



INDUSTRIALIZATION *Digest*



VOL. 6 NO.1 A MAGAZINE OF THE NIGERIA EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES AUTHORITY JULY 2023

Boosting
the Nigerian
Economy: **The
Contributions
of NEPZA**

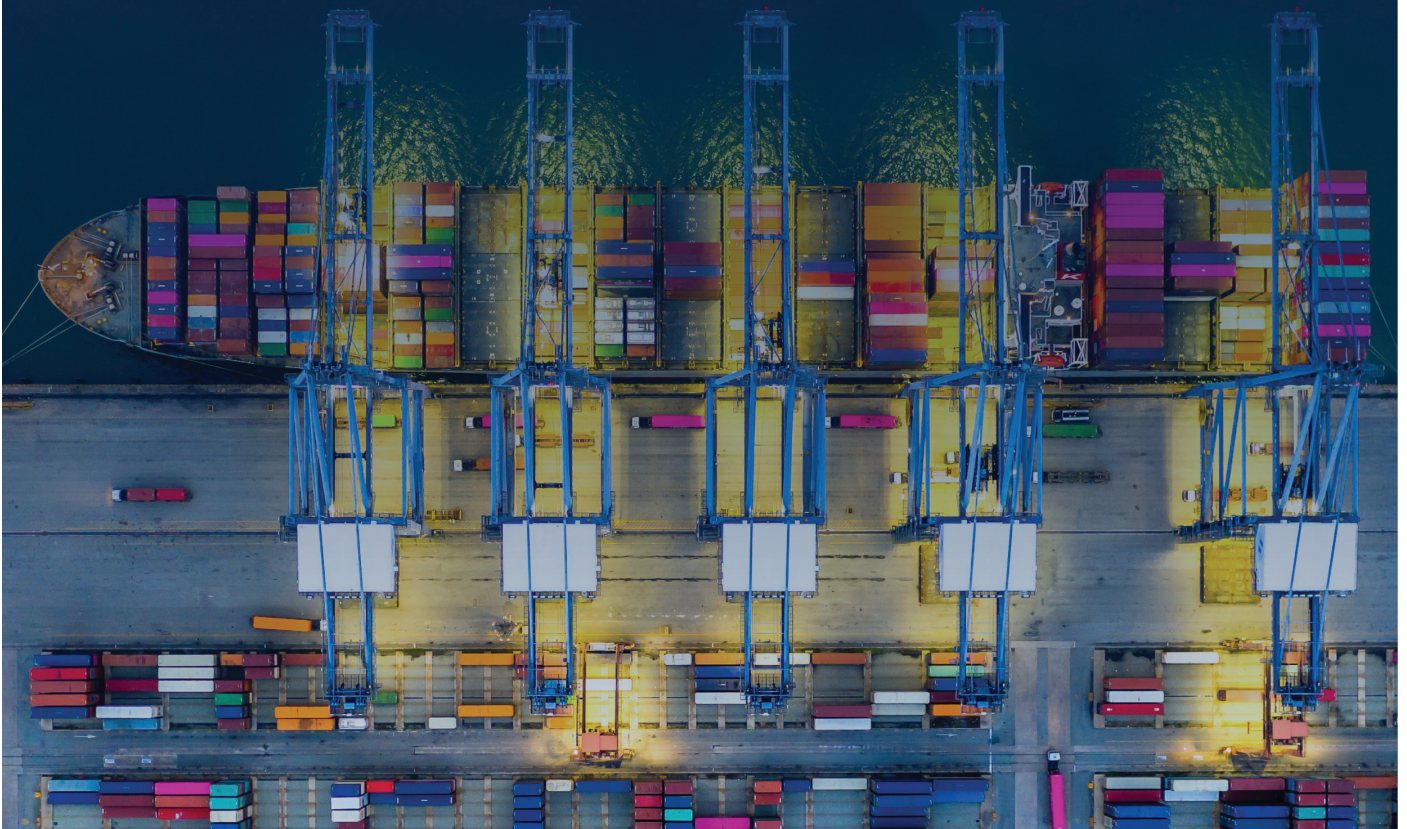
**Stakeholders
in Free Trade
Zones, Special
Economic
Zones Embrace
Global Best
Practices**

Bola Tinubu:
**Brain Behind
Modern Free Trade
Zone in Nigeria**



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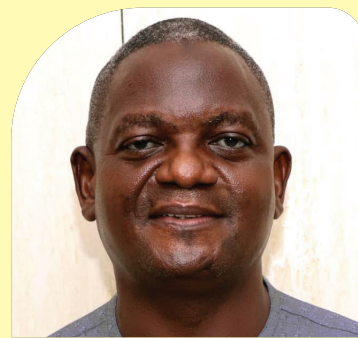
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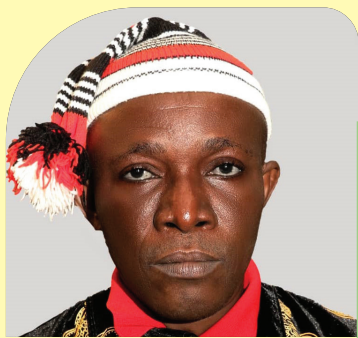
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EDITORIAL



Martins Odeh, PhD
Editor

The Free Trade Zone space in Nigeria continues to be widened as the scheme remains one of the country's dependable economic tools for growth and industrialization.

This first edition of the Industrialisation Digest for the year, captures some of the inroads made by Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, the MD/CEO of NEPZA and his management team with the creation of new zones, provision of world class infrastructure, adoption of the newest technology in promoting one-stop-shop mandate of the Authority among others.

The richness of this edition can further be seen in our carefully crafted feature articles which includes Bola Tinubu: Brain Behind Modern Free Trade Zone, Boosting the Nigerian Economy: The Contributions of NEPZA, Another fastening is the interview with the managing director titled: "Buhari and Free Trade Zones Upward Growth Trajectory."

This interview is a panoramic conversation on the positive impression the President Muhammadu Buhari-led administration made on the free trade zone scheme. We are particularly enthused with the cooperation of the Federal Government that saw NEPZA to midwife the timeous delivery of both Lekki Deep-Sea Port and Dangote Refinery free trade zone projects.

The edition also covers the rountable organised by the Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA) to intimate the Special Adviser to the President on Industry, Trade and Investment Mr John Uwajomogu on the current state of the Nigerian Free Trade Zone. This special interest is not unconnected with His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's bias in using this subsector to drive the economic growth and speedy industrialisation.


In conclusion, let us for the umpteenth time, assure all zone managements, zones' owners, enterprises, and other key stakeholders in the free trade zone family of our unwavering readiness to project your activities that can help to deepen the free zone concept in Nigeria; just call and we shall be there.

VISION

To establish
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The highest quality
That meet the needs
Of investors and
ensure a diversified
economy"

MISSION

To establish, licence,
regulate and operate
highly efficient Free
Zones by providing
Highly competitive
Incentive schemes,
Excellent support
Services for the purpose
of creating an enabling
environment for export,
manufacturing and other
commercial activities



Bola Tinubu: Brain Behind Modern Free Trade Zone in Nigeria

By Martins Odeh PhD

Lagos State occupies a vital space in Nigeria; first as a mega city with over 20 million population and second, as a coastal city with endless maritime routes that linked to other international waters that have positioned it as the country's most viable commercial hub.

Various governments have utilised these somewhat nature-gifts to impact not only on the development of the state, but the entire nation.

Suffice, therefore, to say that the importance of the state in spiking the development process and industrialization of the country has remained highly pivotal.

It is, however, amazing how the state has completely leveraged on the Federal Government Free Trade Zone Scheme managed by the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) to further drive the national economy.

It is common knowledge the His Excellency Ashiwaju Ahmed Tinubu GCFR, now President-Elect laid the foundation for the progress the state is currently making with the freezone scheme.

Currently, 18 out of the 52 Free Trade Zones in the country are located in Lagos state and these include: Lagos Free Zone (LFZ); Snake Island Integrated Free Zone (SIIFZ); Lekki Free Trade Zone (LFTZ); LADOL FTZ; Newsrest ASL Services & Logistics; Dangote Industries and Alaro City Development Free Zone.

Others are: Badagary Creek Integrated Plant; Nigeria Aviation Handling Company (NAHCO); Eko Atlantic; Ogororo Industrial Park; Tomaro Industrial Park; NASCO Town FZ and Quit Aviation Services.

The rest are: Maritime Services FTZ; Cocoa Beach & Walness Valued-Chain Resort; Flour Mills FZ, as well as the Oils Integrated Logistics Services FZ.

These free zones with estimated investments value at 25 billion US dollars are harbouring some of the most renowned international brands. For instance, the Lagos Free Zone, started in 2002 with 215 hectares. Later in 2012, around 590 hectares more land was given by the state government with the construction handled by Lagos Free Trade Zone Company.

This zone prides itself with some of the world class enterprises like: Colgate; Lekki Port; BASF; Insignia; Power Oil; Arla; HEC; Westminster; Boskalis; CNC; SBS; Kellogg's among others. The impact these enterprises are making in the economy cannot

be overemphasized.

It is worthy of note that the Lekki Deep Sea-Port, owned by the Lagos Free Zone, remains a world class maritime infrastructure worth 1.5 billion US dollar with the capacity to mainstream the entire African trade and logistic businesses into the global economy for profitability.

It was on the heels of these unmatched achievements that Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, the Managing Director of the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) recently described the country's modern free trade zone visioner, Tinubu, as the undisputed 'brain behind modern Free Trade Zone' in Nigeria.

The NEPZA managing director alluded further that president-elect had laid the foundation for the establishment of the leading free zones in the country that had attracted over 30 billion US dollars from the non-oil sector and generated over 170,000 direct and indirect employments.

"Eko Atlantic and the four quadrants of Lekki Free Zone which harboured Lagos Free Zone, Alaro City Lekki Free Zone, and over 100 other enterprises including the just concluded Deep-Sea Port and the Dangote Refinery operating in the enclaves as Tinubu's exclusive initiatives.

"His Excellency, Ashiwaju Bola In 2006 the state conceived an idea

Ahmed Tinubu's presidency will be a new dawn as we hope that the scheme will be used to speedily drive national growth. Let me again, congratulate the president-elect for a well-deserved victory at the election and I pray for a successful handover inauguration slated for Monday, May 29.

"We are optimistic that the excellent progress made by His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, in the sector will be expanded and sustained him," Adesugba said. You will recall that Tinubu's intervention on the old Lagos Bar Beach saved that part of Victoria Island's investment estimated at over 170 billion US dollars by the perennial ocean surges.

