

Speech by Mrs. Doja Ekeruche at the 1st Annual CEO Forum & Business Roundtable on Children's Rights and the Business Sector on Thursday May 30, 2013

- The Executive Governor of Lagos State, His Excellency Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN
- The Honourable Commissioner for Commerce and Industry, Lagos State, Mrs Sola Oworu
- Captains of Industry here present,
- Other Guest Speakers
- Our esteemed children here present
- Gentlemen of the media
- Distinguished ladies and gentlemen

Nestlé, the leading nutrition, health and wellness company, is passionate about children's rights across the globe. We are self-regulated by our detailed marketing guidelines, which are globally enforced. In particular, we do not target children below 6 years of age with marketing activities and we only market healthier foods to children below 12 years. We believe children should be inspired to live a balanced healthy lifestyle; they should be guided to adopt healthy eating habits, while also being encouraged to be physically active.

In this vein, Nestlé Nigeria is proud to support the development of young Nigerian sporting talents and has continued to nurture the growth and development of sports in Nigeria. Through its flagship brand MILO, Nestlé Nigeria focuses on sports to develop the champion spirit in children across the country. Knowing that sports is a great teacher, MILO, the energy food drink of future champions, is

committed to grassroots sports development through the Nestlé Milo secondary schools basketball championship, the Nestlé MILO Football clinic and the Nestlé Milo Under 13football championship.

The Nestlé MILO secondary schools basketball competition is aimed at discovering and nurturing the basketball skills of future champions and has continued, not only to expose, but also to harness the enormous potentials of our youth in Nigeria.

Having run for 15 years, the championship continues to blaze the trail in creating a platform for Nigerian youths, to express themselves, showcase their basketball skills, and also instill in them the values that will help them in life.

The championships cut across every state in the Federation and the numbers of schools keep on increasing. Non-stop spectacular display of male and female talent, dedication and stunning determination to win are the hallmarks of the competition which has exploded from about 50 schools in 1998 to about 7,000 schools in 2013.

The Nestlé MILO Secondary Schools Championships has played a key role in producing many national and international basketball stars for our country, Nigeria. The competition provides a vast talent pool for basketball and the bulk of the players in the Nigeria Premier Basketball league have at one time or another participated in the MILO championships.

Now unto football: Inarguably, football is the most popular sport in the country and no doubt, there is need to groom our football playing skills starting from the grassroots and at an early age. The MILO Football clinic does this in conjunction

with Peter Rufai and FIFA certified European Football coaches, who train children, between the ages of 9-13, with the latest scientific techniques of playing football. Running for the past 3 years, the skill acquisition programme has reached almost 20,000 children in various cities across the country. The children are taught world-class football techniques that crystallize their learning and prepare them for bigger games and tournaments. The children develop technical skills of the game while also imbibing the lifelong values learnt from sports.

Some of these children have been enlisted in the Under 13 football teams in their states.

Over the years Nestlé MILO has demonstrated that we are adept at developing; nurturing and elevating talents. We believe in the abundance of sports talents in Nigeria and have worked assiduously to fire up these talents to greater heights. MILO believes that long after the final whistle is blown, these children are better equipped to face the future as their social and leadership skills have been developed through the practice of good sportsmanship, making them champions, not only in sports but also in life

Evidently, distilling the champion spirit in children is our forte at Nestlé Nigeria. Our champions display determination, discipline, honesty, respect, they like winning, are passionate, learn to endure, accept challenges, work hard and love what they do.

Ladies and Gentlemen, join Nestlé MILO as we develop healthy, physically fit, intellectually sound, and morally upright champions for a better Nigeria.

Thank you

