

**THE TEXT OF ADDRESS PRESENTED BY THE CORPS MARSHAL OF THE FEDERAL ROAD SAFETY CORPS (FRSC) DR BOBOYE OYEYEMI, MFR, mni NPoM AT THE TECHNICAL SESSION OF BRANCH OF WORKING COMMITTEE OF NUPENG-PTD ON 17 DECEMBER 2016 AT THE GOLDEN TULIP HOTELS FESTAC TOWN LAGOS.**

## **PROTOCOL**

It is a great honour for me to be here today on this occasion of the technical session of Branch Working Committee of NUPENG-PTD which precedes the Executive meeting scheduled for tomorrow. These meetings would afford members of the technical committee and Executive of NUPENG-PTD opportunity to carefully review their activities for the year, deliberate on wide ranging technical issues affecting efficient and safe operations of haulage operations in the country and come up with proposals that could address the current safety challenges.

2. This technical session is particularly, imperative at this period of the year when increasing report of crashes involving tankers and trailers and the resultant fatalities has alarmed the nation. Let me therefore, commend the leadership of the NUPENG-PTD for demonstrating consistency in its commitment to road safety campaigns initiated by the FRSC. I assure you that we would remain committed to the campaign and continue to strengthen the existing relationship towards ensuring safety and security of lives and property on the nation's highways.

3. As a nation that relies heavily on road for distribution of petroleum products, Nigerians had been alarmed by the rate of tanker and trailer crashes in the country, especially with the fatalities recorded when the products spill and catch fire. Since the tanker incident that occurred in Anambra on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015 which cost many lives and property, FRSC took far reaching measures on how to prevent future reoccurrence. Part of these measures was the Summit on safety of haulage operations organized in Abuja last year when stakeholders and experts on haulage management brainstormed and come up with far reaching resolutions.

4. In line with some of the resolutions reached at the Summit, FRSC in conjunction with NUPENG-PTD embarked on retraining and recertification of tanker and trailer drivers last year in the six geopolitical zones and centers across the country. Further to that, FRSC deployed 169 of its personnel to 43 tank farms and depots located in Lagos, Delta, Cross River and Rivers states to

enforce strict adherence to minimum safety standards by tanker drivers under the Safe-To Load programme.

5. While noticeable improvements were noticed in the aftermath of these measures as evidenced by the trending down of the crashes late last year and early part of this year, concerned stakeholders have been agitated by the recent upsurge in the rate of crashes especially along Lagos-Ibadan expressway. For instance, while a total of 30 crashes involving trailers and trucks was recorded along Lagos-Ibadan expressway, 5 and 16 were recorded in October and November respectively with some of the crashes claiming lives and destroying property due to oil spillage.

6. This development is unacceptable to all stakeholders and we must return to the drawing board to address the ugly trend. That was why I called the meeting of transport stakeholders on 7<sup>th</sup> December this year at Abuja with active participation of the leadership of NUPENG-PTD. At the end of the meeting, far reaching decisions on how to address the menace were taken. These include the need for special intervention patrol by the FRSC and for all the stakeholders to play their individual roles toward ensuring safety of the roads.

7. The participants also called on fleet operators to comply with extant standards on fleet management with a view to ensuring safety of the vehicles and passengers; called on government at all levels to urgently intervene in curbing the activities of the Local Government and sundry tax collectors who create disorderliness on the highways through use of woods to block the road. Having realized that road safety is a shared responsibility, the meeting called on the key stakeholders and indeed, all Nigerians to play active roles in making the yuletide season stress-free for all. The participants stressed the need for aggressive public enlightenment programmes to create adequate awareness in matters of road safety for attitudinal change by people and adherence to traffic rules and regulations.

8. They also gave support for strict enforcement of relevant safety regulations, especially the use of safety valve by petroleum tankers to protect the vehicles from spilling fuel even if they fall. Furthermore, the participants called on governments at all levels to intervene in prompt repair of bad portions of the roads within their jurisdictions and expressed the need for synergy among all stakeholders in road transport business while enjoining the security agencies to ensure timely dissemination of intelligence for promotion of safety and security of road users.

9. Let me recall that road traffic crashes involving tankers/trailers have been on the rise since 2014 when a total of 1,839 crashes involving 3,505 tanker/trailers was recorded, claiming 1,862 lives and injuring 5,672 people. The trend continued in 2015 with 1,253 crashes involving 2,963 tankers/trailers in which 1,285 people were killed and 4,867 sustained various degree of injuries. And between January and November this year, a total of 770 road traffic crashes involving 4,365 tankers/trailers were recorded nationwide killing 1,048 and injuring 4,365 people. Comparatively, there was 31.9% reduction in between 2014 and 2015 and 38.6% reduction between January to November this year.

10. It would be recalled that within one year of the deployment of the FRSC personnel to the depots and tank farms, 103,201 tankers were inspected to determine their level of compliance with the minimum safety standards. Interestingly, 78,121 of the drivers were found to have met the safety standards, while 25,080 failed the safety tests. Furthermore, while 78,821 possessed valid driver's license, 18,821 did not have valid driver's license and 8,556 did not have any form of driver's license at all.

11. Meanwhile, some of the observations made in the course of the programme includes use of 'motor boys to drive tankers at loading base; interference by some stakeholders in the operations of the system with intent to influence the loading of trucks that did not meet the minimum safety standards, while there have been reported attempts to compromise the personnel and undermining of the integrity of the programme.

12. With these discoveries, there is need for concerted efforts by stakeholders to address these challenges through joint efforts. That is why today's technical session is timely and strategic in the search for collective solutions to safe haulage operations in the country. I therefore, call on you to be critical of the existing practices among the haulage operators and come up with workable agenda that could be deliberated upon at the Executive meeting for resolutions.

13. Let me point out that with the forthcoming Christmas and New Year celebrations, FRSC has carefully mapped out operational strategies that could address the perennial traffic challenges associated with this period of the year. To this end, we have deployed adequate number of personnel and logistics to the identified black spots across the country. Consequently, 38 critical corridors have been identified in the special patrol operation aimed at reducing road traffic crashes, fatalities and prompt removal of obstructions. The patrol is

being focused on speeding, overloading, tyre, unlatched containers and prompt removal of obstruction and wreck from the highways.

14. The special patrol involves all relevant stakeholders who have decided to join in order to render their support. I therefore, call on all you to join us as you have always done in the past, to demonstrate the partnership towards ensuring safer road environments during and after the festive period.

15. This year's special patrol is particularly significant because it coincides with the commencement of the full enforcement of speed limiting device on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017, using online portal designed for easy checks of vehicles with or without the device. All commercial drivers must ensure that they install the device in their vehicles before the enforcement date to avoid arrest and prosecution.

16. On this note, I once more welcome you most warmly to this technical session of the Branch Working Committee of NUPENG-PTD and wish you fruitful deliberations and successful Executive meeting scheduled to take place tomorrow.

17. Thank you.