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**HONOURS**  
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## **BADAGRY** **2019 DOOR OF RETURN CEREMONY**



The focus of the Door of Return Ceremony and Festival is to encourage people of African descent, who love Africa and those who found African origin in their DNA.

The festival is an opportunity to display the cultural heritage of Badagry and its environs to the sons and daughters from Diaspora fast tracking the reconnection linkages.

The objective of the festival includes:

- \*Reconnection with the roots,
- \*Cultural exchanges
- \*Socio-Economic development
- \*Chieftancy title and naming ceremony

The highlight of this year's event included the colorful boat regatta, the arrival of delegates at the Topo Jetty O2 Marina, Badagry.

Experiencing the historical town of Badagry in the company of a knowledge-able tour guard as delegates were taken one after another to historical sites like Wawu compound where the Queen of England gifted the people two Canon guns to defend themselves from the slave traders and the compound also has the British Flag hoisted over the Attorikoh in 1843.

Worthy of note is the Seriki Ifaremi Williams Abass Brazilian Barracoon which still houses the original slave trade materials. The building was made a national monument in 1940.

Interestingly, this small building hosted one thousand six hundred slaves at a time with 40 slaves occupying 40 rooms per time.





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The tours next stop was Mobee compound which is significant in the history of Badagry. They were also gifted with two Canon guns as seen in the compound for defence from the slave trader.

The heritage site is very memorable with a huge statue of a man and woman in broken chains symbolizing freedom.

As part of the festival, delegates were greeted with the traditional dance of the Badagry people at the Ankran of Badagry's Palace. It was a rich blend of contemporary dance by the delegates and the local dancers.

The delegates were introduced to the Ankran of Badagry, Aholu Menu-Toyi 1 who thanked them for finding their way home to Badagry and mother Africa. This year recorded 1 Jamaican, 12 American delegates consisting of 6 African American, 3 Americans, and 3 Caucasians. They were given names in accordance with the traditional naming ceremony. This edition had 7 of the delegates named as follows

Marian Allen as Rendo, Linda Lindquist-Bishop as Sename, Angel Cartagena as Quenyon, Dr. George Miller as Aaisu, Mike Perez as Sewedo, Melvin Russel as Setin, and Dr. Keith as Mausii respectively.

In an interview, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa said "this is history, and this is irreplaceable, it needs to be tapped and that is what we have here."

She added that the African continent and Nigeria will lead the way to ensure that Africa is truly the giant of the world. The future is here.

"I am happy the Diasporans are coming here, and when they come, they are being led to what they can do in Africa, particularly here in Nigeria. Africa is a land of opportunities. It is a virgin land waiting to be tapped", she observed.

She added that it is a life-time experience which everybody should have. According to her, "We have come now to the Point of no return. We have opened the door of return and the door symbolizes an opportunity to freedom, prosperity, and joy" adding that the Federal Government would work with Lagos State Government, NGOs and some of the delegates to make the best of the project. Confirming this, the head of the delegation Dr. Anderson expressed their readiness to build a diaspora palace in Gerefu.

The delegates had their feet washed, which was to officially welcome them home from the point of no return, they proceeded to open the door that launched into a colorful event that had rich display of culture as various groups paraded in different regalia according to different family compounds.

*By: Olufunke Oloye*

# DIASPORA NEWSLETTER

## AS NAMIBIANS HELD ITS DIASPORA VOTING, NO NIGERIAN IN ITS PRISONS--ENVOY

As Namibians held its Diaspora voting on November 13 in Nigeria and other countries to elect a new President and parliamentarians, there is no single Nigerian in its prison.

The Namibian High Commissioner to Nigeria, Humphrey D. Geiseb, gave the cheering news when he visited Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, in Abuja.

Geiseb stated that Namibians living in Nigeria joined other Namibians, all over the world to participate in diaspora voting for both Parliamentary and National Elections held on Nov. 13 and 27 respectively. He recalled that Namibia has started diaspora voting

having amended its electoral laws to accommodate it.

Geiseb said that the relationship between Nigeria and Namibia dates back to the 70's when Nigeria contributed to the fight for Namibia's independence.

