

## **DATA CENTRE COMMISSIONING**

### **WELCOME REMARKS DELIVERED BY MR. ANTHONY BUCKINGHAM SENIOR PROJECT COORDINATOR, EU FUNDED PROJECT "SUPPORT TO THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRIMES COMMISSION (EFCC) AND THE NIGERIAN JUDICIARY".**

It is my pleasure and privilege to welcome you on behalf of the UNODC Representative Ms Dagmar Thomas to this event to Commission this data centre which is a product of the European Union funded project, "Support to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Nigerian Judiciary", a joint undertaking of the European Commission, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Federal Government of Nigeria. It is worthy of mention that the British Government has also given support to the project.

This is not the occasion to detail the project objectives and outputs but I would just mention the important goal of complementing the Federal Government of Nigeria's efforts to fight corruption, economic and financial crime through strengthening the capacity of the EFCC including the Training and Research Institute (TRI), and the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU).

Modern criminals do not respect borders, nor do they observe conventions. As we find ways to fight their activities so they continually evolve new methods and move into other jurisdictions where they may believe the power of the law will fail to notice them. We now have in our hands new tools with which to pursue them. It has been recognized as vital not only to share resources and expertise, but also information; however innocuous it may appear at first sight, small pieces of a jigsaw combine to reveal the entire picture.

Financial Intelligence Units worldwide through, for example, the Egmont Group combine to share information; bilaterally law enforcement bodies conduct joint

investigations; and jurisdictions introduce new legislation to facilitate concerted international action against criminals attacking one jurisdiction whilst residing in another.

These developments cannot be successful and in many cases would not be possible without the continuing development of new technology. We need to be proactive and responsive; we need to share information; we need to be practical and hands-on in our enforcement actions to respond with the same flexibility and ingenuity exhibited by the modern criminal.

This EU funded project has a relatively large component, amounting to a little over 40% of the total budget, in support of building the capacity of EFCC in the area of Information and Communications Technology.

We have been on the ground with EFCC for a little more than 2 years and in that time have seen the Commission's ICT transformed:

- A computer on every desk and every user trained;
- A suite of Lotus Notes-based applications to optimize or automate existing office procedures;
- Three fully equipped data centres, including this one, will support the networked communication between all 8 EFCC locations nationwide
- Two major substantive IT software solutions have been developed and are being deployed:
- goAML An integrated database and intelligent analysis system to track Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing; and goCASE A financial investigation Case Management system.

In my view these combined, and there are many other related items such as training which I have not mentioned, amount to a revolution in ICT capacity.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the European Commission and the EU member states for their support to this project and EFCC, but I would not like this opportunity to pass without expressing our profound appreciation of the dedicated staff of ITS and their colleagues in EFCC without whom this progress would not have been possible.

This is an important day for the project and I am proud of the contribution we have made but it is important not to rest on our laurels. Great things are being put in place and we need to work together to ensure that the EFCC and its world class IT systems are sustained to the end of this project and well beyond. Developing and improving with time and sharing our experience with other law enforcement agencies to the ultimate benefit of the international fight against financial and economic crime.