

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS/FORMAL OPENING BY HIS EXCELLENCY, BARR ERIC KELECHI IGWE, DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF EBONYI STATE AT THE 21st EDITION OF THE JOINT PLANNING BOARD (JPB) MEETING HELD AT THE NEW EXCO CHAMBERS, CENTENARY CITY, ABAKALIKI ON WEDNESDAY, 6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022**

**Those present are:**

- **Permanent Secretary, Budget, and National Planning. Mrs. Olusola Idowu.**
- **Directors and Deputy Directors from the Budget and National Planning arm of the Federal Ministry of Finance.**
- **Resource persons**
- **Donor agencies.**
- **Private sector.**
- **Partners.**

1) I am delighted to welcome you all to the 21st Edition of the Joint Planning Board (JPB) meeting to be held today, Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at the New EXCO Chambers, Ochudo Centenary City, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State.

2) This annual meeting, organized by the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget, and National Planning and proudly hosted by the Government of Ebonyi State, provides a very formidable platform for discussions and exchange of ideas among stakeholders across the sub-regionals and the Federal Government.

3) We have senior officials from the Federal and State Ministries, representatives from the Organized Private Sector, Development Partners, and Civil Society Organizations here today to engage in

technical discussions on policy issues in order to propose an optimal approach for improving the nation's economic management process.

- 4) Looking at the theme of the 21<sup>st</sup> edition of JPB/NCDP (which is **"GOOD GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY: Pathways to Sustainable National Development"**), our government, ably led by His Excellency, Engr. David Umahi, places a very high priority on Good Governance and sustainable development in the state. This is surely evident in the testimonies of the changed narratives of our state.
- 5) Ladies and Gentlemen, while preparing for the biggest economic sector event, we carefully packaged programs that will tell the story of how Ebonyi state is changing the narratives and how we have succeeded in navigating meagre finances to achieve so much with very little, comparatively. Our government is very mindful of the economic challenges and needs to institutionalize the good practices with which we have attained our success. While we wind down on the time left in the tenure, we have initiated several programs that will support the plan for sustenance. A lot of these can be replicated elsewhere and create the desired change across the length and breadth of the country.
- 6) Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, before I close, I urge all participants, both physically and virtually, to follow all the proceedings and give input for the good of our dear country. I wish to inform you that the State will be receiving the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister for State Budget and National Planning, for the **National Council on Development Planning** within the program this week.

It will be a long week, as this edition of JPB/NCDP will record a remarkable outcome and cherished memories.

7) May I at this point formally declare this 21<sup>st</sup> edition of the Joint Planning Board officially open.

8) I wish you fruitful deliberations.

9) Thank you