“I am happy to inform you that there is no Nigerian in Namibian prisons, as they are all well behaved and hardworking. They are doing well in various endeavours-academia, business and many others”, he said.

He said that the political party system policy, in his homeland, is gender-friendly noting that the Namibian political parties practise what he called the “50-50 or Zebra system”, which allows equal representation of women in politics.

The Envoy hoped that his government will tap into the Commission's knowledge to effectively align Namibians and the Namibian Diasporas.

Responding, Hon. Dabiri-Erewa urged the National Assembly to make the Diaspora Voting in Nigeria a reality by expediting the amendment to the Electoral Act in Nigeria.

“There is no reason why Nigeria can't have Diaspora voting just as Namibia and Togo have already joined the league of countries doing diaspora voting”, she said.

**By:  
Deborah Anaelechi**



**From Right - Left. Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa (Chairman/CEO NIDCOM) & H.E Humphrey D. Geiseb, Namibian High Commissioner**

## A PATRIOTIC WOMAN DONATES SALARY TO NIGERIA RETURNEES FROM SOUTH AFRICA

A Nigerian woman and two-time cancer survivor has displayed the spirit of benevolence by donating her one month salary to the children of Nigerians who returned from South African due to xenophobic attacks.

The lady, who pleaded anonymity, said she had been in the hospital for 18 months, and vowed that if she survives her medical ordeal, she will put smiles in the faces of the less privileged in the society.

The inspiration, however, got to her when some Nigerians were reportedly evacuated from South Africa to Nigeria with their children, losing all their means of livelihood, due to xenophobic attacks.

The patriotic woman implored other well-meaning Nigerians to contribute to the oneness and unity of the country by helping fellow Nigerians in distress.



*From left - right  
Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa  
Receiving a cheque of  
N500,000 cash from a  
patriotic Nigerian who  
pleaded anonymity*

While in South Africa, "the returnees didn't see themselves as Igbos, Yorubas, Hausas or Fulanis but as Nigerians. This is the spirit we should all imbibe in our daily interactions", she counselled.

Receiving the woman in her office, the Chairman/CEO of Nigerians In Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa thanked the woman for her kind gesture.

The NIDCOM boss, who was touched by the kind act of the woman, used the opportunity to call on other well-meaning Nigerians to come to the aid of their fellow countrymen in dire need of reintegration, re-orientation and empowerment.

BY:

DOOSUGHUN ABUGHIDYER

## NIDCOM HOSTS SECOND INVESTMENT SUMMIT

After a successful maiden edition of the Nigeria Diaspora Investment Summit (NDIS) in 2018, which attracted over 300 investors, the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) hosted its second edition at the State House, Abuja in Nov. 2019.

Welcoming participants, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO of NIDCOM, was optimistic that Nigeria will take over the world going by the numerous feats Nigerians abroad have achieved.

A Nigerian business entrepreneur and chairman of 2019 Investment Summit, Mr. Pascal Dozie, said that having the right enabling environment is key to attracting more Diaspora remittances.

Prof. Charles Soludo, member, National Economic Advisory Team and former Central Bank of Nigeria Governor, said in his keynote speech entitled, "Enabling the Diaspora as Drivers of Economic Growth and Development", that the synergy between Nigerians, home and abroad, was

According to him, Diaspora remittances are a duty for Nigerians abroad, urging Nigerians to preserve their identity and dissuade the *Bleaching Syndrome* of Identity.

Declaring the two-day summit open, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo emphasised that the focus should not be limited to encouraging the Nigerian Diaspora to investment, but on strategies to promote marketable means.

He, therefore, suggested that Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) can be a veritable platform in derisking diaspora investment in agriculture and agribusiness, exemplifying the USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and DCA, which assist the American Diaspora.

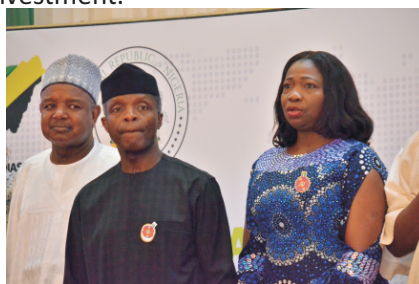
He also noted the importance of engaging Diasporas in the financial industry of their resident areas to relate with Local Private Capital Companies to raise capital for investment.