Today, Eko Atlantic, also a free trade zone, is an international hot-belt with well laid landscape and modern architectural masterpieces as it portends great revenue spot for Nigeria. The tourism worthiness of Eko Atlantic is been further accentuated with the citing of the United States of America's largest Embassy in the world there.

The receptiveness of the Lagos State Government under Tinubu created the right ambience for the Private Public Partnership that also birthed the multi-billion-dollar Dangote Refinery, a free trade zone located in the Lekki area of the state.



Panoramic view design for the U.S. Consulate General Campus at the Eko Atlantic City.

Continued in page 12

Boosting the Nigerian Economy: The Contributions of NEPZA

By Prof. Adesoji Adesugba



The Nigeria Export Processing Authority (NEPZA) is a vital institution that plays a significant role in driving economic growth and fostering international trade in Nigeria.

Established in 1992 under the Nigerian Export Processing Zones Act, the Authority has been instrumental in promoting export-oriented investments, attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), and stimulating job creation.

1. Creation of Export Processing Zones (EPZs):

NEPZA is responsible for the establishment, development, and management of Export Processing Zones in Nigeria. These EPZs serve as dedicated industrial hubs designed to attract foreign and local investments, with a focus on export-oriented industries. By providing a conducive business environment, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and a range of incentives, NEPZA has successfully attracted a multitude of industries, including manufacturing, agro-processing, textiles, and information technology.

2. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Inflows:

NEPZA's efforts have resulted in significant FDI inflows into Nigeria. The establishment of EPZs has created a favourable investment climate, offering tax incentives, duty-free imports, and simplified customs procedures. These incentives, coupled with NEPZA's streamlined approval processes and investor-friendly policies, have encouraged both multinational corporations and local investors to set up operations in EPZs with current cumulative investment value standing at 30 billion US Dollars. This influx of FDI has not

only increased capital investment but also brought in advanced technologies, managerial expertise, and access to global markets.

3. Job Creation and Skill Development:

The Authority's contribution to employment generation cannot be overstated. The establishment of EPZs has facilitated the creation of numerous direct and indirect job opportunities for Nigerians estimated to be 170,000 in the last 30 years. As can be seen, these industries within these zones have employed significant number of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers, reducing unemployment rates and poverty levels. Moreover, NEPZA collaborates with educational institutions and training centers to develop specialized training programmes, equipping individuals with relevant skills and enhancing their employability.

4. Export Diversification and Trade Promotion:

It is important to note that one of NEPZA's key objectives is to promote non-oil exports and diversify Nigeria's export base. By attracting export-oriented industries to EPZs, NEPZA has facilitated the production of a wide range of manufactured goods, agricultural products, and services for export. This diversification has reduced the country's over-reliance on oil revenues, promoting sustainable economic growth and increasing Nigeria's competitiveness in the global market. NEPZA, of course, actively engages in trade promotion activities, showcasing Nigerian products and attracting international buyers through participation in trade fairs, exhibitions, and business forums.

5. Economic Zones as Catalysts for Regional Development:

It is also imperative to state that NEPZA's EPZs have become catalysts for regional development. By establishing EPZs in strategic locations across Nigeria, the Authority has spurred infrastructure development, improved connectivity, and attracted ancillary industries in nearby areas. The growth of these industrial clusters has created a ripple effect, positively impacting the local economy through the generation of business opportunities, increased demand for goods and services, and improved living standards for communities surrounding the EPZs.

The Federal Government through the Authority has been committed to ensuring the effective crystallization of the many vitals of the free zone scheme to drive economic growth and industrialization in view of its deliberate interventions in widening the scope of the freezone ecosystem with approvals of new zones and bridging the infrastructure deficit.

At the moment, there are a total of 52 free trade zones operating within the six-geopolitical regions of Nigeria with the South-West accounting for 27; South-South 11; South-East 4; North-East 2; North-West 2; and North-Central 3 respectively. Out of the 52 zones, 50 of them are privately owned while the remaining two are public zones located in Calabar and Kano.

It is in this light that the Authority has overtly and covertly encouraged government at the sub-nationals' level to key into the scheme in order to fast track development in their various state. It is no rocket science therefore, that the Lagos State Government has and will continue to make the best gain of the scheme as it has long keyed into the concept and presently warehousing 19 out of the 27 zones sited in the South-West region.

The government in trying to improve on the global competitiveness of the scheme, felt the need to bridge the infrastructure gaps in the two public zones and surroundings of privately-owned zones with the executive of 112 projects listed on the NEPZA Tender Board, Direct Federal Executive Council Approval and the Ministerial Tender Board of Capital Project between 2017 and 2021 respectively. The developments have indeed repositioned the scheme to leverage on the Africa Continental Free Trade Zone Agreement (AfCFTA) in order to boost international trade.

It is no surprising that the federal government recently earmarked the country's four most viable International Airports which included Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja; Aminu Kanu International Airport, Kano; Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos; as well as Port Harcourt International Airport as Free Trade Zones.

The conversion of these four aviation corridors into active business ecosystems is no doubt a well-thought-out policy to expand the country's revenue base, generate employment and to improve the general business environment which can accelerate Foreign Direct Investment inflows.

It is safer to say that the impact of the free trade zone in powering the country's economy has been modest and there is room for improvement. For instance, a total of N34 billion was generated from the scheme as custom duty in 2022, just as N702 million accrued to the Federation Account as payments generated from the Immigration activities same year.

Furthermore, a total of N240 million was paid as PAYE in 2022 to the various state governments where free trade zones are located just as domestic

import from the zones to the local markets stood at N190 billion in the period under review.

It is also vital to state that international export from the free zones stood at 36 million US dollars as the scheme also engaged 3,500 Nigerians while 500 skills were transferred in 2022. This delineates NEPZA as one of the few agencies of government that midwife a system that attracts FDI/LDI; generates revenues; generate employment; promotes infrastructure development; promotes skills transfer as well as meet a chunk of the country's 200 million market population demands for goods and services.

The operation of the scheme is not without challenges and some of these drawbacks include interference; the current susceptibility of the NEPZA Act; poor external infrastructure; lack of interest of most state governments in adopting the concept; multiple taxation; and absence of Offshore Banking System.

In conclusion, managing the scheme remains a daunting task in view of aforementioned challenges, but the strides made in the last three years in spite of these drawbacks are testaments to the management's bullish and dodged approach in carrying out the assigned mandate of using the scheme to stimulating economic growth and fast track the country's industrialization.

These efforts have attracted foreign direct investment, boosted export-oriented industries, created employment opportunities, diversified the country's exports, and stimulated regional development. As the government continues to enhance this policy, the country is sure to become a globally competitive investment destination.

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba is the *MD/CEO of NEPZA*



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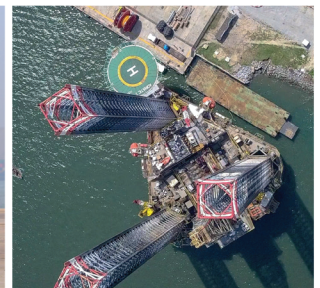
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UAE Corporate Tax: Pros and cons for free zone businesses to on-board

The UAE Ministry of Finance has announced corporate tax awareness sessions on June 21 and 22 June in Sharjah and Dubai. Among businesses and stakeholders, free zone companies earning income from trading activities would be keen to understand their future under the corporate tax laws.

Last week, we raised the issue of potential tax impact on direct shipment transactions. The issue merits a detailed discussion.

Scope of qualifying income

Qualifying Income – taxable at 0 per cent - includes income derived from distribution of goods in or from a designated zone to a non-free zone person. The activity of distributing goods must be undertaken in or from a designated zone.

Direct international shipments

A clarification is needed whether the condition 'in or from DZ' should be tested for the location of the distributor or for the location of the goods. In case of latter, not only income from direct shipments could potentially be taxed at 0 per cent, it could result in breaching the de-minimis condition also if such income is more than Dh5 million (or 5 per cent of total revenue).

This will apply irrespective of the location within or outside the designated zone.

In case of former, companies established in such free zones that are not designated zones will face

a peculiar conundrum. A qualifying free zone person (QFZP) - eligible for 0 per cent tax rate – could be based in a free zone (whether or not it is a designated zone).

However, the qualifying activity of distribution must be undertaken in or from a designated zone. Companies established in such free zones – that are not designated zones - could fail to treat their trading income from direct international shipments as qualifying income.

Warehousing in designated zones

If direct shipments are held to be non-eligible for qualifying income, the next best alternative for evaluation will be to warehouse the goods in a designated zone. One could possibly contend that the distribution activity was conducted in a designated zone and should qualify as qualifying income.

However, could 0 per cent tax rate be claimed for distribution income if the goods are physically warehoused in a designated zone even though the distributor is not located in one?

To be eligible as a qualifying free

zone person, the entity shall inter-alia undertake its 'core income-generating activities' (CIGA) in a free zone and maintain adequate substance. The CIGA can be outsourced to a related party or a third-party, in a free zone. A view is being proposed on social media that the warehousing (in a designated zone) could be outsourced by a non-designated zone free zone company.

However, could the qualifying activity itself be outsourced? One needs to understand if there is a difference between CIGA and qualifying activities. To illustrate, can a free zone company outsource manufacturing activity and still be eligible for 0 per cent tax rate?

Source of procurement

The distribution activity - listed as a qualifying activity - does not specify the source of procurement of the goods. It is not yet clear if the goods, sold in or from the designated zone (including exports), could be procured from a mainland supplier. It also needs to be examined if the mainland suppliers could include related parties. A clarity on

these points could influence the restructuring of business operations and potential anti-abuse implications.

Place of management

It must be remembered that the income earned by a free zone company could be taxable if it is attributable to a domestic permanent establishment, i.e., mainland. This would include a place where management and commercial decisions that are necessary for the conduct of the business are, in substance, made.

For trading companies operating both in the mainland and in a free zone/designated zone, the place of management will be an essential compliance point. To remain eligible for 0 per cent tax rate, they should ensure that the trading income is not attributable to a domestic permanent establishment.

As said multiple times, taxation will be a paradigm shift for UAE businesses. It is important for business owners to ask the right questions to seek a comprehensive understanding of the tax implications on their operations.



Pankaj S. Jain

Managing Director of AskPankaj Tax Advisors

Culled from <https://gulfnnews.com/>

Continued from page 7

to develop some part of the Lekki Peninsula into a blue-green, eco-friendly environment.

The proposed area covered an area of 60,000 hectares stretching from Victoria Island in the west to Refuge Island and some parts of Lekki town in the east.

The blue-green concept was primarily to create a comprehensive new town with important public facilities and infrastructure in the North and South peninsulas. The free trade zone scheme has, however, helped to propel this laudable vision to become a reality.

