**PRESS RELEASE**

JONAPWD LAUDS PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI (PMB) ON RELEASE OF 2016 BUDGET; DEMANDS INCLUSIVE PLANS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA

Consequent upon the official presentation of the 2016 Appropriation Bill before a joint session of the Senate and House of Representatives President Muhammadu Buhari (PMB) on Tuesday22nd December, 2015 and the President’s official statement in this regard, the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWDs), an umbrella organization for all disability organisations in Nigeria, commends the PMB led administration for its unflinching zest towards repositioning the polity for effective delivery of democratic dividends to the citizenry and the drive towards fighting impunity which is fast eaten into the social fabric of the nation in a manner that portends grave danger to our hard won democracy. We however note with great concern that the 2016 Appropriation does not clearly reflect inclusiveness for the over 25 million persons with disabilities in Nigeria whose issues basically cross-cuts all sectors of the economy.

While we state undoubtedly that Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) in Nigeria are impacted by government’s policy decisions directly or indirectly, nevertheless, it is evident that conscious efforts have not being garnered towards protecting the rights of PWDs who appear to be the most vulnerable sectors of society, while the livelihood of the PWDs and their future prospects are hinged upon the whims and caprices of several actors.These actors often neglect the key priorities that will impact on and protect the inalienable rights of PWDs, hence, several ‘agenda setting role’ of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and the unflinching campaigns for the passage vis-à-vis enforcement of the Nigeria Disability Bill, which recently scaled second reading in the upper chambers of the National Assembly, the Nigerian Senate.

JONAPWD therefore demand that budget implementation should be inclusive for PWDs in all sectors of the economy, in particular that

* The recruitment of 500,000 graduate teachers as promised by
President Buhari should be inclusive of qualified PWDs who are
graduates. In addition, implementing agencies should be conscious of
the need to train these  newly recruited teachers on practices of
inclusive education
* President Buhari's intention to vigorously promote and support
small and medium scale businesses should be done in an inclusive
manner to ensure that PWDs are involved in various SMEs are given equal
opportunity to participate and benefit from the process.
* A comprehensive rehabilitation programme for survivors of the
Boko-Haram insurgence who have acquired various degree of disabilities
should be developed and implemented
* The Nigeria Disability Bill be passed
* All discriminatory practices against PWDs be criminalized
* Special security measures be provided for persons with disabilities
* Persons with disabilities should be included in various committees of government
* The Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation should enforce sign language interpreters to TV Stations
* Domestication of the United Nations Convention on Persons with Disabilities, among other points.
* There must be a commission for Persons living with disabilities
* There should be an inclusive transport system and other welfare schemes for all PWDs.
* Public facilities should be structured to include access for PWDs.

It is necessary therefore for Nigeria to intensify and diversify current efforts to bridge her disability discrepancy gaps in governance and implement budgets in an all-inclusive manner.

Long live JONAPWD…Long live Nigeria

**Ekaete Judith Umoh**
National President, JONAPWD

For enquiries Contact:

National Secretariat
**Joint National Association of Persons With Disabilities (JONAPWD)**

Office Address:National Women Development Centre, CBD, ABUJA.

Email: **info@jonapwd.org**
Web address: [www.jonapwd.org](http://www.cleen.org/)