Also speaking at the event, the Senate President, represented by Sen. Surajudeen Basiru, the Senate Chairman on Diaspora Matters commended Hon. Dabiri-Erewa for bringing expertise, sagacity, integrity, passion and vision on ways the country can tap into the plethora of resources in the Diaspora.

He assured the Diasporans that the Senate would bring more reforms that would be beneficial to the Diaspora, following the take-homes at the Summit.

Speaking in the same vein, Hon. Tolulope Akande Sadipe, the Chairman, House Committee on Diaspora, maintained that without the efforts of the NIDCOM Chairman, Diaspora matters could not have been perceived as a serious issue. She called on Nigerians to change the negative narrative, as Nigerians are 'progressive people'.

Kebbi State Governor, Abubakar Atiku Bagudu, said with his second attendance at the summit, showed that the state was ready for investment, and ready to support





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Other goodwill messages include that of Mr Peter Ashode, Group CEO, United Capital Ltd., one of the major sponsors of the event, who lauded the efforts of the Commission for launching the second edition and informed participants at the summit, that there is an array of opportunity Diaspora can leverage on.

Ace Nollywood film maker and director, Lancelot Imaseun described Nollywood as a great asset to Nigeria that accounts

for about 10 million direct and indirect employments for Nigerians, urging Diasporans to invest into the sector as the industry churns out volumes in monetary terms.

The second **Nigeria Diaspora Investment Summit (NDIS) 2019** is convened by **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM)** in collaboration with **Nigeria Diaspora and Alumni Network (NIDAN)**.

**The Summit which has as its theme "Leveraging Diaspora resources for economic growth" was supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Nigeria Investment Promotion Council (NIPC), Nigeria Export Promotion Council (NEPC), and Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC).**

**By: Deborah Anaelechi**

## NIDCOM TO DEVELOP AN M.O.U WITH SMEDAN, ABUJA

Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa has given renewed hope again to the 485 Nigerian voluntary Returnees from South Africa to fast track their reintegration and stabilization through the development and signing of an MOU with the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, SMEDAN.

The NIDCOM Chairman disclosed this when she paid a courtesy visit to the Director General/CEO of SMEDAN Dr Dikko Umaru in Abuja.

Mrs Abike Dabiri-Erewa added that the Returnees be reassured that H.E President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR has not and will not abandon them but will ensure they are reintegrated and empowered to be

the Nigerian economy. H.E Dr Umaru, matching words with action quickly agreed to the working out and subsequent signing of an M.O.U as soon as practicable to factor in the Returnees from South Africa through skills acquisition training programmes.

The Director General SMEDAN, Dr Umaru also commended the NIDCOM Chairman/CEO for her untiring efforts at passionately handling issues affecting Nigerians in Diaspora, urging him not to be discouraged while the task is done.

**By: Gabriel Odu**





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## DABIRI-EREWA LAUDS JOURNALISTS EFFORTS ON MIGRATION ADVOCACY



**L-R: Mr. Abdur-Rahman Balogun representing Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa receiving an Award of Excellence on behalf of NIDCOM Boss from Mrs. Abimbola Oyetunde Vice President JIFORM in Abuja**

Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) has commended Nigerian Journalists for carrying out advocacy on migration affairs in the country.

She gave the advice while delivering a keynote speech on the Diaspora and National Economy, at the maiden edition of Journalists International Forum for Migration (JIFORM) Global Migration Summit in Abuja.

Represented by Mr Abdur-Rahman Balogun, Director, Media & Public Relations NIDCOM, the Chairman/CEO said it was gratifying to note that credible group like the media had been organised into championing advocacy on migration issues.

She restated the Federal Government's commitment to adopt viable policies aimed at supporting Nigerians living abroad. Dabiri-Erewa listed some of the policies to include the Presidential Initiative for Diaspora Excellence (PRIDE), and Presidential Initiative for Medical Excellence (PRIME). She explained the policies are aimed at harnessing the skills and knowledge of Nigerian health care professionals abroad in the delivery of quality health care services in the country.

