

FINANCING FOR TRANSFORMATION:

STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY, MUHAMMADU BUHARI, PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA AT THE GLOBAL EDUCATION SUMMIT ON FINANCING GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP EDUCATION (GPE) 2021-2025 HELD IN LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM ON 29TH JULY 2021.

1. I join others in expressing our profound appreciation to His Excellency, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the Rt Honourable Boris Johnson and His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya, Honourable Uhuru Kenyatta, the co-hosts of this Global Education Summit on Financing Global Partnership for Education (GPE) 2021-2025.

2. I would also like to reiterate the commitment of the Government of Nigeria to ensure that total education spending increases by 50% over the next two years and up to 100% within the next five years (2021 – 2025). We also undertake to work with, and ensure that every State in our Federation progresses towards or maintains spending levels above 20% of their total budget to achieve national minimum standards for education outcomes.

3. We are considering legislation to increase education tax from the current 2% to 3%, to cater for tertiary education; and to also increase the allocation from the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) to support basic and secondary education from 2% to 4%.

4. We shall also expand and deepen our collaboration with development partners such as GPE, UK FCDO, USAID, the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF and the European Union as well as the organised private sector to mobilize additional resources for sustainable funding of education in our country.

5. Our overall strategy is to adopt and implement educational policies that will foster gender inclusion, promote equity, deliver quality and guarantee safe, secure and violence free schooling for all our citizens.

6. To this end, we will sustain advocacy, promote sharing of credible data, demand timely financial reporting and strengthen institutions in the system to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability.

7. Our administration is taking steps to ensure free and compulsory basic education for the first 9 years of schooling. We are therefore implementing social investment and school feeding programmes which have dramatically increased school enrolment, retention and higher transition rates from primary to secondary and tertiary levels. Our target is to provide our citizens with life-long skills and knowledge and to move over 100 million Nigerians out of poverty by 2030.

8. I also seize this opportunity to acknowledge the support of GPE and other partners in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are building resilience through greater use of information and communication technology to expand access, reduce class sizes and improve learning outcomes.

9. Our priorities for transforming education in Nigeria in the next 5 years include:

a. Eliminating the Out-of-School Children syndrome by ensuring that all children of school age are enrolled. The target is to ensure that the 10million out of school children are exposed to some form of education over the next five years.

b. To prioritize skills development to equip Nigerians with the right competencies for employment with special focus on Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

c. To implement and enforce multiple programs on inclusive education – Girl-Child Education, Special Needs Education, Adult and Mass literacy and Alternate School Programmes with priority accorded to retention and completion rates in primary and secondary schools.

d. Revitalizing the teaching profession in Nigeria by introducing incentives to attract and retain the best brains in the profession.

10. By harnessing all these policies and financial resources, and with the support of GPE and other partners, we are confident that we shall bequeath a more functional, equitable and globally competitive education system to the present and future generations of Nigerian children.

11. Thank you.