While the free trades zones and their enterprises are slithering in Lagos state, same cannot be said of those located in other enclaves for obvious reasons spanning from poor understanding of the concept by other state governments, infrastructure deficit, lethargic disposition of local investors and insecurity.

Adesugba, a thoroughbred Investment Promotion and Development expert, has in the last three years devoted time in addressing some of these systemic challenges that have limited the country from realising the full potentials of the scheme ranging also from inter-agency interference, obsolete NEPZA Act, analogue system of operation and external interference.

At the moment, the new management of the Authority with the support of the Buhari-led administration has obliterated most of these challenges and given the Authority a new impetus to promote and manage the scheme in accordance with global standards. The adoption of E-NEPZA, has greatly fenced off some of the teething challenges of accountability, transparency and probity.

The incoming government will be now be handed with a solid freezone scheme to drive the economy more bullishly.

The conversion of national spaces like the major four International Airports into Special Economic Zones, approvals for other specialised public zones in Lagos, Katsina, Benue, Gombe Ebonyi and Ilorin can be avenues for the new government to begin a widespread development across the six-geopolitical zones.

Also, the recent approvals for the establishment of seven privately-driven zones which are: Bonny Kingdom Free Trade Zone Rivers; Hydropolis Niger; Premier Industrial Free Trade Zone, Rivers; Koko Walness Value Change Resort, Lagos; GC Exports, Kogi; Ekiti Knowledge Zone, Ekiti as well as Flour Mill Zone Lagos are great stimulants of the economy with palpable benefits in both employment and revenue generations.

Already, the Authority is on the verge of concluding the legal frameworks for the listing of zones and their enterprises on the Nigeria Stock Market for Nigerians to own equity shares in some of these international brands.

Also, efforts are on to leverage on the global over 1trillion-dollar Virtual and Crypto investment enclave as the Authority mulls partnership with Talent City to establish the first Africa's Virtual Free Zone.

In conclusion, it is our expectation that the new government would place the free trade zone on a first line charge, being a veritable economic instrument to fast track the country's industrialization process.

Dr Odeh is the Head, Corporate Communications, NEPZA.



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CITY

Chief Executive Of



The Free Trade Zone concept for us remains the most viable economic growth option that Chief Executives of States should leverage on to speed up development of their states; and I am bullish in promoting this initiative.

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba
MD/CEO NEPZA



I really want to thank President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR for approving the Delta State SEZ Licence. This is indeed a milestone and we shall leverage on this new business ecosystem to harness the potentials of the Koko Port, Kwale Industrial Park, and the Ogwashiku Agro-Allied Park respectively. Our estimation is that the state will attract about \$22 billion investments when the corridor is fully developed.

Gov. Ifeanyi Okowa,
former Delta State Governor



Security is sine qua non to attracting investments and prosperity. We are witnesses to the fact that Delta State is relatively peaceful and so, the recently approved Special Economic Zone for the state shall indeed attract huge Foreign Direct Investment. (FDI)

Prince Adetokunbo Kayode SAN,
Former Attorney-General of the Federation, former President, Abuja Chamber of Commerce & Industry.



A Free Trade Zone status for the University of Abuja shall change both the landscape and fortune of the university for good. We want this handshake between the ivory tower and the Organised Private Sector to happen quickly.

Prof. AbdulRasheed Na'Allah,
VC, University of Abuja.

Officer's Perspectives



The passion of Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA to get Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti licenced as a Special Economic Zone is overwhelming. This goes to demonstrate his vision for a wholistic industrialization of the country.

Chief Afe Babalola,
Founder/Chancellor ABUA



The recently approved Ekiti Knowledge Free Zone is an economic stimulant that will provide jobs for our youth, earn us revenues and bridge the infrastructure gap.

Mr Abiodun Abayomi Oyeibanji,
Executive Governor, Ekitis State.



Our first goal is to ramp up production of the various products to ensure that within this year (2023), we are able to fully satisfy the nation's demand for quality petroleum products.

Alhaji Aliko Dangote,
Chairman, Dangote Group



The approved port status of Niger-Dock and Snake Island Integrated Free Zone will facilitate job creation and develop critical infrastructure vital for the nation's growth.

We are immensely grateful for the support the Federal Government has shown to enable the expansion of our operations, which increases our value add to Nigeria's economy.

Mr Maher Jarmakani,
Chairman/CEO, Niger-Dock.

DELTA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE (DSEZ)



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (left), presents Operating License of the Delta Special Economic Zone (DSEZ) to His Excellency, Sen. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa, CON, Executive Governor of Delta State.



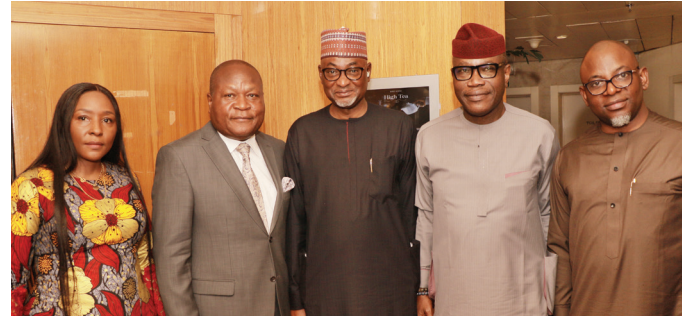
Gov. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa, of Delta State (5th right); Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (5th left), flanked by members of both NEPZA and DSEZ technical team.



Sen. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa, Executive Governor of Delta state (2nd right); Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (2nd left); Gen. Mike Ndubuisi ret'd, Chairman, DSEZDC (right); and Chief Festus Agas, Chief of Staff to the governor Delta State/Chairman, DSEZ Steering Committee (left).



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, presents a copy of Industrialization Digest (NEPZA's in-house magazine) to Gov. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa.



L-R: Victoria Akai, DG, ACCI; Prince Adetokunbo Kayode, SAN, former Attorney-General and Minister of Justice; Malam Muhammad Mu'azu Hadi-Ruma, TA, Zones Operations, MD, NEPZA; Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA.

GOVERNORS INDUCTION CEREMONY



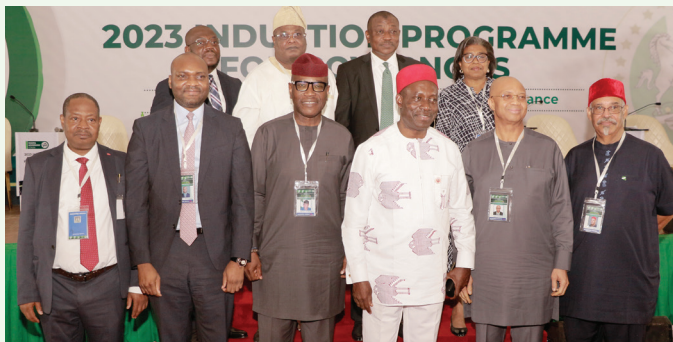
Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (left), and other panelist, during the Day Two of the Nigeria Governors' forum, NGF 2023 induction for new and returning governors, at the Presidential Banquet Hall, State House, Abuja... Monday, May 15, 2023.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, with Benjamin Akabueze, Director-General, Budget Office of the Federation.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, presents his paper during the Day Two of the Nigeria Governors' forum, NGF 2023 induction for new and returning governors, at the Presidential Banquet Hall, State House, Abuja.



Sen. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa, Executive Governor of Delta state (2nd right); Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (2nd left); Gen. Mike Ndubuisi ret'd, Chairman, DSEZDC (right); and Chief Festus Agas, Chief of Staff to the governor Delta State/Chairman, DSEZ Steering Committee (left).



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (left), exchange greetings with Dr. John Kayode Fayemi, former governor of Ekiti State (right) and Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Iormem Alia, Executive Governor of Benue State (2nd left), during the Nigeria Governors' forum, NGF 2023 induction for new and returning governors.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (centre), is flanked by his media crew, Dr. Martins Odeh, Head, Corporate Communications and Onyinye Adigwe, ACZO, NEPZA.



R-L: Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, with Dr. Avuwa Joseph Oteri, during the Nigeria Governors' forum, NGF 2023 induction for new and returning governors, at the Presidential Banquet Hall, State House, Abuja.



L-R: Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA; Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Iormem Alia, Executive Governor of Benue State; Mr. Moses Ternenge, Aide to the Benue State governor; Dr. Martins Odeh, Head, Corporate Communications, NEPZA.



L-R: Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA; Gov. Dikko Umar Radda of Katsina State, in a discursion during the Nigeria Governors' forum, NGF 2023 induction for new and returning governors, at the Presidential Banquet Hall, State House, Abuja.

ABUJA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY VISIT TO NEPZA



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA/2nd Deputy President, Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry, ACCI (centre), receives Alh. Al-Mujtaba Abubakar, President, Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry, ACCI (left), and Chief Emeka Obegolu, ESQ (right), 1st Deputy President, ACCI, at the NEPZA Corporate Headquarters, Abuja...

Wednesday, March 15, 2023.



Members of the visiting ACCI and NEPZA at the event.



Members of the NEPZA's Executive Management Team (EMT) at the event. L-R: Oyekunle Oyesola Rasheed Ph.D, Director, Finance and Accounts; Engr. S.K. Lawal, Director, Projects and Procurement; Hajia Haleema Sani-Kamba, Director, Corporate Services; Engr. Ekpe Godwin Okimba, Director, Planning, Research & Statistics; Chika Ibekwe (Mrs), Director, Zones Operations; and Bernadette Akuye-Gbefwi (Mrs.), Dep. Director/Head, Internal Audit.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA/2nd President, ACCI, in a business conversation with the visiting ACCI President, Alh. Al-Mujtaba Abubakar, in his office.



Alh. Al-Mujtaba Abubakar, ACCI President (2nd right), gives his address on the reason for the courtesy visit to NEPZA; the MD/CEO, NEPZA, Prof. Adesoji Adesugba (right); Prince Adetokunbo Kayode, SAN, former Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (2nd left); and Chief Emeka Obegolu, ESQ, 1st Dep. President, ACCI (left), in attendance.

AT THE HEAD OFFICE (NEPZA) ABUJA



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (centre), flanked by Comr'd Yahaya Hamisu, Chairman, ASCSN, NEPZA-Unit (2nd right); Comr'd Akor Fidel Castro, Secretary (2nd left); Comr'd Nura Abubakar, Treasurer (left); Comr'd Isaac Pendo Obaro, Ex-Offio (right), during the ASCSN NEPZA-Unit EXCO meeting with the MD/CEO at the Head office.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, presents the Approval and Designation Authorization Letter of the Deep Blue Industrial Free Trade Zone (DBIFTZ), Lagos, to Mrs. Anita Omoile, MD/CEO, DBIFTZ, at his office in Abuja...