Citing the World Bank record, the NIDCOM Boss said Nigerians in the diaspora have contributed greatly to national economy with over \$22 billion dollars annually in remittances as some of them are making waves in different fields globally.

The NIDCOM Boss promised JIFORM of the Commission's support especially with regards to advocacy for regular migration for the benefit of Nigerians and the African continent.

Also present at the summit were Hon. Muhammad Umar Jega, Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who called for articulate proactive measures geared towards curbing internal displacement in the country.

The guest speaker, Prof. Anthony Kanu, Rector, Villa Nova University, Osun state, disclosed that recent statistics have shown that only 11 per cent of Africans migrate abroad while 89 per cent of migration in Africa are intra-Africa.

In his welcome speech, JIFORM President, Abayomi Ajibola, said migration was important as it helps to boost the nation's economy, encouraging journalists to stand firm to protect and serve humanity especially on migration matters. Highlights of the two-day event include recognition of notable personalities with awards in which Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, was given the 'Legacy Excellent Leadership Award'.

Compiled by:

**Deborah Anaelechi and Khadijah Shehu Bamalli,**



# DIASPORA NEWSLETTER

## DIASPORA ACHIEVER

**Dr Osatohanmwem Osemwengie** is a Nigerian born genius from Edo state who has made the country proud in Texas, USA by setting a very good record for academic excellence. He left the country in the early 1980s. Osemwengie has 7 (MSc) degrees. He got his 4th PhD degree at University of Texas at Dallas in September, 2017.



He is proficient in several computer programming languages including Java, C++, ASP.net, SQL and database design and implementation, API server side programming, and website development.

He was as an administrator at the College of Education, Benin City. There, he was recognised as the Educator of the Year by the Board of Trustees of the institution for securing funding used to design and implement pre-service teacher education programs. While he was still serving as the Head of Department in the College of Education, he recruited and trained staff and students, managed funding programs and the college's acquisition of equipment and services.

He went to the United States of America in 1982 and taught in Columbus City School for five years and afterwards served as the administrator of the school system where he coordinated staff and student recruitment. He also developed programs to increase staff and student retention. Osemwengie studied Software Engineering and management of information system at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-sponsored Ohio Leadership for Integrating Technology Initiative (OLIT). He trained elementary, middle, high school principals and assistant principals to use adaptive learning designed to identify instructional approaches that emphasized integrating technology into the learning and teaching processes.

He expertly trained them to facilitate the integration of technology into teaching and learning through process workshops and seminars, coaching robotics and serves as software engineering mentors to robotics teams. In 2008, he was selected to present at the world robotics championships. He also works with National Aeronautics

championships. He also works with National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). He has successfully operated drones and sent it to different planets, including Mars and Jupiter.

Osatohanmwem is the founder of Open Robotics University; a tuition free engineering degree-granting university that allows people to further exercise their talents and expands their knowledge into all fields related to engineering. The guiding principle of the non-profit organization is to facilitate the development of future technologies through peer collaboration with the end-product, source-material, and documentation made available to the public free of charge.

He builds drones for the United States Army. He is currently working on a military game and collision avoidance software for drone. He has been an integral member of the American Armed Forces, building drones for the United States Army. These drones are used for surveillance to gather important information, as well as take out terrorist camps.

Osatohanmwem owns a drone company, Ubiquity Interface Inc. which he is the CEO and works with a team of foreign engineers as well as his brother, identified as Ken, who is a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the US Army.

In February 2017, he produced his latest research, which he submitted to the US Army entitled: **"QuantumDB API for Database Security and Integrity Enhancements"**.

Nigeria recently joined other countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, Israel and Iraq who have adopted the use of drones in modern warfare, especially in the wake of havoc being wreaked by terrorist group, Boko Haram. Nigeria could develop its modern warfare options if it engages the competences of this illustrious son who is doing exploits in the U.S.A. technology into teaching and learning through process workshops and seminars, coaching robotics and serves as software engineering mentors to robotics teams. In 2008, he was selected to present at the world robotics championships. He also works with National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). He has successfully operated drones

By **Khadija Shehu Bamalli**

## ICMPD TO TRAIN NEW NIDCOM STAFF ON CAPACITY BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) has offered to train the newly recruited staff of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) on Diaspora Migration in Africa.

