

**SPEECH OF THE CGC HAMMAN BELLO AHMED AT  
THE INAUGURATION OF NEW NCS MANAGEMENT  
TEAM, HELD ON MONDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2008, AT  
CONFERENCE ROOM, CUSTOMS HEADQUARTERS,  
ABUJA.**

**CALL TO SERVICE**

**It gives me great pleasure and honour to welcome you to Customs Headquarters, for this historic event, which marks an important mile stone in our Service history, and march towards restoration of our Professionalism.**

**You will recall in my first address to Senior Officers about a fortnight ago, I reminded you all that my appointment was made possible by the Grace of God. It has also pleased God to have you Gentlemen Officers, as members of the newly constituted Customs Management Team. I congratulate you all on this elevation to the various positions and wish you all a successful tenure.**

**However, before we get overwhelmed by the euphoria of this occasion, I am calling on you as colleagues to reflect deeply on the significance of your elevation, and the expectations there from.**

**This is a clarion call to Service. The challenges before the Service are quite onerous. None of us is a stranger to events in the Service in the last few years.**

**First, we all need to come together as a family and work as a team. We owe it a duty to the Federal Government of Nigeria, and the Nation as a whole, to demonstrate absolute commitment to duty, selfless Service and Transparency in our conduct and actions.**

**I demand from you all absolute loyalty to the Service, whose tenets to “Justice and Honesty” we must uphold at all times. As leaders, we must show good examples in our effort to foster a positive attitudinal change among the rank and file. It begins with punctuality at work.**

**Once you are punctual at your duty posts, your subordinates will take their bearings accordingly. If you are perpetually late to work, what moral right would you have to sanction late-comers?**

**You will re-call during my first meeting, I outlined an Eight-Point Agenda of Action, which I expect to be a rallying point for this Management. For the sake of emphasis, let me quickly refresh your memories. They are;**

- 1. Conformity with the Rule of Law.**
- 2. Restoring Professionalism in the Service.**
- 3. Forging Strategic partnership with the Private Sector.**
- 4. Instilling Discipline and Integrity through enhanced Welfare for all Officers and Men.**
- 5. Consolidating on – going Customs Modernisation Projects.**
- 6. Attainment of 48-Hour Clearance Time.**
- 7. Optimizing Benefiting derivable from bilateral/multi-lateral International Commitments.**
- 8. Restoring the Service as legitimate trade facilitator.**

**As members of Management, you are expected to drive the process of attaining these noble objectives. In the next few days, we shall therefore preoccupy ourselves with the responsibility of establishing a framework and a road map for effective action plans.**

**In achieving our set goals, we shall require the assistance of our Stakeholders. Just this weekend, we went through a Stakeholders Retreat Programme, convened by the Honourable Minister of Finance, with two other Ministers in attendance, to consolidate on our efforts to attain 48-hour clearance of goods. I wish to say here that we shall achieve 48-hour clearance with the cooperation of all stakeholders, with clear understanding of their responsibilities, discharged within the provisions of the Laws of the Land.**

**I have equally had preliminary sessions with other Stakeholders like the Terminal and Bonded Terminal Operators, Banks and Destination Inspection Service Providers, all geared towards achieving effective and efficient Service delivery in line with the Rule of Law.**

**It is therefore a big task in our hands, individually and collectively to steer the ship of our Service towards the coast of Professionalism. Though we are privileged to have been chosen, we shall not posture as having all the solutions that can fix the problems of the Service. We shall be open to suggestions, advice and even constructive criticizing from all.**

**We appreciate the strategic importance of the Press as Information Managers and Agenda Setters. We shall strengthen our framework for a beneficial Customs - media relationship to assist us in the attainment of our objectives. I however appeal for restraints in your reportage of our affairs, spreading of rumours and speculations and**

**perpetration of other unethical practices. We shall work with you, but we plead for your patience and understanding.**

**We remain indebted to Mr President for reposing in us the confidence. We must not fail him. We shall demonstrate commitment to selfless service. By the Grace of God, together we shall succeed.**

**Thank you and God bless.**