Monday, June 5, 2023.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (centre), is flanked by Mr. Martin Folliasson, the French Embassy on Regional Economic Department and an official of the French Embassy.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (left), receives Mr. Martin Folliasson, the French Embassy on Regional Economic Department of Nigeria and Ghana, at the NEPZA's Corporate Headquarters, Abuja... Monday, June 5, 2023.

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (left), states the reason for the courtesy visit on the Solicitor-General of the Federation, Mrs Beatrice Jedy-Agba, OON.



Directors of both the Federal Ministry of Justice, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Lagos Free Zone (LFZ), in attendance.



L-R: Mrs Beatrice Jedy-Agba, OON, Solicitor-General and Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Justice; Elder Toyin Elegbede, ED, NEZA; Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, during the NEPZA's helmsman, Prof. Adesoji Adesugba's courtesy visit to the Federal Ministry of Justice... Wednesday, May 17, 2023.



Inter-Agency and Ministerial collaboration at the round-table.

Continued in page 34

NEPZA NEWS STORIES

NEPZA boss commends FG on Awolowo's appointment



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba has said that the appointment of Mr Olusegun Awolowo as Secretary, National Action Committee on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was a bold statement by the Federal Government to activate the law for the benefit of the Free Trade Zones, local industries and investors.

The AfCFTA is one of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063 of the African Union. It is a high ambition trade agreement with a comprehensive scope that eliminates barriers to trade in Africa.

You may recall that President Muhammadu Buhari, after months of scrutiny eventually signed the agreement on July 7, 2019 that made Nigeria a member.

Adesugba, who on Sunday made the remark said the president had

continued to display diligence in the handling of all trade, industry and investment policies of government. He therefore, explained that the appointment of Awolowo to oversee the national action committee in the local implementation of the agreement was fitting.

The NEPZA Chief Executive Officer, also said that Awolowo would be operating on a familiar ground having served as the Managing Director/CEO of the Nigeria Export Promotion Council (NEPC) for the period of eight years.

He further explained that the bold steps taken by the government so far on the local implementation stage of the agreement were exemplary, adding that it was about time the country's Free Trade Zones, local investors and industries took advantage of the government's

friendly policy around the agreement. "Let me at this point congratulate Mr Segun Awolowo for his appointment and to wish him well as he frontally leads the country's business community to boost their participation in trade on the continent.

"We are also very ecstatic with the uncommon commitment of the government in ensuring that the country takes the lead in trading across Africa. Nothing can be re-assuring to achieve this with the recent inauguration of the Deep-Sea Port located in the Lagos Free Zone by the president," he said.

06/02/2023

NEPZA boss describes Bola Tinubu as 'brainbox' of modern Free Trade Zone in Nigeria



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, the Managing Director of the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) says Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, winner of the country's February 25 Presidential Election is an undisputed brainbox of modern Free Trade Zone in Nigeria.

Adesugba, also, the Chief Executive Officer of NEPZA, made this remark on Monday in his congratulatory message to the National Leader of the APC on his victory at the poll.

The NEPZA managing director said that Tinubu laid the foundation for the establishment of the leading free zones in the country that had attracted over 20 billion US dollars to the National Economy and generated 170,000 direct and indirect employments.

He explained that establishment of the Eko Atlantic and the four quadrants of Lekki Free Zone which harboured Dangote Refinery, Lagos Free Zone, Lagos Free Port, Alaro City Free Zone, Lekki Free Zone and over 100 other enterprises including the just concluded Deep-Sea Port operating in the enclaves as Tinubu's exclusive initiatives.

"Bola Ahmed Tinubu's presidency will be a new dawn and as a veritable strategy for speedy economic development.

"We are optimistic that the excellent progress made by His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, in the sector will be expanded and sustained.



"It is on this note that the Management and Staff of the Authority congratulate the deserving victory of a man with the right foresight to use the free zone scheme to speed up the development of the country," Adesugba said.

06/03/2023

NEPZA, SEC begin process of listing FTZs on capital market



The Federal Government is preparing the country's business environment for greater prosperity and wealth circulation as plans are underway to begin the listing of Free Trades Zones and zones' enterprises on the Nigeria Capital Market.

The Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA); Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA) and the Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) as well as the Lagos Free Zone (LFZ) are the key establishments involved in this innovation.

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, Managing Director/CEO NEPZA while speaking during a business interface meeting with the Director-General of SEC, Alhaji Lamido Yuguda on Wednesday at the commission's headquarters in Abuja, said that the prosperity and wealth of the free trade zone would be effectively extended to the investing public through the stock market.

Adesugba, explained that the law establishing NEPZA gave it substantial latitude to effect changes that ensured dimensional linkages between the free zone and the Nigerian public for mutual benefits.

"We are not in this alone; it is indeed a synergy between some key agencies of government with the Security and

Exchange Commission driving the process in order to grant access to the free trade zone community to trade on the Nigeria Stock Market.

"The best governance structure and framework to drive this innovation is also being worked on. This initiative is a sign of greater things the Authority and the Commission can do together to position the country's business environment and the stock market for global competitiveness.

"We are, therefore, about to unleash immeasurable wealth, technology and prosperity into the country's stock market. It is our desire to convert the country's business space into a free trade zone as obtained in Dubai. This is like a first step towards that direction," the NEPZA boss said. Mr Dinesh Rathi, Managing Director of the Lagos Free Zone (LFZ), said that it was gratifying that the Lagos

Free Zone was among the team championing this good course, adding that the move would allow shares of the Lagos Free Zone, Lekki Deep-Sea Port and the 24 enterprises under zone's supervision available to the public in the future.

"We are, therefore, happy that the Working Group drafting the framework has been given six weeks deadline within which to submit the final draft of the would-be operating framework.

"We need a document that will stand the test of time. This system of linking the free zone with the customs territory using the stock market is not new; we are currently sharing the experiences of Dubai, China and India that have been successful with this," Rathi said.

On his part, Yuguda, expressed delight in the initiative that aimed

to pull more players into the stock market net, adding, however, that all grey areas that could act as impediment must be dealt with.

The DG, SEC also said that the commission was interested in the governance structure of the free trade zones enterprises as that was fundamental to the declaration of profits and sharing of dividends.

"On the whole, the commission welcomes this innovation and we must all work hard for it to come to fruition in the shortest possible time.

"Already, six weeks deadline has been agreed to submit the final draft of the framework and we must work within this period to deliver this big gift to Nigerians," Yuguda said.

16/02/2023

NEPZA boss extols new NACCIMA president's investment promotion insight, says election well-deserved



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, Managing Director, Nigeria Export Process Zones Authority (NEPZA) says the election of Mr Dele Kelvin Oye as the 22nd President of the National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), will elicit aggressive local and international investments' promotion by the Organised Private Sector to rapidly grow the economy.

Adesugba stated this while

congratulating the new president on Monday in Abuja as he (Oye) succeeded Chief Ide John Udeagbala to administer the association for the next two years.

The NEPZA Chief Executive Officer, explained that the entire NACCIMA family was confident of the new president's management prowess and rich index in both local and international investments promotion. He however, urged the president to challenge his members to take advantage of series of good economic policies of the Federal Government to increase their investment profiles, adding that the Free Trade Zones were among those impeccable investment enclaves that must be explored.

Adesugba, therefore, called on Oye to consider NEPZA as partner in

progress, adding that NACCIMA's unbroken cooperation with the Authority was required to jointly drive the country's economy successfully. "On behalf of the management and staff of NEPZA, I wish to congratulate you for a successful tenure of office," Adesugba said.

Aside being a successful Legal Practitioner, Oye's involvement in the economic landscape stretches beyond the shores of Nigeria as he currently chairs the Nigeria Turkiye Business Council (NTBC).

He is the Founding Partners of Consolidated Legal Practice and has been an attorney for about 29 years with specializations in securities litigation; business succession planning; employment law counseling/ litigation; commercial litigation; mergers and acquisitions; as well as general corporate transactions

May 22, 2023.

Adebayo, Okowa, Adesugba hail FG's adoption of SEZ to fast-track industrialization



The Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Otunba Adebayo, has described the Federal Government's adoption of the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) model of the Free Trade Zone concept as a wise step toward making the scheme more meaningful and beneficial to local investors and markets.

The minister made the remark on Wednesday at the official licence presentation of the Delta State Special Economic Zone (DSEZ) by the Nigeria Export Processing Zone in Abuja.

Adebayo, represented by Mr S.A Jaja, Deputy Director, Trade in the ministry, said the President Muhammadu Buhari-led administration had encouraged NEPZA to adopt the model for all-inclusive industrialisation process across the country.

The minister further explained that the SEZ model was better positioned to both attract Foreign and Local Direct Investments into the free zone business ecosystem, adding that the model allowed for easy interface with the custom territory.

He therefore, expressed delight on the giant step taken by the Delta State Government to embrace the economic model that had the capacity to unlock the state's wealth and growth potentials.

Adebayo also thanked Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, the Managing Director of NEPZA for his relentless passion in ensuring that all-state governments keyed into the free zone scheme. On his part, the governor of Delta State, Sen. Ifeanyi Okowa, thanked President Buhari for approving the Delta State SEZ Licence, describing it as a milestone.

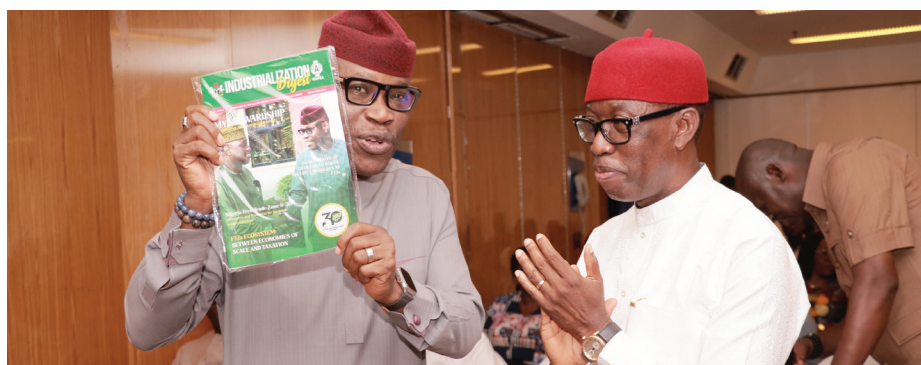
Okowa said the state would leverage on the new business enclave to fully harness the potentials of the Koko

Port, Kwale Industrial Park, and the Ogwashiku Agro-Allied Park.