The leader of the delegation, Mr. Martin Pluim, who is the Director for Migration Dialogue & Cooperation, ICMPD Headquarters, gave the cheering news in Abuja when he led a delegation on a courtesy call on Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa.

He said that a nexus can be reached to synchronise the functions of both parties as the organization was partnering with a number of countries to develop diaspora investment, build networks, and boost entrepreneurship which will be beneficial to diasporans and their respective homelands.

advising NIDCOM to assist some Nigerians in Diaspora who wish to reconnect back home.

Receiving the delegation on behalf of Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Dr Sule Yakubu Bassi, Secretary to the Commission, thanked ICMPD for the offer and other collaborative assistance aimed at achieving some of the goals of the commission.

He said in creating a conducive environment for investment, the Commission has reached out to the 36 states of the federation to key in, with 16 states already established a Diaspora focal point.

The Commission's Secretary announced that NIDCOM is about to launch its Diaspora International Call Centre, for diasporans to contact the Commission directly.



From Left-Right: Dr. Bassi the Secretary Nigerians in Diaspora Commission and Mr. Martin Pluim, the leader of the delegation



From Left-Right: Barr. Habibat Eluemeh, Mr. El'amin, Mr. Martijn Pluim Dr. Yakubu S. Bassi, Mrs. Sodeinde Mojisola and Mr. Abdur-Rahman Balogun

Ms Mojisola Sodeinde, Head, ICMPD West Africa Office, stated that a synergy in terms of training will be created with the Commission, in terms of capacity building through tailor-made workshops for staff.

She hoped that the trainees would get the required knowledge to move the Commission forward,

Bassi added that the Commission in 2020 plans to host an Award Ceremony to recognize diasporans who are making the nation proud, and rendering various assistance in the Nigerian economy using their resources, skills and talents.

By: **Deborah Anaelechi and Juliannah Erin.**



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## NIDCOM BOSS RECEIVED NIGERIAN MBE AWARD PHILANTHROPIST



from left-right NIDCOM Boss, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa and MBE Award winner, Iginla Olusubomi Aina



Iginla Olusubomi Aina Receiving MBE Award



NIDCOM Boss, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa and MBE Award winner, Iginla Olusubomi Aina

Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, the Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, has described Mrs Olusubomi Iginla-Aina, a recipient of the insignia, Member of the British Empire ( M B E ) , as a true reflection of the Nigerian spirit of hardwork, diligence, integrity and trustworthiness. Owing to her outstanding performance and achievements, Dabiri-Erewa, conferred on Mrs Olusubomi Iginla-Aina MBE, the title of 'Diaspora Ambassador'. Dabiri-Erewa gave her the title when she received Mrs Olusubomi Iginla-Aina, Nigerian-UK Youth Philanthropist and CEO, LightUp Foundation, who was installed with the insignia of MBE, among 1,073 recipients on Nov. 26, 2019 in honour of the Queen's birthday. She called on all Nigerians living abroad to cooperate with the Federal government in having a better Nigeria that we can be all proud of.

The Chairman said that the conferment was a testament to the numerous selfless services Olusubomi Iginla-Aina has done both at home and in the UK on youth development, child abuse and the less privileged.

Receiving the title, the elated Iginla-Aina and CEO of LightUp Foundation, appreciated the Commission for its kind gesture. She believed that her passion was a divine mandate to motivate the youth positively, and be a vocal person for the vulnerable, dating back to her leadership roles as Head Girl, Anglican Girls' Grammar School, Surulere, Lagos state, and as the first female Student Union President, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Osun state, more than 15 years ago.

