**WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF BUDGET AND NATIONAL PLANNING AT THE 19TH EDITION OF THE JOINT PLANNING BOARD (JPB) MEETING HELD AT THE NIGERIAN AIR FORCE (NAF) CONFERENCE CENTRE AND SUITES, ABUJA ON WEDNESDAY, 24TH MARCH, 2021**

**PROTOCOL**

I am delighted to welcome you all to the 19th Edition of the Joint Planning Board (JPB) meeting holding today Wednesday, 24th March, 2021 at the NAF Conference Centre and Suites, Abuja.

2. As you are aware, the JPB meeting is an annual event organized by the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning. It provides a veritable platform for interaction and exchange of ideas among stakeholders from the States and Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

3. Permit me to say that the current Administration places high priority on the socio-economic development of the nation. This is more reason why the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning anchors this special 19th meeting.

4. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, as part of the effort towards ensuring the effective preparation of the National Plans, the Ministry recognized the need for effective collaborations between the National and Sub-National Governments to ensure that the Plan being produced has the in-prints of the States. The essence of our gathering here today is to have elaborate discussions with a view to proffering lasting solutions to the looming constraints in our National Development Planning efforts. The outcomes of our meetings will support the ongoing preparation exercise on the MTNDP 2021-2025 and Nigeria Agenda 2050.

1. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the 19th JPB meeting is designed to be participatory and highly interactive. There will be no dull moments. I am confident that with the ambience and serenity of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), you will surely bring your vast experience/knowledge to bare on the subjects of discourse during the Plenary Sessions.
2. Once again, I formally welcome you to the 19th Edition of the Joint Planning Board (JPB) meeting and wish you fruitful deliberations.

7. Thank you for your kind attention