**LAUNCHING THE FIFTIEF ANNIVERSARY OF THE NIGER BASIN AUTHORITY: MESSAGE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, HIS EXCELLENCY MAJO GENERAL COLLINS R. U. IHEKIRE rtd,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**People of the basin of the Niger**

Courageous and productive citizens of the countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Chad.

I would like to say that for me it is a thing of joy to address you on this occasion of the preparation for the fiftieth anniversary of the Niger Basin Authority.

Fifty years in the life of an individual or fifty years in the life of an institution or of the country, is a land mark worthy of celebration. That of the NBA cannot be different, it is a land mark we have to celebrate and over the years the achievements of the basin are shown that the founding fathers of the Niger Basin Authority and all the executives along the line who have helped to steer the ship of the Niger Basin have not mistaken.

The NBA is a veritable institution for development of the people of the basin because its mandate is to ensure the improvement of the welfare of people of the basin by eliminating poverty.

Now, one can say what have we come out with after fifty years. In fifty years, we have learnt a lot of lessons, which can be summarized in the sustainability of the existence of the Niger Basin Authority.

The very sustainability of its activities is proof of the success of this organization. It is an organization that has endured and despite the fact that years we have had turbulence times, the boat of the NBA has been rocked, it has been shaken, it has been never sunk, it has remained afloat and in fact written its self from lessons it has learnt to float much better and steer in a much better direction.

And it is part of what gave right in what we are enjoying today which is the shared vision, which is bringing all of us together and in fifty years we have learnt to translate adversity to the word solidarity which is the corner stone of our existence. We are happy, we are proud of the political solidarity; the political will that has continued to keep the NBA together and to make it achieved what it has achieved. The success of the NBA should be very alive in our minds and become memorable momentos which is the legacy we can leave for prosperity of our proud and veritable institution.

The anniversary of the NBA is an opportunity to remember all we have achieved, the legacy we are leaving or the future and the herculean tasks ahead or us to achieve.

It also a clear call to better service, better commitment by all member countries, by all heads of state, by all staff of the NBA and to the whole population of the Niger Basin Authority. We hope that this call will energize them into further activities. And that the dynamism which is taken place in NBA will take us to higher heights. It is on this note that, I am very pleased to launch the activities to start the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Niger Basin Authority. I thank you all for your attention.

Long live international cooperation;

Long live the Niger Basin Authority and

Long live to all of us

Thank you!!!!