The governor also said that the state would greatly rely on its comparative advantage in gas and crude oil deposits to also lure sustainable investments into the zone.

Adesugba, while delivering the licence to the governor, said the Authority was committed to further assisting the state in providing it with technical assistance and attracting world class investors into the zones.

27/04/2023



NEPZA, NEZA, FTZs CEOs, Ex-customs chiefs bid DCG Ekekezie farewell



The Nigeria Export Processing Authority (NEPZA) and the Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA) have formally led the free trade zones' community as well as serving and ex-senior officers of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) to bid Deputy Comptroller-General of customs, Mrs Kathleen Chinwe Ekekezie tumultuous farewell after a 35-year meritorious service.

The event which took place on Saturday at the international Restaurant and Dinner Hall of the Eko Hotel, Lagos was graced by over 400 personalities cutting across the business community, customs, MDAs, families and friends.

Ekekezie, who retired as Deputy Comptroller General in-charge of Excise, Free Trade Zone & Industrial Incentives, was described by Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, Managing Director of NEPZA as a "quintessential achiever."

Adesugba, also, Chief Executive Officer of the Authority, said that Ekekezie had combined a number of good virtues to attain the rank of the Deputy Comptroller-General in a heavily competitive and male dominated environment.

The NEPZA boss, explained that

Ekekezie was a brilliant officer and administrator whose professional interventions in the management of the affairs of the free trade zones remained palpable and indelible.

"Ekekezie, was a thoroughbred public officer with a proven record of uncommon brilliance and achievements. She has got proven leadership and team building skills.

"She was focused, performance-driven, insightful, innovative, analytical and did develop numerous problem-solving skills over these years. She indeed, brought all these good traits to assist us at the NEPZA board and in the management of the entire free trade zones in Nigeria.

"On behalf of the Authority, management team and staff, I wish her the most peaceful retirement life." Adesugba said.

On his part, Elder Toyin Elegbede, the Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA) said that retired DCG Ekekezie was loved across all pedestals and that the love, respect and honour for her among the free trade stakeholders remained even more pronounced.

"The association and NEPZA have put this together to celebrate the peaceful retirement of this infrequent

Nigerian", Elegbede said.

He also said that: "this rare retired customs chief was simply audacious and an exemplary administrator whose footprints on the premises of all the free trade zones shall not be easily erased."

A cross section of Managing Directors and Chief Executive Officers of free zones and other personalities also took turns to deliver their goodwill messages.

In her remarks, the celebrant acknowledged the show of love and honour toward her, adding that all the proclaimed achievements she made while in service were ordered by God.

The Achi, Oji-River Enugu State born retired customs chief, further said that it was her commitment to the fear of God that was instrumental for the customs collecting its first 'Trillion Naira revenue' under her watch as an Acting Deputy Comptroller-General (Tariff & Trade) between December 10, 2017 and January 10, 2018

06/02/2023

FG, Uni-Abuja, ACCI commend NEPZA over proposed SEZ's initiatives

The Federal Government has said that the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority's (NEPZA) accelerated initiatives at designating willing Universities as Special Economic Zones was aimed at speedily reconfiguring the country's academic environment to match with global trends and competitiveness. Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, the Hon. Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, made the remark while playing host to Prof. Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Abuja, Prince Adetokunbo Kayode SAN, former Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of the Federation and Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO NEPZA in his office on Tuesday in Abuja.

Adebayo said that the country's industrialisation process could become much more prolific and all-encompassing when the country was able to coordinate its universities to also operate as profitable industries through the free zone scheme.

"The MD NEPZA has given a brief background of what this is all about and let me assure you that it is something that the federal government will be interested in.

"It is indeed a unique idea to be able to make the academic institutions have the freedom to break away from the over-dependence on government for funding. Once this initiative gains popularity, universities across the country will become centers of not only human capital development but of wealth creation. "I am delighted with the strong partnership the university of Abuja



has created with NEPZA and the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) to pull this project through.

"You have to move fast so that we can get all things sorted out as quickly as possible. I will, however, like to assure you that you have my 100 per cent support," the minister said.

On his part, the VC said that the visit was a follow up to a preliminary technical session held with NEPZA recently, adding that the both parties had worked assiduously in ensuring that the project was realized at the short possible time.

Na'Allah explained that the project required the blessing and support of the minister and the federal government, adding that the designation of the university as a special economic zone would not only put an end to our history of incessant strikes, but would transfer enormous wealth into the hands of all members of the university community.

He said further that the university was endowed with a number of solid minerals at commercial quantities, adding that opening the campus space for external investments using the free zone concept would be a landmark achievement.

"We want the university to become the richest institution in Nigeria. We will open the space for tourism, estate, mining, agriculture, car

production plants, dairy farms, light rail services etc. Our proximity to the city and the airport makes movement seamless. This is our thinking, this is our project," the VC said.

Speaking, Kayode also former president of ACCI, and Head of the Technical Committee, expressed delight to be part of the project. He said that the ACCI had sourced sufficient investors and international financial bodies that had bought into the project.

"We are expected to reconfigure the way the country's universities are run using the university of Abuja as a pilot scheme.

"We have been to some of the great universities around the world and seen that those institutions have direct influence in the development of their host cities. This is what we want to replicate here," Kayode said. You may recall that NEPZA and the Ekiti State Government are working on processes to establish the "Knowledge and Technology Special Economic Zone" in Ado Ekiti, just as it received an application from the Afe Babalola University Ado Ekiti (ABUA) for a similar project.

The NEPZA boss, therefore, said that the Authority was on the verge of showing how the university and chains of industries could jointly be operated within same location to enhance the country's industrialisation process.

01/02/2023

NEPZA hails Okpukpara's appointment to Int'l Jewelry Board, mulls collaboration with Gemstones' professionals to promote sector



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, Managing Director of the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) said that the country's gemstones Industry was speedily gaining global attention with the appointment of Mrs Amina Okpukpara to the International Board of the Women Jewelry Association, New York.

Adesugba made the remark while congratulating Okpukpara and other new members of the board on Tuesday in Abuja.

The NEPZA boss, also the Chief



NEPZA commences technical study of proposed Ekiti Knowledge/Technology Free Trade Zone

The Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) and the Ekiti State Government have agreed on a 2-week deadline to submit Technical Report on the proposed "Knowledge and Technology Free Trade Zone" to be established in Ado Ekiti.

The two parties agreed on the

February 7, 2023 deadline submission of the report after NEPZA officials led by its Managing Director/CEO, Prof. Adesoji Adesugba conducted a preliminary inspection of the site and other associated infrastructure on Thursday in Ado Ekiti.

Adesugba, during a session with the State Governor, His Excellency, Gov. Abiodun Oyebanji after the

inspection, said the free trade zone would be used to revolutionise the state.

The NEPZA boss explained that the state had the required background to venture into this specialised ecosystem, adding that the state now appeared decisive to harness its peoples with high academic

Executive Officer of the Authority, explained further that the sector was a multi-billion-naira enterprise that required public and private collaboration for a more effective and efficient management.

He said that it was gratifying to see how Okpukpara had consistently explored and exploited the sector both in Nigeria and the United States.

Adesugba, therefore, reiterated the Authority's readiness to encourage Nigerians living abroad to link up with the sector back at home through the free trade zones corridors which had the required incentives to spike the needed enormous profits for the investors.

The NEPZA boss also explained that the Authority was working with the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the 'Best Centre,' that specialised in the training of gemologists to widen the scope of the trade in order to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the country.

"This is a huge enterprise and investors are welcome to collaborate with us on how to promote the sector in our free zones.

"I therefore, congratulate our newest ambassador in the sector, Mrs Amina Lotanna Okpukpara GIA GG, AJP on her well-deserved appointment to the International Board of the Women Jewelry Association."

The managing director, further added that "she has contributed immensely to the gemstones and Jewelry Industry in Nigeria and Africa. We are, however, not surprised with this new appointment as she has long craved to be an international player in the sector."

01/02/2023

Continued from page 26

and technological endowment for profitability.

He said the Authority was prepared to assist the state to achieve its goal of developing the first knowledge and virtual-based free zone in Africa. "NEPZA is now very dynamic and innovative in the way and manner it encourages the establishment of free zones in the country. This is a deliberate move by the Federal Government to help boost trade and investments across the 36 states of the Federation, and the FCT.

"The Governor and I have, therefore, agreed to give a two-week deadline for the submission of the Technical Report after a more detailed inspection is carried out by NEPZA officials in collaboration with other technical partners. Precisely, we shall be looking to have this report on February 7, 2023 for onward transmission for Presidential Declaration.

On his part, the governor expressed profound delight on the visit of the

NEPZA team to evaluate the capacity of the state to own and manage a free zone.

Oyebanji explained that the visit was a follow-up to his courtesy call on the managing director of the Authority where he sought the support and guidance of the Authority in setting up the Knowledge and Technology Free Zone that will attract wealth and prosperity to the state.

"We have campaigned on a mantra of sheer prosperity, so that we will be less dependent on sharing from the monthly Federation Account. It is our goal to drive development in the state either with or without FAC. "My exposure to the Lekki Free Trade Zone corridor is an eye opener and we shall fulfill all the technical requirements to ensure we scale through the various stages of approvals," the governor said.

In a related development, the Authority has also agreed to commence technical inspection of the Afe Babalola University Ado Ekiti (ABUAD) for a free zone status.

Adesugba, after an on-the-spot assessment of the university, Afe Babalola Farm and Afe Babalola Industrial Park, said the ABUAD Joint Venture was on the verge of showing how university and industry could be operated to benefit the country.

"We have seen the capacity of this institution, a different kind of university that is committed to nation building. Our technical officers shall commence evaluation of these entities for a free zone status.

"Imagine the huge business opportunities that await investors and the good people of this state when these two proposed free zones are approved and become operational," Adesugba said.

Chief Afe Babalola, founder of ABUAD explained that the university and its adjoined businesses could become the next business revelation for the country if given the free zone status.

28/01/2023



► **Special Interview**

Buhari and Free Trade Zones' upward growth trajectory

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba

President Muhammadu Buhari was consistently faithful with activating the Free Trade Scheme to drive the country's economic policy within the life time of his administration and this undoubtedly helped to attract some significant measure of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) with the current combined investments' value of the scheme standing at 30 billion US Dollars. Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, Managing Director/CEO of the NEPZA in this excerpt, provides the background, prospects and achievements recorded in this sector in the past seven years.



Q: Assessment of the success of FTZs in diversifying Nigeria's non-oil revenue, especially by generating Forex: Main Challenges to the forgoing.

Ans: It was with this very reason of creating a viable revenue option to reduce the over-dependency on the downstream sector that the Nigerian Government in its wisdom adopted the Free Trade Zone concept and created the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) with an Act 63 of the parliament in 1992 to regulate and manage the scheme.

