANGE, FLOODING AND INFRASTRUCTURE VULNERABILITY

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Protocols.

1. It is an honour and a privilege to stand before this distinguished gathering, to give a Keynote Address on the theme "Facilities Resilience and Disaster Preparedness: Engineering Responses to Climate Change, Flooding and Infrastructure Vulnerability".

2. This theme is not only timely—it is existential. Climate change is no longer a distant threat in Nigeria; it is a harsh reality that demands immediate attention. Almost every State in the Country is faced with rising temperatures, and unpredictable weather patterns which are pushing our infrastructure to the limits. Flooding, in particular, poses significant threat to our facilities every year, disrupting economic activity, food security, threatening public health, and undermining community stability.

3. In addition, we are all witnesses to the alarming changes in our environment, over the years. Rivers which once sustained our agriculture now overflow their banks with fury. Roads and bridges which were built many decades ago, now crumble under the weight of rainfall patterns they were never designed to withstand. From Makurdi to Bayelsa, from Lagos to Lokoja, flooding has become an annual scourge displacing families, destroying livelihoods, and exposing our infrastructural inadequacies.

4. This therefore means that it is no longer adequate to build infrastructure for public and private use; it is also of necessity to consider the service lives of the facilities, so that they would be robust enough to withstand both predictable and unpredictable impacts of climate change.
5. A lot of these infrastructure are built by the government for public use, and lately due to economic concerns, the budgetary provisions have not been adequate to cater for the cost of construction, operations and maintenance of these infrastructure. The revised Nigeria National Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan (2020 to 2043) issued by the Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning, requires a capital expenditure of USD 2.3 Trillion. This translates to an average annual requirement of USD 100 Billion, or about NGN 160 Trillion; which is far higher than our present budgetary provisions. As a way out, the Government has opened its arms for alternative financing mechanisms, one of which is the Public Private Partnership (PPP) procurement route.

6. As the regulator of PPPs in Nigeria, the ICRC stands at the intersection of policy, investment, and technical innovation. Permit me to give a brief background of the ICRC and our mandate. In 2008, the Federal Government of Nigeria established the Commission under the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (establishment, etc) Act, 2005; to regulate PPP endeavors of the Federal government aimed at addressing Nigeria's physical infrastructure deficit.

7. The ICRC Act empowers the ICRC to, among other functions:
   - Take custody of every concession agreement made under the Act and monitor compliance with the terms and conditions of such agreement;
   - Ensure efficient execution of any concession agreement or contract entered into by the Federal Government;
   - Ensure compliance with the provisions of the ICRC Act;
   - Perform such other duties as may be directed by the President, from time to time, and as are necessary or expedient to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of the Commission under the ICRC Act.

8. Climate Change is now an Infrastructure Issue. Unequivocally, climate change is no longer a distant environmental concern —it is a national infrastructure emergency. According to NIMET's 2024 report, over 30 states in Nigeria are at high risk of flooding. The economic cost of these climate events is mounting: road washouts, hospital closures, power outages, damage to key transportation systems - the effects are enormous. For a developing economy like ours, these are not just environmental setbacks—they are developmental reversals. We believe that addressing climate-induced vulnerabilities in our infrastructure requires engineering prowess in addition to institutional foresight, financial creativity, and unwavering political will.

9. We must engineer **resilience** into the very fabric of our infrastructure - and PPPs offer a powerful mechanism to do this. Through **performance-based contracts**, **risk-sharing frameworks**, and **climate-smart design requirements**, PPP projects can embed resilience standards from day one. It is evident, that the absence of robust infrastructure will hamper much needed efficient and effective economic activities to enhance growth, wealth and job creation as well as overall national development.

10. Over the last two decades, Nigeria has successfully implemented PPP projects in seaport terminals, silo complexes, hydropower plants, roads for Tolling, bridges, Inland Container Depots/Dry Ports, Truck Transit Parks and hosts of other projects. The Commission has recorded sound achievements all geared towards

simplifying our procurement process and attracting investors into our economy. Our mandate as a Commission is to accelerate private sector investment in infrastructure delivery for both Greenfield and Brownfield infrastructure development in Nigeria through a transparent, competitive and robust PPP procurement process

11. Let me emphasize that the Federal government, through the ICRC, is committed to providing:
    - Technical assistance in project structuring and preparation;
    - Harmonization guidelines to reduce duplication and increase efficiency;
    - Capacity building for States PPP Units/Agencies.
    - Providing platforms for the continuous brainstorming and fine tuning of PPP endeavors. The ICRC is hosting the Nigeria PPP Summit from 17th to 18th of June, 2025 in Abuja at the State House Banquet Hall and the Congress Hall of the Transcorp Hilton respectively.

12. I also use this opportunity to invite our engineering bodies and tertiary institutions to continually encourage the development of homegrown design and climate resilient standards which are suited for Nigeria's ecological realities. It is essential to fund climate related researches, support start-ups in green construction, as well as empower local artisans to manufacture durable products. Our message is clear: every naira invested in infrastructure must yield not just economic return, but **climate stability and safety**. A key part of our feasibility analysis in our consideration of PPP projects is to ensure that Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) are done to ensure that the projects meet environmental sustainability and disaster resilience criteria. This is not just regulation—it is responsible governance.

13. Distinguished participants, we are at a crossroad; and PPPs, well structured and implemented, provide win-win solutions to be explored. Together we can chart a bold, resilient path - a path where the bridges we build, the hospitals we construct, and the roads we pave can stand the test of time - and of climate.

    Let us choose to be visionary.
    Let us choose to be prepared.
    Let us choose to be resilient.

    And above all, let us build **not just for today—but for the storms of tomorrow.**

14. Finally, the ICRC is available for collaborations with the NIFEngM to ensure the delivery and implementation of infrastructure project where facilities resilience and disaster preparedness are considered; and mitigation programmes put in place

15. Thank you, and may God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

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