



## PRESS STATEMENT

### FG APPROVES AMENDMENT OF 2022/2023 DEEP OFFSHORE OIL BLOCK MINI BID ROUND SCHEDULE

- **Conclusion date now July 28, 2023**

In a bid to boost confidence in the transparency and continuity of the 2022/2023 Deep Offshore Oil block Mini-bid Round process, President Muhammadu Buhari has approved the amendment of the bid round calendar to accommodate the concerns expressed by both local and international investors over the closeness of the schedule to the terminal date of the present administration in the country.

Following the approval by President Buhari in his capacity as the Petroleum Resources Minister, the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) has revised the Deep Offshore Oil block Bid Round Schedule by extending the deadline for the submission of Technical/Commercial bids to May 19, 2023, as well as the timeline for concluding activities of contract negotiations and signing between July 3 and 28, 2023.

The Commission Chief Executive, Engr, Gbenga Komolafe indicated that the 2022/23 Deep Offshore Oil block Mini-bid Round is progressing in accordance with the Bid Round Schedule which has been published as part of the Bid Round Guidelines. The outstanding activities for the conclusion of the exercise include the Technical/Commercial Bid Submission and the Ministerial Consent/Contract Negotiation and Signing.

The Technical/Commercial bid submission involves Data access, purchase, evaluation, bid preparation and submission; Bid evaluation and publication of results as well as Commercial bid conference and announcement of winners.

The CCE reiterated that the Commission is fully committed to conducting the bid round in a manner that guarantees the achievement of the objectives of the exercise, pointing out that participation is both robust and beneficial to key stakeholders.

However, constant interrogation and oversight of the process revealed two concerns which the Commission felt might impact the success of the exercise if not immediately addressed. The concerns are the plan to conclude the bid process before transition to the new Government and the need to guarantee participation of qualified indigenous companies, working collaboratively with multinationals and the International Oil Companies (IOCs) to leverage technology, funding and expertise in the deep offshore.

The Commission has already announced the requirement for joint venture (JV) arrangements between IOCs and indigenous companies and amended the Guidelines accordingly. This measure not only addresses the second concern, but is also in consonance with, and supports the Nigerian Content requirements of the Bid Round. It is also in accordance with Section 16(1)(a) of the Nigerian Constitution which provides that resources of the nation shall be harnessed in a manner that promotes national prosperity and efficient, dynamic and self-sustaining economy.

The extension of time is also to afford interested multinationals and IOCs enough time to enter into, and conclude the necessary joint venture arrangements as well as allow for proper evaluation of relevant data by all bidders.

**Signed:**

Engr. Gbenga Komolafe, FNSE

Saturday, April 1, 2023