First, an entirely public free trade zones were promoted with the establishment of the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in Calabar, Cross River State which later metamorphosed to the Calabar Free Trade Zone. The second public zone was set up in Kano. We have had to unfortunately manage these two public zones for over 20 years; and this showed how we have collectively as a nation failed to maximise the huge potentials of this scheme.

However, we have experienced a turnaround in the last seven years of His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari's administration as he continues to show commitment and passion through Federal Government unflinching support for the success of the scheme. For instance, in 2017, administration buttressed the role of Special Economic Zones (SEZ's) in Nigeria's industrialization agenda under the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) by using the SEZ model to accelerate implementation of the Nigerian Industrial Revolution Plan (NIRP), a four (4) year road map on industrialization in order to create jobs and promote exports, which in turn will facilitate economic growth

Consequently, we have seen approvals given to the establishment of:

- ❑ Integrated Cotton & Fabric Special Economic Zone in Funtua, Katsina State.
- ❑ Agro-Allied Special Economic Zone in Ilorin, Kwara State.
- ❑ Medical/Pharmaceutical Special Economic Zone, Lekki, Lagos.

The Federal Executive Council also approved the establishment of Special Economic Zones in Sokoto, Gombe, Benue and Ebonyi States within the same period, but we have the budget approval of commencing work in Katsina, Ilorin and Lagos in the first phase development plan.

Aside these, the administration in 2022 approved the designation of four international airports as Special Economic Zones. They are:

- ❑ Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja.
- ❑ Murtala Mohammed International Airport, Lagos.
- ❑ Aminu Kano International Airport, Kano.
- ❑ PortHarcourt International Airport, Rivers State.

Successes/Prospects

There is no gainsaying that the successes and prospects of the scheme have been in the last few years made manifest as a result of the entrants of private investors. Currently, there are a total of 46 private zones with a culminating investment value standing at 30 billion US dollars oiling the Nigerian economy. NEPZA with a highly proficient workforce has also under my watch increased investment prospecting and promotion which is leading to the desired attraction of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Local Direct Investment (LDI) respectively. The impact of the scheme is being seriously felt in Country's GDP and attraction of Forex. For instance, we have at the moment, 500 enterprises operating in these zones providing a total of 100,000 direct jobs and over 170, 000 indirect jobs for the country's teeming youth population. The Authority has in the last two and half years developed the right strategy plan to put the scheme at the front-burner of global competitiveness.

Main Challenges

- ❑ Knowledge gap of the scheme by policymakers/stakeholders
- ❑ Intra-agency lukewarm cooperation.
- ❑ Non-existence of Offshore Banking System etc.

It is interesting to note that steps are being taken to resolve these challenges so as to free up the scheme for greater exploitation, being a veritable option for revenue generation for the government aside oil and gas.

Q: Key factors driving the upswing in new FTZS across Nigeria; and NEPZA's role in encouraging establishment.

Ans: On my assumption of office as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Authority, I wasted no time in commencing the execution of the federal government mandate aimed at genuinely driving the country's economy. In the light of that, the board, the management team and of course, the workforce agreed to some of my key reforms which include:

- Staff development leading to improved staff motivation.
- Establishment of New Unit to support new strategies: -

The organizational structure of the authority was reviewed to suit the delivery of the revised strategic plan. This included the establishment of two new units focused on ensuring the safety and security of lives and properties in all zones. These are Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Unit, Security Unit, Investment Promotion and Investors Services, Planning, Research and Statistics Departments as well as the Anti-Corruption Unit (ACTU). Others include:

- New Tariff Structures
- Review of Legal and Regulatory Framework.
- National Operational Licences (OPL): -

The FZ scheme is global in nature and requires flexible and seamless set of procedures for the operationalisation and licensing of enterprises within the zones. In this regard, a National Single Registration/Operational Licence regime was adopted under the National Economic Development Policy which gives potential investors the right to situate and operate their enterprises within any zone of their choice.

- Improved Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration through the Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA).
- Collaboration with sister agencies.
- The NEPZA Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre (ADRC): -

Structured by the Institute of Chartered Mediators and Conciliators (ICMC), the NEPZA DRC provides an avenue and facility for access to justice where Free Zone Management Companies, Enterprise and personnel enjoy the benefits of resolving their disputes without the usual delays experienced in

litigation in courts.

- Implementation of a revised social media strategy.

It is interesting to note that the impact of these efforts is what has bestowed "the beautiful bride" status on NEPZA; we are ceaselessly committed to the turning around of the country dwindling economy fortunes using the free zone.

Q: Evaluation of the competitiveness/ attractiveness, in terms of incentives, infrastructure, utilities etc, of Nigeria's FTZ's vis-à-vis regional and international counterparts.

Ans: The free trade zone as you are aware is a global business ecosystem with somewhat attractive incentives as investors' baits. Nigeria, in line with the rules and regulations of the concept, adopted some of the best incentives as deliberate measure to compete and canvass for investments not alone in Africa but globally.

Our policy direction also recognizes economies of scale being cost advantages reaped by enterprises when production becomes efficient. It is with this in mind that the Nigeria Government heavily incentivized operations in the free zones. Over time, the government has provided outside infrastructure, improved delivery of services around outside utilities like water, power as well as built roads which have so far assisted these enterprises in the zones to achieve regular increases in production at lower cost.



Below are some of the definitive incentives currently in operation:

- ❑ Complete tax holiday from Federal, state and local government taxes, rates, custom duties and levies.
- ❑ One-stop-shop approvals for all permits, operating licenses and incorporation papers.
- ❑ Duty-free, tax-free import of raw materials and components for goods destined for re-export.
- ❑ Duty-free introduction of capital goods, consumer goods, machinery, equipment and furniture.
- ❑ Permission to sell 100 per cent of manufactured, assembled or imported goods into the domestic Nigerian market. However, when selling into the domestic market, the amount of imported duty on goods manufactured in the free zone is calculated only on the basis of the raw materials or components used in the assembly, not on the finished goods.
- ❑ 100 per cent foreign ownership of investments.
- ❑ 100 per cent repatriation of capital, profits and dividends.
- ❑ Waivers on all import and export licenses.
- ❑ Waivers on all expatriate quotas for companies operating in the zones.
- ❑ Prohibition of strikes and lockouts during the first 10 years of operation.
- ❑ Rent-free land within the first 6 months of construction for government owned free zones.
- ❑ Standard Facilities in the Free Zones
 - ❑ Large expanse of industrial land with good access to international airports and sea ports, railways and other modes of transportation.
 - ❑ Fenced wall around the zones with good security network.
 - ❑ Trained Customs/Immigration personnel as obtained in other Free Zones worldwide.
 - ❑ Special Economic Zones Security (SEZSEC)/Police/DSS posts to provide adequate security in the zones.
 - ❑ Pre-built zone factory building and service plots.
 - ❑ Pre-built zone warehouses for storage of raw materials and products.
 - ❑ Efficient telecommunication facilities.
- ❑ A one-stop-shop administrative center to handle all investors' needs.
- ❑ Training centers to cater for skills needs, among others.
- ❑ 25 Megawatts of Electricity in the Calabar and Kano Free Trade Zones apiece.
- ❑ Investors have discovered the following benefits in locating in any of the Free Zones in Nigeria.
 - ❑ Nigeria is by far the largest consumer market in Africa with more than 200 million inhabitants.
 - ❑ Investors can take advantage of this market while working toward developing their export market.
 - ❑ Investors benefit from the proximity to abundant natural resources such as wood, rubber, cocoa, gum Arabic, sesame and gemstones.
 - ❑ Nigeria is an excellent location from which to export to the rest of Africa, middle-east, Europe and the Americas.
 - ❑ Nigeria enjoys the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) with benefit on more than 65,000 products.
 - ❑ There are preferential quotas and tariffs on the export of some of the goods to the EU, D8, ECOWAS, WTO, OPEC etc.
 - ❑ Investors benefit from an abundant supply of skilled labour at some of the most competitive rates worldwide.
 - ❑ Linking the Free Trade Zone and Customs Territory through the listing of FTZs on the Nigerian Stock Market (Process ongoing).

Q: Views on strengthening supply chain linkages between local firms and businesses in the FTZs; and ensuring technology and skills transfer to local stakeholders.

Ans: The operation of the concept in Nigeria has evolved with time. It metamorphosed from being an Export Processing Zones (EPZ) to a Free Trade Zone (FTZ) and now to being a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). We have had to experience different economic situations at every stage but, the first two models did not as much promote supply chain linkages between local firms and the free zone as experienced now with the special economic zone model. This upgrade has changed the dynamics of free trade zone operation in Nigeria as the business ecosystem now has a robust nexus with the local markets, local investors, local industrialists, local suppliers and the entire citizenry; thereby helping to genuinely drive the country's industrialization process.

Below are a few of the 52 world-class Free Trade Zones in Nigeria:

- Dangote Free Trade Zone, Lagos.
- Lagos Free Zone.
- Lekki Deep-Sea Port.
- Lekki Free Trade Zone, Lagos.
- Alaro City Free Trade Zone, Lagos.
- Ogun Guandong Free Trade, Ogun State.
- Eko Atlantic City, Lagos.
- Eyimba Economic City
- Calabar Free Trade Zone
- Kano Free Trade Zone
- Snake Island Integrated Free Zone, Lagos.
- Tinapa Free Zone & Resort, Cross River State.
- LADOL Free Trade Zone.

As earlier stated, there are 46 free trade zones under NEPZA supervision, but I have just mentioned these few notable ones for you to understand the quality of business inter-faces that happen between the country free zone landscape and the customs territory which on a daily lubricate the supply chain linkages.

CASE STUDIES

Dangote Refinery

Dangote refinery is a 650,000 barrels per day (bpd) integrated refinery and petrochemical project under construction in the Lekki Free Zone near Lagos, Nigeria. It is expected to be Africa's biggest oil refinery and the world's biggest single-train facility, upon completion in 2022.

The refinery will process a variety of light and medium grades of crude to produce Euro-V quality clean fuels including gasoline and diesel as well as

jet fuel and polypropylene.

Dangote Oil Refinery, a company owned by the Nigeria-based Dangote Group, is developing the project with an estimated investment of \$19bn. Nigeria's Federal Executive Council (FEC) approved the acquisition of 20% minority stake in the project by state-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) for \$2.76bn in August 2021.

The integrated refinery and petrochemical projects are expected to generate 9,500 direct and 25,000 indirect jobs.

This huge construction site is helping in building the technical expertise of young Nigerian Engineers and other supporting staff in various departments of the oil and gas sector.

