**PRESENTATION BY RT. HON. PRINCESS MIRIAM ONUOHA, CHAIRMAN, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON DISABILITIES, AT THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE NIGERIA GOVERNORS FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 14TH JULY, 2021.**

Protocols

On behalf of the Members of the Committee on Disabilities and the House of Representatives, I offer our profound gratitude and appreciation for the honour and privilege to address the Nigeria Governors Forum.

Your Excellencies may recall that, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari on 17th ofJanuary 2019, signed into Law the Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018, after eighteen yearsof relentless advocacy by disability right groups and activists.

The Act provides for the full integration of persons with disabilities into the society and establishes the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities and vested in the Commission the responsibilities for their education, health care, social, economic and civil rights

Your Excellencies may also recall, that the House of Representatives, in its wisdom and out of foresight on 3rd December 2020, constituted and established the Committee on Disabilities as a Standing Committee as part of its commitment to ensure the full implementation of the Act.

In Pursuant to Order Twenty, Rule 31 of the Standing Order of the House, the Committee’s Jurisdiction amongst others includes, ‘**’*advocating for Domestication of the Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018 and other related matters in the Federation’’*.**

The estimates of persons with disabilities as at today is not clear, but according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) publication in 2011, over 25 million persons in Nigeria, representing 15% of our population suffer one form of disability or the other. More alarming is the fact that out of this number, over 3.6 million are significantly challenged and have difficulties in functioning.

Apart from disabilities occasioned by birth, accidents and natural disaster. The current security challenges ranging from, insurgence, banditry, secessionist, kidnaping to famers/herders clashes have further escalated the number of persons with disabilities in Nigeria.

It is in view of the above, that the Committee wishes to commend the Governors of the (12) States that have passed disability Laws namely: Ekiti, Lagos, Kwara, Kogi, Plateau, Jigawa, Ondo, Bauchi, Anambra, Niger and River State and to as a matter of urgency, request other Governors to expedite actions on the adoption of the Discrimination against Person with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act (2018).

Please permit me to mention States like Ekiti, Lagos, Bauchi, Jigawa, and Anambra States whose disability law is in tandem with the National Disability Act. I would like to encourage States that have passed disability law prior to the passage of the National Disability Act to take measure to review the law to ensure that it meets national standard on the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

The Domestication by State Governments also has numerous benefits, one of which is to create Disability Commission that can generate a comprehensive Data Base for persons with disabilities. This process will further accelerate State Government access to National and International grants, interventions and subventions for persons with disabilities.

The Committee also wish to inform your Excellencies and solicit your support ahead of time, of our desire to hold a National Summit on the general intendment of the Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018.

It is my sincere expectation that this Forum will support the Committee in achieving a greater height by adopting the Act in the other States.

Thank you for your attention.