**WELCOME ADDRESS DELIVERERD BY THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF NANNM ALHAJI ABDURAFIU ALANI ADENIJI AT THE INDUCTION PROGRAM FOR THE NEWLY ELECTED STATE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS OF NANNM TODAY 14TH DECEMBER, 2015 AT NICON LUXURY HOTEL AREA 11, ABUJA.**

**Protocols**

With praise and adoration to the Almighty Allah (God) the supreme, I am delighted to address this august gathering of leaders. As you all know, every four years, the Association conducts her State delegates’ conference which usher in new crops of leaders who will paddle the canoe of leadership of the Association in the next four years.

I want to use this medium to specially welcome all our important dignitaries who have set this day and time aside to grace this occasion. I equally welcome newly elected State Administrative Councils members and in doing this wish to congratulate you on your respective success at the election. I wish you successful tenure in office.

The national Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives is a professional cum trade union organization. This implies that in spite of taking care of the professional growth and development of our great profession, leaders in NANNM are saddled with the responsibility of ensuring welfare of our members, managing industrial relations with all the employers of Nurses in Nigeria and piloting the affairs of the organization and the profession at large. Therefore, elected leaders at the various states are to provide good leadership and effective management of the union affairs at all times. Hence this induction program is to empower you act effectively and efficiently.

The historical perspective on the official birth of NANNM on the 8th December, 1977 revealed that there were various unions of Nurses and Midwives. The Nigeria Union of Nurses was formed and got registered on the 12th January 1943 under the Trade Union ordinance No 44 of 1938. The Nigerian Union of Nurses (NUN) changed its name to Nigerian Nurses Association (NNA) in 1956. In 1958, another group of Nurses in Nigeria (PATNON) was formed with Mrs. A.K. Pratt as its first President. These groups of Nurses worked separately and in isolation, and did not speak WITH ONE VOICE. These Associations even including specialist groups like Professional Association of Public Health Nurses, Psychiatric Nurses Association etc. came together as a Joint Action Committee (JAC) in reaction to poor award from Udoji Commission in 1975 to demand for better conditions. The Marriage can be described as a loose marriage of convenience and was very temporary. There was however a need for one professional Association to speak for Nurses but they were not united. It was further reported that lack of unity of purpose and concern for the professionals made a group of five concerned Nurses namely late Mr. Adelowo, late Alh. Yaya Ali, Mr. Kola Oyedepo, Apostle M. A. Olabode (Now HRH, Omala of Imala) and Chief Babajide dedicated themselves and worked on a fresh strategy, and on the 25th June, 1976 all representatives of the various groups were brought together under the same roof.

This effort gave birth to what is known today as the National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives (NANNM), which was officially inaugurated on the 8th December, 1977. As the only recognized union and professional body for all cadres of nurses and Midwives in Nigeria. NANNM then became registered as a trade union (Amendment decree No 22 of 1978- listed as Number (11) on schedule of Industrial Unions in Nigeria.

From the fore going, it is evident that as an organization, we can thrive and prosper only in an atmosphere of solidarity! As new generation leaders of our dear Association, we have a task of maintaining absolute unity among the rank and file of our members, representing them at all levels in negotiations and collective bargaining with employers of Nurses and Midwives and to ensure we are concerned more with advocacy, defense and protection of members’ rights and the improvement of their material condition through pay and condition of service.

The theme of this conference “Leadership in Health care: Nurses and Midwives as agent of change” is appropriate at this time considering the fact that A competent, well-supported and motivated nursing and midwifery workforce can deliver quality, equitable health services and contribute to the well-being of individuals, families and communities.

Leadership is broadly accepted to be about influencing others to accomplish common goals. In nursing literature, it has been described as a complex and multifaceted process which involves providing support, motivation, coordination and mobilization of resources to enable individuals and teams to achieve collective objectives. Leadership is fundamentally about creating a long-term strategic vision and enabling people to work towards change. It involves developing a shared sense of mission; tackling political, organizational and resource barriers; inspiring and motivating others.

Management and leadership are distinct concepts, although Managers occupy formally recognized positions of power within the hierarchy of an organization, leaders are not necessarily concentrated in a particular role or person. Leadership is often distributed throughout the organization, and leaders can be found at all levels of the organizational hierarchy. However, in practice there is significant overlap and interconnection between management and leadership roles.