Lekki Deep-sea Port

The Lekki Deep-Sea Port is a marquee free zone enterprise managed by the Lagos Free Zone. The development of the Nigeria's first deep seaport, was undertaken by Lekki LFTZ Enterprise Limited, a special-purpose vehicle promoted by the Tolaram Group and China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd. The entire project is valued at about 1.5 billion US dollars. In the first phase, the port is expected to have a natural depth of 16.5 metres, a quay length of 680 metres, a breakwater of 1.909 metres, about three containers berths, a marine services jetty to handle containers as well as a liquid and dry bulk.

The container terminal is built and equipped with the capacity to handle up to 2.7 million 20-foot equivalent units of containers annually. Nigerians will further see more expansion projects on the port site after the new port must have started commercial operations.

Continue in page 43



Ogun –Guangdong Free Trade Zone approved by the President Umaru Yar’ Adua is established in 2008, which is the first outcome of the friendly partnership between China’s Guangdong province and Ogun state. It located in Igbesa, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. The geographic area covers over 20 square kilometers (over 2,000 Hectares) with lease period of 99 years.



China-Africa Investment FZC as the management company of OGFTZ provides services such as attracting foreign investors through its robust marketing strategies, processing of customs documents for export and import, operational license for

enterprises, issuance of registration certificate, general administrative services among others. This platform is beneficial for Chinese enterprises to invest in Nigerian market in consonance with the Chinese “One Belt, One Road” initiative.

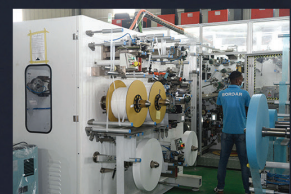
Since taking over the management responsibilities of Ogun-Guangdong Free Trade Zone, China-Africa Investment FZC has taken bold steps to improve the overall economic condition and welfare of the host communities through committed developmental projects as part of its corporate social responsibility that are beneficial to the host communities. Among them are the ongoing construction of *10KM Lusada-Igbesa Road project*, construction of *Medical Clinic*, *China-Nigeria Friendship School* and *Scholarships* to qualified youths in the communities that are currently studying in China, palliatives of communities roads, participation and gifts to communities during festivities, admittance of persons for industrial attachments, etc.

We are committed to a win-win vision towards this lofty project which will make Nigerian economy stronger and the people prosperous.

OGUN-GUANGDONG FREE TRADE ZONE



It is one of the fast-rising Free Trade Zones in Nigeria and continues to attract foreign investors because of its proximity to the city of Lagos which is the economic hub of West Africa and other attractive FACILITIES which includes **24-hours power supply, gas supply, availability of needed raw materials, strong and youthful workforce** etc. To date, the zone has over 60 registered enterprises with about 33 enterprises fully operational while others are at various stages of construction. Some of the operating enterprises have brands that have become household names in the Nigerian and West Africa sub-regional markets. These enterprises includes GOODWILL CERAMICS FZE, CHINA NIGERIA GLASS (CNG) FZE, HEWANG PACKAGING FZE, etc.



If want more information, please feel free to contact us.

Daniel CHE: 0906 676 7435

Address: Ogun Guangdong Free Trade Zone, Igbesa, Ado-Odo/Ota local government area, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Continued from page 19

DCG EKEKEZIE

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (centre), is flanked by Mr. Martin Folliasson, the French Embassy on Regional Economic Department and an official of the French Embassy.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (centre), is flanked by Mr. Martin Folliasson, the French Embassy on Regional Economic Department and an official of the French Embassy.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (centre), is flanked by Mr. Martin Folliasson, the French Embassy on Regional Economic Department and an official of the French Embassy.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (left), receives Mr. Martin Folliasson, the French Embassy on Regional Economic Department of Nigeria and Ghana, at the NEPZA's Corporate Headquarters, Abuja... Monday, June 5, 2023.

NACCIMA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN EKITI

Gov Abiodun Oyebanji of Ekiti State (r), with Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, in a tete-a-tete during the NACCIMA 63rd AGM and inauguration in Ado-Ekiti.



L-R: Aare Afe Babalola, Chancellor/Founder, ABUAD; Mr. Dele Kelvin Oye, Esq, National President, NACCIMA; Mr. Biodun Abayomi Oyebanji, Executive Governor of Ekiti state; Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, former Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment; Iyalode Alaba Lawson, former President, NACCIMA (2017 - 2019); Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA.



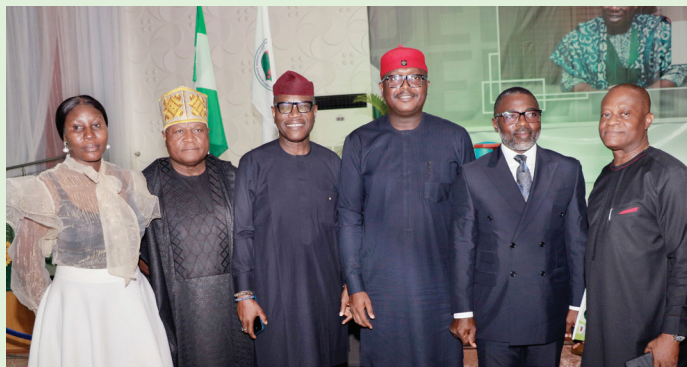
R-L: Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA; Mrs. Omotayo Adeola, SA-Trade and Investment, Ekiti State Government; Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, former Minister for Industry, Trade and Investment; and Chief Nabil Saleh, MD/CEO, M. Saleh & Company Limited/Chairman, Planning Committee, NACCIMA @63.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (centre), flanked by Chief Nabil Saleh, Chairman, Planning Committee, NACCIMA @63 (left); and a member of the business community.



Aare Afe Babalola, Chancellor/Founder, ABUAD (4th left), is flanked by Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (centre) and his NEPZA team.



L-R: Ms Amina Akai; Prince Adetokunbo Kayode, SAN, former Attorney-General and Minister of Justice; Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA; Chief Emeka Obegolu, ESQ, 1st Deputy President, ACCI; Dr. Agada Elachi, Vice President Finance, ACCI; Olasheni Balogun, CEO, Toshebal Ventures Ltd.

NEZA STAKEHOLDERS' FORUM



L-R: Mr. Dele Kelvin Oye, Esq, President, NACCIMA; Senator Tijjani Yahaya Kaura MFR, MD/CEO, OGFZA; Mr. John Ugochukwu Uwajumogu, Special Adviser to the President on Industry, Trade and Investment; Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA; and Chief Nabil Saleh, Chairman NEZ Association; observes the national prayer at the commencement of the roundtable.



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, in a tete-a-tete with Mr. John Ugochukwu Uwajumogu, Special Adviser to the President on Industry, Trade and Investment.



L-R: Mr. Dinesh Rathi, CEO, Lagos Free Zone (LFZ); Dr. Ani Gabriel Wellington, CEO, FALCON Oil and Gas; Prince Adetokunbo Kayode, former Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of the Federation.



Mr. John Ugochukwu Uwajumogu, Special Adviser to the President on Industry, Trade and Investment (4th left), flanked by Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (his immediate right), Senator Tijjani Yahaya Kaura MFR, MD/CEO, OGFZA (his immediate left) and other stakeholders in a group photograph.

PRESS RELEASE

STAKEHOLDERS IN FREE TRADE ZONES, SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES EMBRACE GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES



The Federal Government, under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, recognizes the vital role that Special Economic Zones (SEZs) can play in driving Nigeria's industrial growth. This affirmation was made by Mr John Uwajumogu, the Special Adviser to the President on Industry, Trade, and Investment, during a roundtable meeting organised by the Nigeria Economic Zones Association.

The purpose of the meeting, held on Tuesday in Abuja, was to provide firsthand information to Mr Uwajumogu on the progress, challenges, and prospects of the scheme, as conveyed by the umbrella body representing all free trade zone stakeholders in the country.

Addressing the attendees, Mr Uwajumogu expressed the administration's commitment to addressing the obstacles hindering the optimal performance of the SEZs.



He emphasized the government's readiness to collaborate with free zone investors and relevant stakeholders to adopt global best practices within the scheme.

He further emphasized the administration's determination to prevent the abuse of both local laws and international rules and regulations that govern SEZs.

"The potential for Nigeria to become an industrial hub in Africa, achieving high double-digit growth rates like China did using the scheme, is within reach," stated Mr Uwajumogu.

He assured the stakeholders that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration fully understands the pivotal role of SEZs in catalysing industrialisation and is actively working to reposition the scheme for optimal performance.

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, the

Managing Director/CEO of the Nigeria Export Zones Authority (NEPZA), highlighted the significance of free trade zones as valuable assets for the country.

He acknowledged the financial resources required to manage these zones and praised the federal government's ongoing efforts to address infrastructure deficits within public and private zones across the country.

Adesugba emphasized the need for improved understanding of the scheme among policymakers and revenue generation agencies.

He urged the new administration to work with the Central Bank of Nigeria to finalise the framework for the establishment of Offshore Banking for zone operators, facilitating easier access to foreign exchange.

Sen. Tijjani Kaura MFR, the Managing Director/CEO of the Oil and Gas Free Zones (OGFZA), described the meeting as a turning point for the sector, noting that Nigeria now has a businessman as its president.

He commended President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his willingness to utilise the free zone scheme to drive real-time industrialisation, even when other state governors were hesitant to allocate significant state lands for private economic use.

Kaura expressed hope that the scheme would receive strong support and be revamped for the



benefit of all citizens.

Prince Adetokunbo Kayode SAN, former Attorney-General of the Federation, emphasized the importance of aligning the work templates of all relevant government agencies in the sector to boost the operation of the scheme.

He also stressed the need for effective marketing of the scheme both domestically and internationally, highlighting its critical role in the survival of the free trade zone ecosystem and other businesses in the country.

Barrister Dele Oye, President of the National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industries, Mining, and Agriculture (NACCIMA), condemned any agencies or individuals obstructing the scheme, labeling their actions as economic sabotage.

Oye expressed the readiness of the Organized Private Sector (OPS) to collaborate with the government in exploring viable economic avenues that promote production and exportation, thereby addressing

the imbalance in the country's international trade metrics.

Chief Nabil Saleh, Interim Board Chairman of the Nigeria Economic Zones Association, congratulated Mr Uwajumogu on his appointment as Special Adviser to the President on Industry, Trade, and Investment, citing it as a well-deserved position. Additionally, Mr Dinesh Rathi, the Managing Director of the Lagos Free Zone, in his presentation on behalf of the association, highlighted the immeasurable benefits of free trade zones and emphasizing the necessity of their continual embrace for the nation's economic rejuvenation.

