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**High-level roundtable on “The role of STI in empowering people and in ensuring
inclusiveness and equality”**

Statement submitted by

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**STATEMENT BY DR OGBONNAYA ONU
HONOURABLE MINISTER OF SCIENCE
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AT THE

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AT

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GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

Mr Chairman, Distinguished delegations and representatives, Most distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

I am happy to attend this meeting. I will like to use this opportunity to congratulate the Chair for his enormous contributions. I also commend the delegations and representatives for attending this meeting.

The general themes draw attention to the importance of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in global development.

In Nigeria, the Administration of President Muhammadu Buhari is fully committed to deploying STI to addressing societal problems.

This commitment has been demonstrated in several ways.

We are vigorously implementing our National science Technology and Innovation Policy which was last reviewed in 2012. The National Science, Technology and Innovation Roadmap 2017 – 2030 provides a step by step approach to the effective implementation of this Policy.

The acceptance of the Roadmap by the Research/Development, and Business communities is an indication of our citizens acknowledgement of the importance of STI in nation building.

The Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, has commenced the process of revising the National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (NSTIP). It is my hope that, the next Edition of this Policy will further encourage the commercialization of Research and Development results. This is important,

because we want STI to provide jobs, create wealth, reduce poverty and build a safe and prosperous nation.

The Presidential Executive Order N0 5 is another instrument to show Nigeria's commitment to the development of indigenous capacity in Science and Technology. This Order is important as it provides the citizens with the platform to venture into areas that will lead to technological breakthroughs with the capacity for sustainable economic growth.

An important component of the Order is the provision for creation of Science and Technology Centres as nucleus to midwife budding Scientists, and Technologists with the capacity to compete in the international market, build and manage enterprises for sustainable economic development.

Nigeria's recent policies on Leather and Leather Products; and the National Strategy for Competitiveness in Raw Materials and Products Development were carefully structured to allow the business community take advantage of our abundant raw materials, so as to help build industries as well as develop new technologies. These policies aim to ensure that there is value addition to many of our raw materials before they are put in the market place.

Distinguished delegates, cooperation in STI, has become an inevitable choice for developing countries in pursuit of socio- economic growth and development. In this regard, Nigeria is working closely with various Countries, International, as well as Regional Organizations. This explains the basis for our hosting the 5th High Level Industry, Science and Government Dialogue on the Atlantic Interactions, from 28th – 30th April, 2019. The Dialogue helped to provide the platform to share

ideas and discuss best approaches to jointly study the Atlantic Ocean for the benefit of humanity.

Also, Nigeria's Space Agency will utilise its expertise in Space applications, and working with others using satellite in constellation will help ensure that maximum benefit accrues to collaborating entities.

Our establishment of the National Biotechnology and Development Agency, National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure, as well as our current effort at establishing the National Agency for Research in Robotics and Artificial Intelligence, are steps toward ensuring that Nigeria participates in the fast growing and very dynamic fields of STI. This, we will continue to do as a nation so as to ensure that Science, Technology and Innovation is well entrenched as the key driver of our socio –economic development.

Distinguished delegates, it is my hope that the resolutions at this meeting will help nations to deploy STI for achieving their economic goals, as this is the only way to ensure sustainable prosperity.

I thank you for listening. May God continue to bless the world.