Iginla-Aina said her projection to the UK in 2005 started when Prof. Rogers Makanjuola, a former Vice Chancellor of OAU, referred her to UN ECOSOC to join a project, thus giving birth to her own project, Light Up Foundation. A mother of three and an LLM holder, she said the foundation which started 19 years ago, has worked closely with youths in the UK and parts of Nigeria, especially in Abeokuta and Kwara. The CEO, Light Up Foundation, explained the foundation has pet projects such as, *Let's Talk* and *Bag of Hope*, which engage the youth on positive thinking, good value-system, community service and development. The MBE awardee, recalled that the highlights of the organisation was when five youths from the foundation, were selected to be part of a 15-man team engaged on a project in the Croydon Borough, UK, as well as, proudly wearing the outfit she adorned when she received her conferment from the Prince, by the inmates from the Nigerian corrective facilities, and numerous fields of entrepreneurship which the inmates are participating. A Guinness World Book of Records holder, She disclosed that the foundation currently has another project of reconnecting changed delinquents with their families, as some of them were disowned by their families while in correction centre. The Light Up Foundation is an NGO with the vision of improving child rights, youth empowerment and creating awareness on the dangers of child abuse. Since its inception in 2000, the foundation has impacted over 10, 000 people via the Bag of Hope initiative, with 800 youths supported out of prison.

By: Deborah Anaelechi



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*Photos speaks*

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Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO Nigerians in Diaspora Commission paid a courtesy visit to Belgium Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Daniel Dargent in Abuja on Wednesday 4th December, 2019



Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO Nigerians in Diaspora Commission celebrates a Nigerian in the diaspora attended the photography exhibition 'SCARED' an event put together by Temi Fete'ra, the founder of Mae Africa in London



Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO Nigerians in Diaspora Commission celebrates another Nigerian in the diaspora Iginla Olusubomi Aina an MBE Award winner in London



# DIASPORA NEWSLETTER

*Photos speaks*



Chairman/CEO of Nigerians in Diaspora, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa visited the world Bank Director of Nigeria Africa Region, Mr. Shubham Chaudhuri to discuss Diaspora related issues and collaborations with the World Bank



Chairman/CEO of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa on a courtesy visited to Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Nigeria H.E Adnan Bostaji



Chairman/CEO of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa hails and congratulates Nigerian born Chinyelu Onwurah who wins first seat for Labour in the UK December 12th General Election.

## NIDCOM FACILITATES N2.5 MILLION GIFT TO SOUTH AFRICAN RETURNEE WIDOW FROM MULTICHOICE, NDE



Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa Chairman Nigerians in Diaspora Commission receiving Mrs. Yinka Iyoha, a South-African returnee widow in her office



Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa NIDCOM Boss, Dr. Bassi Secretary of the commission presenting a cheque to Mrs. Yinka Iyoha, a South-African returnee widow in her office

Mrs Yinka Iyoha, a mother of four and South-African returnee widow, has been blessed with the sum of N2.5 million cash donation facilitated by the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM).

It will be recalled that the widow's plight attracted attention from Multichoice Nigeria, who graciously donated a cheque of one million naira through NiDCOM and N1, 500,000 from Dr. Nasiru Mohammed, Director-General of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) during a courtesy visit.

Receiving the woman in her office in Abuja, the Chairman/CEO of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa told her that the federal government will not abandon her as well as other Nigerians brought back to the country as a result of xenophobic attack.

Dabiri-Erewa equally announced a scholarship to one of the children of the returnee courtesy Nigerians in Diaspora Commission. She said that the Federal Government is kick starting an entrepreneurship programme for the returnees in collaboration with Small and Medium Scale Enterprises Development Agencies (SMEDAN) and National Directorate of Employment (NDE).

The NIDCOM boss said that the returnees will be trained on various skill acquisitions and certified, mentored and funded by the Central Bank of Nigeria, adding that funds from one to ten million naira will be released for the programme.

She appealed to other state governments to liaise with the returnees in their respective constituencies and see how they can empower them. He further reiterated the Agency's commitment and readiness in partnering with NIDCOM by providing necessary vocational trainings and resources for other Returnees who are willing to be part of the empowerment programme. An elated Iyoha showed appreciation to President Muhammadu Buhari, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Airpeace, Multichoice, The Director-General of NDE and Nigerians for assisting her as well as other returnees.

Iyoha, who lost her husband as far back as 2010, has been left alone with the responsibility of raising her children respectively ages 19, 17, 15 and 12 years old alone in South Africa.

As a businesswoman, Iyoha lamented that she has lost 20 million naira worth of goods due to the South African Customs seizing imported goods from foreigners.

