**IHS TELECOMS CONFERENCE 2019**

**September 10, 2019**

**Theme: *The Power & Telecommunications Synergy: Building Strategic Alliances for Broadband Penetration and Inclusive Prosperity.***

**Concept Note**

I. INTRODUCTION & JUSTIFICATION

Nigeria with a population of over 190 million and an internet penetration rate of 62.89% has its current broadband infiltration figure at 33.70%. It is estimated that the number of internet users will rise to over 187 million by 2023 given the population increase in the country. These figures pose both opportunities and challenges for sectoral growth and national development.

According to recent GDP figures by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the telecommunications sector contributed 10.11% to the national GDP in the 1st quarter of 2019 thereby entrenching the sector as a key driver of economic growth and national prosperity.

However, when compared with the rate of growth in developed nations and the economic impact that broadband services have on their economies, a lot needs to be done in Nigeria to bridge the gap. The Nigerian Broadband Plan (NBP) 2013 – 2018, sought to address this by connecting communities with high-speed internet and broadband access in order to facilitate faster socioeconomic advancement through improved learning, increased job creation, better community and civic engagement and improved trade and commerce.

Six (6) years from the initiation of the NBP, the key challenges identified at the start still exist, with minimal improvements. The high costs of right of way (RoW) resulting in the high cost of leasing transmission infrastructure, multiple taxation at Federal, State, and Local Government levels, multiple regulatory bodies with conflicting regulations, damage to existing fibre infrastructure as a result of cable theft, road works and other operations, and the lack of reliable clean grid electricity supply have limited the growth of broadband.

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has identified key prospects for broadband penetration in the nearest future which include;

* All new sites to be LTE compatible, spreading 3G coverage to at least 80 % of the Nigerian population (currently 56.4 % of the population are covered with 3G),
* A complete upgrade of 2G BTS to 3G, spreading 5G to at least 5 % of the population when launched globally,
* Spreading 3G/LTE services to 100 % of the population with a minimum broadband speed of 1.5 Mbps and;
* Deploying at least one Access Point of Fiber with a 10 Gbps capacity in all the 774 LGAs of the Federation through the InfraCo project.

The transformation of these prospects into tangible results is hinged on building strategic alliances between the telecoms sector and the power sector of the country.

In this regard, the IHS Telecoms Conference 2019 seeks to explore the benefits of integrating power solutions into the broadband plan and vice versa and chart a road map for sectoral collaboration that will bring about the broadband growth forecasted. In addition, issues such as building harmonised regulations, creating shared

prosperity through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); using broadband as a driver, and Investment sourcing and optimisation of returns for broadband infrastructure, would be discussed extensively.

The maiden edition of the IHS Telecoms Conference 2019 provides a platform which brings business leaders, regulators, investors, Government, experts and practitioners together, to engage on issues of Broadband and Power. The quality of the resource persons and participants, intellectual exchanges, and learning experiences - both for corporate strategy, policy development and investor relations, makes it a must-attend event in the industry.