Leadership is a fundamental part of effective nursing care and nurses are recognized as leaders in patient care. Nursing involves the implementation of goal-driven interventions which aim to improve a patient’s health status or comfort. Nurses are recognized for their role as alliance builders: nurses coordinate and motivate health care teams, families and patients to support patient wellbeing. It is for this reason that nurses are often at the forefront of initiatives to improve safety and quality in health care systems.

Despite the recognition of the need for nurse leadership at the highest levels, nurse leadership positions are not always secure within health care organizations and the wider health system. Nurse leaders currently occupying formal leadership positions at all levels sometimes lack the resources, visibility or formal authority to be optimally effective. Therefore, the professional Association is responsible for leading the struggle for actualization of the ideals. The reason for which you are elected.

It is pertinent to speak on certain topical issues affecting health care services efficiency and quality outcome in Nigeria. In addition to the ones we have earlier submitted to you our Honorable Minister, which we believe is receiving your urgent attention. The central issue in professional practices revolves around Education, regulation and clinical practices. Today, the challenging factors cut across all these strata. The problem of inadequately equipped institutions for nursing education and absence of available opportunity for linking the two major type of institutions offering education and training for nurses in Nigeria remain a clog in the wheel of progress for the profession. The much orchestrated PGDN is yet to have a proper placement in nursing Education.

The regulatory body, Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria is limited in scope of operation and empowerment. In fact, the absence of a board of Management for the council is a disservice to the profession and capable of compromising quality health care services. The clinical practices are bedeviled with many issues itemized as follows:

* Shortage of Nurses which has affected the productivity, image and efficiency of Nurses. There are less than 20,000 Nurses in employment of the 73 federal health institution in Nigeria. The shortage affects education instructions as well as clinical practices.
* Infrastructural development in our health facilities is less than international acceptable standard. You can imagine a nurse using mobile phone torchlight to perform Nursing duties. Where lies efficiency and expected quality outcome?
* The work environment in our health facilities are militating against the effective performances. Without a positive work environment the impact of our professional services will amount to nothing. The worst situation is at the primary health care level.
* Professional jurisdiction are not religiously being adhered to. Nurses and Midwives are prevented from carrying out their rightful duties in some health institutions. This is contradicting the standard world best practices. It is also contributing to the bad health indices especially in maternal and infant mortality rate.
* Quackery and the image of Nurses: Quackery is a cankerworm that is frustrating the efficiency of Nursing practices and creating a bad image for the profession. Quackery is a criminal offence and it is a great disservice to the Nation. All efforts should be directed towards reducing the menace of the quackery to safeguard the interest of the masses.
* Internship and unified scheme of service: The much delay that is happening to the issue of the commencement of internship for BNSc graduates is of great concern for the Association. The unified scheme of service that is awaiting the consideration and approval of the National Council on Establishment is a twin issue to the internship. The Association has exercised enough patience on this matter.

I once again welcome all our invited guests and specially thank you for honoring our invitation to grace this occasion. To my dear professional Colleagues, I wish you a happy stay in Abuja for the induction program. I equally wish you all travelling mercies to our respective destinations at the end of the program.

Long Live the Nursing Profession!

Long Live Nurses and Midwives of Nigeria!!

Long live Nigeria!!!

**SOLIDARITY SONG**

1. When the union's inspiration through the workers' blood shall run

There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun

Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one

For the Union makes us strong

**Chorus**

***Solidarity forever, solidarity forever***

***Solidarity forever***

***For the Union makes us strong***

1. Is there aught we hold in common with the greedy parasite

Who would lash us into serfdom and would crush us with his might?

Is there anything left to us but to organize and fight?

For the union makes us strong

1. It is we who ploughed the prairies, built the cities where they trade

Dug the mines and built the workshops, endless miles of railroad laid

Now we stand outcast and starving 'mid the wonders we have made

But the union makes us strong

1. All the world that's owned by idle drones is ours and ours alone

We have laid the wide foundations, built it skyward stone by stone

It is ours, not to slave in, but to master and to own

While the union makes us strong

1. They have taken untold millions that they never toiled to earn

But without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn

We can break their haughty power gain our freedom when we learn

That the Union makes us strong

1. In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold

Greater than the might of armies magnified a thousand fold

We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old

For the Union makes us strong