OPENING REMARKS BY HON. MINISTER OF HEALTH, PROF. ISAAC. F. ADEWOLE
AT THE ANGLOPHONE AFRICA PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE
IMMUNIZATION FINANCING, ABUJA. 19TH – 21ST APRIL, 2016

PROTOCOL

It gives me great pleasure to be in your midst today on the occasion of the
Anglophone Africa Peer Review Workshop on Sustainable Immunization
Financing.

The theme of this Peer Review meeting which is; “Sustainable Immunization
Financing” while the Sub-theme is “Immunization Trust Funds and Legislation”, is
quite appropriate as it captures the vision and the change agenda direction of this
administration under the able leadership of Mr. President, Muhammad Buhari,
GCFR. The current administration change agenda on health is focused on basic
PHC. The current Strategic Implementation plan for 2016 budget has PHC
reactivation as one of the 33 concrete actions to be executed for the year and the
strategic frame clearly identified collaboration and partnership as one of its key
strategies

The present administration is currently exploring ways of inviting and engaging
the private sector in the development of the health sector.

Presently the federal government of Nigeria pays fully for traditional vaccines and
coopays for new vaccines, with Gavi support. The federal government then
distributes bundled vaccines for a birth cohort of 7.4 million children to all states,
which in turn distributes to their corresponding local governments. Since 2000,
Nigeria has received support from Gavi through various funding windows.
Following the rebasing of the economy, Nigeria’s GNI rose to US$ 2690,
surpassing the eligibility threshold of US$ 1580 for Gavi support. Nigeria has now
entered a graduation period spanning 2017 to 2021, during which Gavi subsidies will diminish by 20% every year for five years, after which Nigeria is expected to bear the full cost for vaccines. Having entered graduation, 2016 is the last year Nigeria can apply for new vaccine support.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, the government of Nigeria has recorded huge successes in the Routine immunization programme as a result of increased government commitment which led to the interruption of polio virus and delisting from WHO’s polio endemic countries. Nigeria will therefore qualify for delisting in 2017 if the country stays polio free. The contributions of development partners and improved coordination of efforts among stakeholders in the immunization community has also been of tremendous support to our health system. For instance, with the support of the Gavi Alliance, the Gates Foundation, the EU, WHO, UNICEF, JICA and other partners, the country has expanded its cold chain capacity and management, improved data monitoring and introduced new vaccine. Within four years, three new vaccines, pentavalent, PCV and IPV were introduced into the routine system. Four additional new vaccines (rotavirus, HPV, MR and MenAfriVac A) are planned to be introduced into the routine system by 2018.

The ambition of these new vaccines introductions is unprecedented and represents additional opportunities to save lives and prevent morbidity. However with the relatively costlier new vaccines, the increasing infant population, and the expected phase out of support from Gavi due to graduation, vaccine programme cost will increase progressively and significantly. Government alone cannot bear the burden and immunization funding for 2016 and beyond remains precarious.
Without adequate funding for vaccines the RI system will experience setbacks such as stock outs of vaccines that will ultimately lead to increased illness and or deaths from vaccine preventable diseases.

The Anglophone Africa Peer Review Workshop on Sustainable Immunization Financing holding from April 19th to 21st, 2016 is therefore critical to the achievement of a lasting solution for vaccines and immunization financing in Nigeria and the sub-region.

May I therefore use this opportunity to call on all country delegates and the representatives of all stakeholders from the Ministries of Finance, Economic Planning and the Parliaments to ensure that funds allocated to health programmes especially in promoting vaccination and public health in general are disbursed in full and on time and that sources of public financing are made adequate and dependable. I also urge other key public institutions to also work together in order to accomplish the establishment of permanent structures in the Anglophone countries for sustainable immunization financing.

Ladies and gentlemen, from the going, it is clear that the stage is now set for Nigeria and other countries of the sub region to work towards the institutionalization of a sustainable mechanism of immunization financing.

At this juncture, I wish to appreciate the Sabin Vaccine Institute for their partnership with the Ministry of Health and NPHCDA in staging this peer review meeting in Abuja.

I want to also commend the chairman and members of the NIFT, all government officials and representatives of the organised private sector for their continued support and commitment.
Last but not the least, the Federal Ministry of Health acknowledges the collaboration from our parliamentarians from the national Assembly, our sister Ministries of Finance, and Economic Planning for their show of solidarity and commitment in making Nigerians healthy.

I wish you all a fruitful deliberation.

Thank you for listening.