

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY PROF. A. M. WOKOCHA, REGISTRAR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE, TEACHERS REGISTRATION COUNCIL OF NIGERIA (TRCN) AT THE 1<sup>ST</sup> ROUNDTABLE OF TEACHING REGULATORY AUTHORITIES IN AFRICA HELD IN ABUJA, OCTOBER 11-14, 2010**

**PROTOCOLS**

I am filled with joy to see today's occasion become real – an occasion where distinguished personalities in the teaching profession from all over Africa have assembled to chart a way forward for the profession in Africa.

I wish to start by appreciating God Almighty for granting journey mercies to all delegates. I am excited at the enthusiasm of delegates on arrival in Nigeria and the burning desire already being expressed to work together as one people with a common purpose which is to reposition the teaching profession, not only in Africa but also in the world.

This Roundtable came about as a result of the unflinching commitment of **TRCN** and the South African Council for Educators (**SACE**) to the realization of the goals of the world body of Teaching Councils, the International Forum for Teaching Regulatory Authorities (**IFTRA**) with headquarters at the General Teaching Council for Cardiff, United Kingdom. **IFTRA** is working to revitalize the teaching profession in all countries and can only succeed with active participation of the respective countries.

Unfortunately in the whole of Africa, it is only **TRCN** and **SACE** that have Teaching Councils and are members of **IFTRA**. **TRCN** and **SACE** therefore took up the challenge to re-awaken African consciousness towards the role expected of the continent in the world with respect to its teaching profession.

The impressive turnout of most of the African countries today is already a confirmation that African countries have got the message and as a great continent will live to the expectation of **IFTRA**. It is therefore the hope of **TRCN** and **SACE** that this Roundtable will lead to very fundamental decisions that will move the teaching profession in Africa forward.

**TRCN** is exceedingly happy about the very robust brotherly relationship existing between it and **SACE**. The relationship has empowered our two organizations to achieve a lot together including this Roundtable. This is the kind of relationship that **TRCN** and **SACE** expect from Teaching Regulatory Authorities in Africa and

we have every hope that this Roundtable will give us the opportunity to realize this dream as well.

We are also very honoured to have the Chair of the General Teaching Council for Wales, **Mrs. Angela Jardine**, representing **IFTRA** in this event. The presence of the world body here underscores the importance of the Roundtable and the keynote address to be delivered by **Mrs. Jardine** will surely set the tone and agenda for discussions in this Roundtable.

May I most importantly appreciate the presence of our Hon. Minister of Education, **Prof. Ruquayyatu Ahmed Rufai (OON)** who is the Chief Host of this Roundtable. It must be put on record that so many landmark achievements of **TRCN** in the past one year including this Roundtable are due to the great inspiration and support received from the Hon. Minister. She has left no one in doubt about the goals she wants to achieve within one year and these goals and targets are clearly articulated in her document titled "One Year Strategy for the Development of the Education Sector in Nigeria" which she presented to the public early this year. The documents put Teacher Education and Development at the centre of her strategy to reposition Education in Nigeria. On Teacher Education and Development, the teaching profession and the role of **TRCN** are very key issues.

As our Hon. Minister of Education works round the clock to deliver her strategy, **TRCN** has been empowered to be on her train and to be part of her success story. Our Hon. Minister, we appreciate you. May I also express our delight and gratitude to the President of the Association of African Universities and Vice Chancellor, University of Ilorin, **Prof. Is-haq Oloyede** who readily agreed to Chair the ceremony and has given so much support for the success of the Roundtable. Similarly, gratitude goes to other eminent teachers invited to chair the plenary session, among them are **Prof. Kabiru Isyaku**, the former Executive Secretary of the National Commission for Colleges of Education and **Prof. Peter Okebukola**, the former Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission.

To all distinguished guests - from the Chief Executives of Federal Ministry of Education Agencies to International Development Partners, Non-Governmental Organizations, the media, teachers and all others, we thank you sincerely for showing solidarity by sparing your very precious time to attend this opening ceremony.

I wish all delegates fruitful deliberations.

