

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY ALHAJI ABUBAKAR MOHAMMED, FNIM  
PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL  
ON THE 46TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT  
CONFERENCE OF THE NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT  
(CHARTERED)  
AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER, ABUJA  
ON THE 20TH NOVEMBER 2006**

**Protocols**

It is with great delight to welcome you to the 46<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Management Conference of our great Institute, the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered). Before we continue, let us observe a minute's silence prayer for the remorse of the souls our members, leaders and other distinguished Nigerians who died in Sosoliso air crash in Port-Harcourt and ADC air disaster in Abuja, this year.

May our prayers be answered!

**The Quest For Excellence**

It is no longer news that Nigeria as a nation has the greatest potential for achieving greatness not only in Africa, but the world as a whole.

Our Managers rank among the worlds best on a level of intellectual and, or professional platforms.

For example:

We have won the Nobel prize for imaginative Writing.

We have won the Pulitzer Prize for Journalistic excellence;

we have twice won the Grammy Awards for musical Creativity.

We have been nominated for the Nobel prize in Physics for scientific ingenuity.

We have won the Central Banker of the Year Award; and many such global acknowledgements of our quest for excellence.

Nigerians are intelligent, hardworking and professionally competent to meet all the challenges of making our country great.

**Where Are We?**

At this moment in our history, I cannot subscribe to what Nigeria is ascribed, as a ship in reverse thrust, on the verge of grinding to a halt. The wheel of our development is gradually moving forward, but certainly inadequacies are casting doubts to our coming of age in the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenge. We trained up Managers through a long process taking many years just to lose them in a flash through negligence, cutting corners, indiscipline, greed, corruption, name them.

It is an over stated fact that the Nigerian problem is centered on mismanagement. The very process of producing manager-material, the Education sector, was laid bare at the Presidential Forum on Education where the Education Minister scored Management Competence F on the educational development score card.

The Aviation sector in the last 13 months has demonstrated their own sorry state by leaving behind a trail of tears and blood as evidence of endemic management failure in the system.

The financial sector seems to have sneezed back to life and is showing signs of recuperation after the visible symptoms of systemic distress when a dose of reforms was administered.

In almost all the socio-economic sectors of the nation, management failure has assumed epidemic proportions. It is the harvest season for the many years of mismanagement sown.

### **Where Are We Going?**

The Nigeria we inherited as it is from our heroes past is not the same today. It is more sophisticated, richer in material and human resources, yet poor and insecure. What legacies do we intend to leave to our children? For the future begins, today!

Today, we can accurately evaluate 50% of the production matrix (Land and Capital). These have become commodities that can be picked off the shelf. The remaining 50% (Entrepreneur and Labour) may soon be commoditized. The concept of Human Capital Development seeks to place a shelf value on employable Labor. Where will this leave our children? What implications will this have on our economy? Can Nigeria or better still can Nigerian managers, play in the globalized employment market? If you are an employer, will you employ an aviation worker (say Air Traffic Cadet) with Nigerian experience? Truthful, soul-searching answers to these questions will pave way for our discussions in this year's Conference.

### **Managing Our Future Today**

The management of our Tomorrow must begin Today. This year's Conference will focus on evolving processes for re-defining our future. Varied experts will lead discussions on managerial content of some pressing national issues; hence the focus of this year's Conference **Managing our Future Today**.

Some common issues begging for management solutions in Nigeria of today bear on:

1. Pension Reforms
2. Private-Public Partnerships
3. Economic and Financial Reforms
4. Leadership and Management development
5. Wealth Creation
6. Poverty reduction

These issues were the guide to the selection of this year's management topics. If management solutions can be achieved on these issues and the communiqué channeled to appropriate implementation sectors, the **Nigerian Institute of Management** would have contributed meaningfully to nation building within its duties as established by the Act of the National Assembly.

Some of us present here today, including others members of the Institute who could not make it to this conference, must be ambassadors of this great Institute. You will do this by imbibing good management culture and holding yourself accountable for results in your respective organizations.

I am therefore using this forum to challenge all members to rise and make a difference in their various work places and proudly bear the banner of being professional managers under the umbrella of NIM.

I would like you to consider the papers that would be presented at this Conference as frameworks for thorough deliberation, so that good and implement-able solutions could be generated from the discussions to help resolve management pitfalls that have arisen or are likely to arise in the course of implementing the reforms under discussion today.

Contributions by the Institute on issues affecting the Nigerian nation are ongoing. To mention but a few, in recent times and with the support of our members, prominent among whom are the past presidents, the Institute contributed meaningfully to some commissioned Federal Government Committees, including those on Police Reforms and African Investment Banking (now African Finance Corporation). The Institute will continue to offer its management expertise on national issues to see that Nigeria is back on the path of effective and efficient management in order to foster development. Our membership strength is over seventy thousand and Council decision is to consolidate and strengthen Professional Competence through Mandatory Continuing Training. Intending members must go through preparatory assessment and examination to qualify. To support this drive, the Institute is about commissioning its virtual library (the e-library and electronic management document) that will ease Management research and other relevant studies.

The Nigerian Institute of Management has been expanding its structures in order to achieve these objectives. We have established management centers in Benin, Ibadan and Kano while Umuahia, Abakaliki and Jalingo would come on board before the end of the year. These centres will be adequately equipped and further expanded to cope with these challenges. The Zonal, Branch and Chapter structures of the Institute shall also be given the required attention and adequate level of involvement to be able to channel the largely needed management education and development information across the length and breadth of this country. Twenty seven additional chapters have so far been inaugurated within the last twelve months in our efforts to bring NIM services closer to members outside Lagos. It is also worthy of note that the Nigerian Institute of Management is growing beyond the shores of this country and all processes towards the establishment of London chapter, for other Nigerians in diaspora, is almost completed. I am happy to let you know that one of our past Presidents who is Nigeria's High Commissioner in London has been of tremendous help in this direction. The London Chapter will facilitate cross-pollination of ideas for effective leadership development and education.

The NIM/NYSC partnership has yielded positive impact on capacity building of our young managers who are potential leaders of tomorrow. In the two year partnership, 23,000 Corp members registered for six months free tuition programme of the Institute across the country. I am happy to report that 16,000 have successfully passed the examinations and are being gradually inducted as graduate members of the Institute in addition to having proficiency certification by the Institute.

The top executive leadership training programme in collaboration with the Manchester Business School, UK, for interested members of the Institute is waxing stronger. The Nigerian Institute of Management as a partner of the programme has facilitated the training of one hundred and forty (140) top managers/Chief Executives so far. Contacts for possible partnership with Harvard Business School, USA and South Africa are still on. Interested members should log on to our website ([managementnigeria.org](http://managementnigeria.org)) for update on this.

My fellow professional managers, I wish you a fruitful deliberation and I am very confident that a positive outcome with an implementable communiqué will be produced from this conference.

Thank you.