By: **Juliannah Erin**



# DIASPORA NEWSLETTER

## FIRST EVER NIGERIA-SAUDI INVESTMENT FORUM HOLDS IN ABUJA

A two-day Nigeria- Saudi Investment Forum has opened in Abuja .

The Investment Forum which is to create new opportunities for investment between Nigeria and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia attracted more than 50 Corporate and portfolio investors., and also featured a hajj and Umrah exhibition. The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, (NIDCOM) Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa stated that the Investment forum is a fall-out of the just concluded Nigeria Diaspora Investment Summit. Hon. Dabiri-Erewa said the Nigeria- Saudi Investment Forum has further strengthened socio-cultural relations between Nigeria and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and urged exhibitors

and investors to make it an Annual event.

In the same vein, the Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Nigeria Adnan Bostaji said Nigeria and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shared common history and implored the Organisers to make the event worth while for investment opportunities in Nigeria and export opportunities from Nigeria to Saudi.

The Forum also had in attendance many Nigerians in the Diaspora who are visiting Nigeria for the First time. Reports say there are about 1.5million Nigerians living in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Compiled by: Gabriel Odu



L-R: Ms. Marie, Engr. Musa Yaro, H.E Adnan Bostaji Saudi Ambassador to Nig., Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa Chairman/CEO NIDCOM & Mr. Yaro



L-R: Hon Kabiru Ajana, Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa Chairman/CEO NIDCOM, H.E Adnan Bostaji Saudi Ambassador to Nig., Mr. Yaro with other Participants



L-R: The Yaro Brothers, H.E Adnan Bostaji Saudi Ambassador to Nig., Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa Chairman/CEO NIDCOM & Engr. Dr. Sule Yakubu Bassi Secretary NIDCOM



L-R: H.E Adnan Bostaji Saudi Ambassador to Nig., Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa Chairman/CEO NIDCOM, Engr. Dr. Sule Yakubu Bassi Secretary NIDCOM and Exhibitors at the summit



## TIME TO SAY THANK YOU!



**Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa NiDCOM Boss, Dr. Bassi, Mr. Ekpo, Hajiya Magashi and Mr. Muhammed**

Sometimes in October all the staff of NiDCOM were asked to gather at the Chairman/CEO'S office for a send forth party for some of the staff.

For a Commission that is newly established, one will wonder how come a send forth at this early stage as the Commission is less than one year but having a proactive, vibrant, intelligent, caring and homely mama as a Chairman, nothing less will be expected.

In a gesture to show appreciation for the pioneer staff of the commission who for one reason or the other are leaving, this send forth was necessary for the Commission.

Mr. Xavier Maurice Ekpo who is retiring from active service is the Pioneer Director of Administration. He contributed immensely in organizing the Commission for a smooth and proper take off of operations.

Next is Muhammed Munkaila, the Deputy Director of Finance, also a pioneer staff who worked to ensure that everything pertaining to finance in the Commission worked well and accordingly.

Finally, we have Mrs. Ubong Ekeng, who was on secondment from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of

protocol, also worked so hard in organizing the activities of the Commission's courtesy calls and visits. She is leaving the Commission for another posting in the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Hajia Hasiya Magashi also seconded from Ministry of Foreign Affairs displayed quiet diplomacy in helping to resolve some diplomatic issues and other issues.

In order to say a very big thank you and show her appreciation for the efforts they put in taking the Commission to what it has become now, their time, hard work and show of love, the able Chairman/CEO of the Commission Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa in her enormous disposition asked all to come and join her to say thank you.

Staff of the Commission were asked to say a word or two on to them and a lot of beautiful memories were shared.

For Mr. Ekpo, he is seen as an astute administrator who knows his onions, he tells you the rudiments of administration, the does and don'ts in public service, he was the engine room of administration in the Commission, a father and lover of all.

Muhammed Munkiala is very jovial, sociable, amendable and acceptable, a man with wealth of experience, has travelled far and wide and can speak virtually all Nigerian languages and can also tell you their histories. He is grounded and very lively and above all, he knows his job.

