

Remarks By The Hon. Minister, Budget And National Planning Sen. Udoma Udo Udoma On The Occasion Of The Launch Of The 2018 National Human Development Report Held On 5th October, 2018 At The Hilton Hotel, Abuja.

Protocols

Let me first welcome the UNDP Administrator, Mr. Achim Steiner and the United Nations Emergency Relief Co-Ordinator, Mr. Mark Lowcock, who are currently visiting Nigeria and are here with us to participate in this launching. We are happy to have you here with us. It gives me great pleasure to be here today at the launch of the UNDP's Eighth National Human Development Report on Nigeria which is focused on "**Achieving Human Development in North East Nigeria**". It will be recalled that when the President, H.E. Muhammadu Buhari, was campaigning for elections in 2015, he promised to address the security and other development challenges of the North East, which was a source of great concern for all Nigerians. He has remained true to that promise as he has devoted time, attention and resources to improving the security and living conditions in the North East. By focusing this report on the North East, the UNDP is therefore recognising the priority that this Administration has given to the humanitarian, developmental and security challenges of North East Nigeria.

2. Your Excellencies, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the UNDP has been of great help to Nigeria on developmental issues. You have, over the years, sought to identify with our developmental priorities. Your interventions in the implementation

of a number of the programmes and policies set out in our Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) 2017-2020 is very much appreciated. As you know the ERGP is the comprehensive medium-term plan of this Administration which aims to transform Nigeria by tackling the constraints to growth; leveraging the power of the private sector; allowing markets to function whilst upholding core values and promoting national cohesion and social inclusion. At the core of the ERGP is the focus on human development. One of the three core objectives of the ERGP is “Investing in our people. Indeed the ERGP recognises that economic growth is beneficial for society when it creates opportunities and provides support to the vulnerable.

3. Excellencies, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I must commend the UNDP for regularly putting together the findings on human development indices in Nigeria. I understand that this report was initially conceived as an alternative version to the prevailing development paradigms of that time. The aim was to produce a report that goes beyond the focus on income indices to a tabulation of the totality of human development indices. In that regard it plays an extremely useful role and we, in Nigeria, always look forward to the report as a useful guide. This is why this Ministry has been happy to collaborate with you in the production of the report. It was in that spirit of collaboration that our then Minister of State, Budget & National Planning, Mrs Zainab Ahmed, co-chaired the Steering Committee that put together this report, working together with Mr. Edward Kallon, the UNDP Resident

Representative in Nigeria. I congratulate both of them for an excellent report. In addition, Mrs Zainab Ahmed also contributed a foreword to the Report. She, of course, is now the Minister of Finance.

4. I believe your first production of a Human Development Report on Nigeria was in 1990. I also recall that the last one you produced was the 2016 edition which was on Human Security and Human Development in Nigeria. This year, the focus is on the North East.

5. This Report focusing on the North East confirms the view that the *Boko Haram* insurgency is partly as a result of the manipulation by religious extremists of some of the socio-economic, socio-cultural conditions of the North East. By addressing the economic and developmental issues in the North East, we are therefore also helping to reduce the incidence of terrorism.

6. In more specific terms, the report has confirmed a significant relationship between perceptions of exclusion, inequality, religious bigotry; loss of property; unemployment, resultant loss of livelihoods; as well as perceptions of exclusion that extend to key sectors including health, education, agriculture etc that have a significant nexus with the conflicts and violence in North Eastern Nigeria. This Report is therefore a reminder that we

all need to continue to work together, the Federal Government, the State Governments, donor agencies and friends of Nigeria to continue to reduce the causes of the relatively low human development indices in the North East. In this connection, let me re-iterate the commitment of the Federal Government to continue to provide strong leadership in this effort.

7. Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, with these few remarks, it gives me great pleasure to officially launch the UNDP National Human Development Report 2018 on **“Achieving Human Development in Northeast Nigeria”**.

I thank you for listening.