**COMMUNIQUE OF THE 2-DAY INTERNATIONAL RETREAT FOR DGs/CEOs**

**OF MDIs IN WEST AFRICA HELD AT THE INTERNATIONALTRAINING**

**INSTITUTE, CBN, ABUJA, NIGERIA FROM 30TH - 31ST OCTOBER, 2019**

**INTRODUCTION**

ATwo day International Retreat for DGs/CEOs of MDIs in West Africa was successfully held at CBN International Training Institute, FCT, Abuja from 30th to 31st October, 2019. The theme of the Retreat was “Managing MDIs in a Volatile and Complex Environment”.

**OVERVIEW**

The International Retreat had the presence of some of CEOs of MDIs. There was brief introduction of members on the high table. The Retreat was declared open by the Ag. Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, Dr. (Mrs.) Folashade Yemi-Esan, who was ably represented by the Permanent Secretary, CSO, Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, Dr. (Mrs.) Magdalene Ajani. In attendance were also the President of WAMDEVIN, Prof. Alexander Yonly from Liberia, who delivered a well articulated welcome address and also the guest speakers from Ghana and Nigeria. The 1st Vice President, WAMDEVIN and Director-General, ASCON – Mrs. C. U. Gayya gave the Goodwill Message and wished the participants successful deliberations during the two-day Retreat.

**PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS:**

The first paper was presented by Mr. A. A. Peters, a Management Consultant and Human Capital Development Specialist of Badeh Nigeria Limited and former Director-General of Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON). The title of the paper was “Strategic Options for Management Development Institutes (MDIs) in a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) Environment”. During his interactive presentation, he reiterated that we are in a completely dynamic and transforming socio economic and cultural environment with many challenges. Managers and leaders of the organization need to be vigilant about their environmental changes. He advised the CEOs to regard VUCA as the necessary “evils” and that VUCA business environment is unavoidable and a reality today. He suggested a number of strategic options to operate in VUCA environment such as:

* The VUCA Prime can be tagged “Countering VUCA with VUCA”. The countering VUCA is an acronym for Vision, Understanding, Clarity and Agility.
* Regular stakeholder engagement
* Giving Primacy to research
* Acting as strategic partners to clients
* Need to leverage on the explosion of new and emerging technologies
* Becoming learning organizations to thrive and improve their fitness for the future
* Attracting and retailing great talented men and women
* Collaboration as a potent strategy for growth, development and coping with the unsettled nature of the environment

He concluded that MDIs should focus on self-survival and autonomy and be Rescue Institutes, sought after and dependable for their governments in a VUCA environment.

The second paper was delivered by Prof. Emeritus Stephen Adei, Chairman of National Development Planning Commission of Ghana and Ghana Revenue Authority and former Rector, Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA), Ghana. The title of his paper was on “Strengthening the Business Processes of MDIs through Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship.” There is a call for creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in the public service. He elaborated on these three words as the means to revamp the business processes of MDIs. There is need for critical thinking required to confront the formidable challenges and come out with innovative ideas, method to serve the contemporary needs. He said the good news is that both creativity and innovativeness are arts that can be learned, cultivated and grown irrespective of one’s discipline. MDIs should move from traditional rule-oriented public service to one driven by creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship to remain relevant.

He also advised MDIs to engage in quality practical research in its business processes and make use of the findings to inform the training of public servants.

**RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION:**

The main recommendations and conclusions arising from the sessions and the final deliberations are as follows:

1. Participants expressed concern on how MDIs could collaborate in the area of Consultancy, Research and Training considering different cultural environments and the law (s) that governs them.
2. There should be need to institutionalize this retreat and make it an annual forum.
3. There must also be need to network with ECOWAS, UN etc. to strengthen governance.
4. WAMDEVIN was advised not to take up the mandates of their member institutions.
5. The DGs/CEOs should start to think outside the box for post retirement life.
6. It was unanimously agreed that the Communiqué should be sent to the DGs/CEOs that did not attend the retreat.

**APPRECIATION:**

The participants were grateful to the organizers of the retreat and guest speakers from Ghana and Nigeria for their well articulated presentations.