Plagues were presented to them and they were appreciative and express happiness at the gesture shown them by the Commission. The gesture came as a surprise package to them.

The Chairman/CEO, Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa thanked the entire Staff for their presence and the organizer for her effort in putting everything together even at a short notice.

By Violet Nwosu

**NiDCOM**  
*Cares at home  
and  
Diaspora*

# DIASPORA NEWSLETTER

It was a normal working day at NIDCOM on 11<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2019 in the morning, staff were busy going about their normal duties until later in the day the atmosphere changed.

The Secretary of the Commission Engr. Sule Yakubu Bassi and members of staff organized a surprised birthday for the Amazon, the great woman of substance with an amazing personality, the Chairman/ CEO of our great Commission Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa whom God kept alive to witness another year in her life.

Staff took turns to extol her wonderful virtues, responding to them, the NIDCOM boss appreciated everyone and thanked all for their love, efforts and support in making NIDCOM what it has become today. She promised that subsequently staff birthdays will be celebrated in the Commission.

Being a woman that keeps to her promise, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Nov. there was a triple-treat celebration at the office for Mr. Victor Eshiet, Omolabake Omoniyi and Tobechukwu Obienu in celebration of their birthdays

The Commission gave the trio surprise birthday packages, and the Chairman, with the rest of the staff took time to take photographs with the celebrants.

The Chairman, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, shared some fun sweet memories of each celebrant, much to the amusement of the house. She commended the celebrants for the milestones achieved so far, and the contributions they have added towards the growth of NIDCOM. The Chairman wished them many more giant strides in their endeavors.

Mr. Victor Eshiet is the Head of Protocol NIDCOM, Tobechukwu Obienu is in programs, while Omolabake Omoniyi is in the Media & PR Unit.

It did not just end there as another king was born on the 27<sup>th</sup> of Nov. in the person of Hon. Abdulrahman Terab, Head, Technology Transfer Innovation (TTI). As the tradition goes, another surprise package was organized for him and to the celebrant, it was indeed a huge surprise.

The Chairman/CEO and the Secretary of the Commission spoke so well of this wonderful and intelligent colleague. The celebrant who was so astonished with this gesture thanked all that made his day a memorable one for him.

To all our wonderful celebrants here is wishing you all the best in your endeavours.

By Violet Nwosu



Chairman/CEO Nigerians in Diaspora Commission presenting birthday card to Dr. Bassi, the Secretary NIDCOM



Chairman/CEO NIDCOM Hon. Abike, Secretary of the commission, Dr. Bassi celebrating birthday of 4 staff of the commission



# DIASPORA NEWSLETTER

## SPORTS

### BOXING: DABIRI-EREWA HAILS JOSHUA, USMAN, STYLEBENDER FOR THEIR FEATS

Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, Chairman/CEO Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) has congratulated Nigerian-born boxer, Anthony Oluwafemi-Joshua, for defeating his opponent Andy Ruiz Jr in December 8, World Heavyweight Boxing fight in Saudi Arabia, thus reclaiming his World Heavyweight titles.

The NIDCOM boss also applauded Kamarudeen 'Kamaru' Usman for retaining title at UFC 245 in Las Vegas, Nevada, after knocking out Colby Covington as well as Israel Adesanya (last Stylebender), a Nigerian kick boxer, who defeated Robert Whittaker in a middle weight title of UFC 243.

"I congratulate you all on this wonderful feat, for winning this tensed but historical fights. We are truly proud of you

and urge you to continue to use your professional prowess to extol the virtues of Nigerian heritage.

"Your shining beacon serves as inspiration to the youth of Nigeria. Your victories are testimonies to the fact that Nigerians are great people, contributing in many ways to the development of the country and the continent as a whole,"

Dabiri-Erewa stated.

She said that their victories over their challengers was not only a thing of pride to Nigerians, but to Africa as a whole.

Dabiri-Erewa reiterated her appeals to Nigerians living abroad to continue to be of good behaviour and show that Nigerians can be great wherever they find themselves.

END.



By  
**Khadija Shehu Bamalli**

**Israel Adesanya  
(last Stylebender),**



**Kamarudeen 'Kamaru' Usman**



**Anthony Oluwafemi-Joshua**

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