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We wish to start by commending the Department of Local Government and Development Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria for the foresight in convening this Conference at this critical time in our nation's history.

We thank many people for their support towards the successful hosting of the conference. His Excellency, the former Governor of Sokoto State, Senator Aliyu Magatatakarda Wammako and His Excellency Governor Kano State Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje played a large part in the success of the conference by providing financial support to kick-start preparations. This conference would not have been possible without the support and contributions of National President of NULGE, comrade Ibrahim Khaleel (mni) and many Executive Members of NULGE. The organisers will also like to thank the Vice Chancellor of Ahmadu Bello University, Prof. Ibrahim Garba for his moral support and his participation at the opening ceremony through the representation of the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Prof Ahmad Bako Ezra Amans .

The organisers also express their sincere appreciation to Dr. Abubakar Siddique Mohammed, Chairman of the first day of the conference, the Guest Speaker, Prof. Musa Garba Maitafsir, Director Institute of Administration Prof. Ibrahim Aliyu, Dean of the Faculty of Administration, Prof. Bello Sabo and the representative of His Royal Highness of Zazzau Emirate, Alh. Aliyu Saidu, Bijimin Arewa, who all fully participated at the opening ceremony.

With great honour and sense of responsibility, the Department recognises the contributions and great commitment of the members of the Conference committee made up of : Prof. Massoud Omar- Chairman; Dr. Pius Abang- Member; Dr. Adamu Sanusi Gambo- Member; Dr. Dalhatu Jumare- Member; Mal. Umar Dahiru- Member; Mal. Abbas Aminu- Member; Hajiya Hauwa'u Ibrahim Yero- Member Mal. Musa Isa Kera- External Member; Sanusi Isah Gusau , President Zamfara State NULGE – External member; Saidu Kala, President Niger State NULGE – External Member; and Mal. Abdul Hamid Abdullahi – Secretary. The committee members displayed extraordinary commitment towards the organisation of the conference and the its success was a consequence of this commitment.

The Department also thanks the Chairmen of the various Plenary Sections, Resource Persons, Participants, Staff and Students of the department for their continuous assistance and support for the success recorded.

FOREWORD

The quest for viable and sustainable Local Government system has occupied the attention of many policy makers and academia in Africa. Against the backdrop of the 2nd Century global concern, Local Governments in Nigeria have faced critical challenges as agents of grassroots development in terms of performance of its functions as envisaged in the Constitution. These challenges are due to multifaceted problems ranging from relationship of tutelage between the States and local governments, the dearth of skilled manpower, internal revenue generation, corruption, service delivery and a host of others

Due to these plethora of problems bedeviling the system of local government in this country, The Department of Local Government and Development Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, as part of its primary assignment, found it necessary and compelling to organize a National Conference on **Local Governments and Sustainable Development in Nigeria**. The main objective of the conference was to create a platform for policy makers, practitioners and members of the academia to come together to discuss topical and thorny issues affecting Local Governments in Nigeria, proffer solutions and develop a policy agenda for moving the local governments forward in our quest for sustainable development at the grassroots.

The Conference covered six themes: Constitutional Issues, Local Government and Urbanization, Local Government and Democracy, Governance Issues, and Local Government and Environment. The Book of Abstracts contained more than one hundred and five (105) abstracts which cut across all the themes and other areas that were of great utility to the conference.

The conference recorded a large turnout of over three hundred and fifty participants from all nooks and corners of the country. Many Scholars, Practitioners and principal officers of the Local Governments including members of the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) demonstrated their keen interest through their full participation and useful presentations and interventions at the conference. The grouping of participants under the various themes in the six plenary sessions provided platform for cross fertilization of ideas between presenters of the papers, Policy Makers and Practitioners of local governments. Ninety Five papers were presented and thoroughly discussed and the communiqué presented by the participants emphasized the need for constitutional review to grant Local Governments real, instead of perceived autonomy, the need for the creation of an enabling environment for greater local participation on local issues, the overall importance of effective and efficient Service delivery, the overriding necessity of implementing Sustainable Development Programmes in order to scale down poverty and unemployment bedevilling our cities and rural areas. As the contents show, the conference was indeed very timely and useful and we hope that it will in no small way help to contribute in our march towards sustainable development at the grassroots.

Prof. Bashir Jumare
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Prof. Massoud Omar
Chairman
National Conference Committee