The Nigeria Economic Zones Association remains committed to fostering collaboration among stakeholders and promoting the adoption of global best practices within the free trade zone ecosystem.

Together, they strive to harness the transformative power of Special Economic Zones to drive Nigeria's industrial growth and ensure a prosperous future.



Toyin Elegbede
Executive Secretary,
Nigeria Economic Zones Association

19/07/2023

Deep Sea Port completion indicates FG's effective policy implementation

The Nigeria Export Processing Authority (NEPZA) has said that the completion of the Deep-Sea Port in record period of four years was indication of Federal Government's continued effective policy implementation.

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba made the remark on Tuesday in Abuja in a special congratulatory message to the president, free zone investors, and to all relevant stakeholders in the sector after the unveiling of the port on Monday by the president.

When the construction of this port began four years ago with the president designating it as a free trade zone, very few Nigerians believed that this would become a reality, especially with the challenges of COVID 19 ravaging Nigeria and the entire world at that period. Therefore, we should all be proud as Nigerians that this has not only become a reality, but a Free Zone has built and completed the largest sea port within four years which will reposition Nigeria as a regional hub globally for maritime business.

We are indeed glad that this sea port is a testimony of the capability of Nigeria and the Nigeria Free Zones to compete at the world level", the



NEPZA boss said. Adesugba further explained that the speed at which the project was delivered was to the amazement of all, adding that the project delivered in record time and with good-natured quality remained an 'engineering wonder'.

For us in NEPZA, we will ensure that the infrastructure is protected and administrative processes in the port are seamless enough to promote the federal government's ease-of-doing-business policy," he said.

Adesugba said that to achieve professionalism at the port, only agencies of government with legal mandates to be at the port shall be granted access as any plots to inject inefficiency and congestion shall be immediately rebuffed.

I wish to, therefore, express my profound delight to His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR for his believe in the free zones to drive the economic development of the country. The free zones scheme in Nigeria has enjoyed the president's support and the support of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, CON, particularly in the area of innovations, infrastructure development and investment promotion," Adesugba said.

The NEPZA CEO explained further that the Buhari-led administration had through this project secured a total of 170,000 jobs for the country's teeming youth, adding that it was no mean feat in addressing the economic problems of the country.

I also wish to acknowledge the support of Gov. Babajide Sanwoolu of Lagos State, who is not only a great supporter of the port but also a champion of the free zone scheme in Nigeria. Under his regime, the free zones in Lagos have flourished and I have no doubt in my mind that with his continued support, free zones in Lagos State will continue to serve as the funnel for foreign direct investment into the country," he said.

You may recall that the port with an investment in excess of \$1.2 billion is a joint venture between the federal government, Lagos State Government, the Tolarams Group (the owner of the Lagos Free Zone), and China Harbour Engineering Company.

25/01/2023





Lagos Free Zone

YOUR GATEWAY TO A NEW FRONTIER

NEPZA boss eulogises Princess Anifalaje, describes new appointment as offshoot of ingenuity, commitment, hard-work



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, Managing Director of the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA), has said that the appointment of Princess Abiodun Anifalaje as the new Deputy National Coordinator of the Gemstones Miners and Marketers Association of Nigeria (GMMAN) hinged on ingenuity, commitment and hard-work towards value-addition.

Adesugba stated this in his congratulatory message to the Lagos-based business woman on Sunday in Abuja.

The NEPZA boss, himself, a member of the association said that Anifalaje took the business of solid minerals by storm in view of the success she had made of it.

According to him, the association through her professional ingenuity, hard-work and commitment has significantly improved in the overall coordination of members in the mining and processing of precious stones.

"It is widely acknowledged in the sector that Princess remains an arrow head in pushing national consciousness toward competitive solid mineral exploration for national growth.

"This is also part of our focus in NEPZA; to galvanise investments in solid mineral by partnering with investors who are willing to key into the country's free zones scheme with

arguably the best incentives in the world", he said.

Adesugba also said that the authority was taking inventory of business women like Anifalaje with strong capital base in order to encourage them to establish an 'Amazon Free Trade Zone' for the production of women and children's items for export.

"The business of Solid Minerals (Gemstones and Metals) such as Gold, Aquamarine, Sapphire, Emerald, Amethyst and Charcoal among others is a good way to start for interested business women and we are committed to ensuring that the processes are made easy for them," the NEPZA boss said.

Adesugba, therefore, said that Anifalaje had indeed distinguished herself within a short period in the sector, adding that her new appointment was well deserved.

24/01/2023



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba MD/NEPZA in SEZSEC uniform and Mrs Katherine Ekekezie, DCG of Customs (Rtd).

NEPZA boss reckons DCG Ekekezie's brilliance in FTZs management as she retires

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, Managing Director of the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) has described Mrs Katherine Ekekezie, immediate past Deputy Comptroller-General of Customs in charge of Excise, Free Trade Zone and Industrial Incentive as a brilliant administrator whose interventions in the management of the free zone scheme helped positioned it for global competitiveness.

Adesugba made the remark on Friday in Abuja

while bidding the former customs officer farewell.

The NEPZA boss, himself a former customs officer used the occasion to reminisce on some of the official activities both did together while in service, adding that Ekekezie had always showed uncommon brilliance on any assigned tasks.

“ I have known DCP Katherine Chinwe Ekekezie for decades during which time we shared knowledge on various customs’ job specifications and their complexities. She was always learning and perfecting her skills on those duties much more than her peers.

“I am, therefore, not surprised about her uncommon patriotism, skills and rectitude in the manner she had managed her role in the free trade zone circle. Ekekezie, did bring in marvelous suggestions and inputs that shaped the Authority’s relationship with the Nigeria Customs service.

“We have also inputted most of her contributions into our strategy plan which continue to give the scheme global recognition,” Adesugba said. Adesugba further explained that the former customs chief was often times caught between making the free trade zone to have greater meaning in the industrialisation process of the country and radically insisting on the collections of taxes and levies.

He noted that Ekekezie had always allowed the legal framework of both organisations to guide her decisions without sopiness.

The managing director, further said that the service must ensure that the officer who would take over the position must be one with similar skills, knowledge and disposition toward the greater good of the scheme.

In another development, the NEPZA boss used the occasion to deliver to Ekekezie an award from the National

Association of Retired Para-military Officers (NARPO), Abuja Chapter in recognition of her “Outstanding Leadership and Contribution to NARPO and Nigeria”.

Recall that Adesugba was among the earliest convener of this body and had served as its chairman for eight years.

13/01/2023



NEPZA, NACCIMA, Ekiti Govt. agree to make Ekiti Knowledge FTZ most attractive Knowledge, virtual, blockchain hub in Africa

The Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA), Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) and the Ekiti State Government have agreed on partnering to position the Ekiti Knowledge Free Trade Zone as the most attractive virtual and blockchain hub in Africa.

The agreement was reached on a sideline meeting of the 63rd



NACCIMA's Annual General Meeting held between June 7th and June 8th in Ado-Ekiti between the three parties.

The event had opened on Wednesday with Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, Managing Director of NEPZA accompanied by Chief John Udeagbala, NACCIMA's outgoing National President, his successor, Mr Dele Oye and scores of investors to officially deliver the Ekiti Knowledge Free Zone's Presidential Approval to Gov. Abiodun Oyeibanji.

While presenting the letter, the NEPZA boss said the approval was an offshoot of the state government's aggressive pursuit for economic transformation.

The NEPZA chief executive also explained that it was amazing how the state was able to meet up with the Authority's guidelines within a short period.

He further said that the development only showed the advanced knowledge of the state government on the potency of the free trade zone scheme to unlock the economic potentials of the state.

"I have deliberately waited in delivering this approval so that the three parties could leverage on the presence of hundreds of investors attending this special NACCIMA AGM to position the new zone for exploitation and make it the most attractive knowledge, virtual and blockchain hub in Africa.

"I am particularly delighted that His Excellency, Gov. Abiodun Oyeibanji, is as receptive as his predecessor, Dr Kayode Fayemi who laid the foundation of what we are celebrating today," Adesugba said. On his part, Udeagbala, who aligned with the NEPZA's chief position, described Adesugba as a truly



renowned International Investment Promoter.

Udeagbala said also that the NACCIMA Council was prepared for any partnership aimed at industrializing the country, adding that the Ekiti Knowledge Free Zone was a viable project both local and international investors would be interested in exploring.

"The importance of the Public Private Partnership policy cannot be overemphasized and this has also informed our theme for this annual meeting. We are glad to be part of this," Udeagbala said.

Gov. Oyeibanji expressed his delight and paid tributes to both the former governor, Fayemi and former Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment, Otunba Adeniyi Kayode on their various roles that birthed the state's free zone.

Oyeibanji said that the Presidential approval for the zone was an excellent omen that ran in tandem with his vision for the state to reduce the over-dependency on the monthly Federal Allocations.

"We must begin to run our race ourselves and we want this partnership to be the starting point for the industrialization of the state," the governor said.

June 11, 2023

Continued from page 32

The import of this analysis is for you to see the immeasurable impact the project has made on local young engineers and other stakeholder on knowledge and skills transfer. The benefit of the port to the Nigerian economy will also be enormous.

Eko Atlantic City

Formerly known as Bar Beach, and with decades of irregular movement of the large body of water, the entire Victoria Island of Lagos became threatened. However, Free Trade Zone investors came to the rescue and deployed a multi-faceted world best marine engineering to reclaim that coastal part of Lagos. Eko Atlantic is a marvel of modern engineering and technology and a testament to the rise of Nigeria on the world stage. Local expertise is majorly coopted, thereby, ensuring the right supply chain linkages. Also, to note, is the fact that this particular free zone will be home to the United States' biggest foreign Embassy in the world as the construction of the edifice is ongoing; another engineering masterpiece that will ensure transfer of skills and technology to the locals.



Q: The importance of leveraging technology digitalisation to turbocharge the multiplier effect of FTZs; and strategies to drive digital adoption.

Ans: Technology remains the most veritable tool to speedily drive the free trade zone operation for global competitiveness and seamless attraction of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). To this end, the Authority recently migrated from the manual and orthodox operations to digital-based for both internal and external operations. The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) is a digital platform for internal operations while the E-NEPZA (www.nepza.online) links us with the public and particularly with our external stakeholders. The Authority through this innovation has truly become a one-stop-shop entity that promotes the federal government policy on ease-of-doing-business.

Q: FTZs role in enhancing readiness of Nigerian businesses amid emerging AfCFTA environment; initiatives to maximise benefits of intra-African trade.

Ans: For the umpteenth time, the Free Trade scheme was introduced to drive the Nigerian economy on a path of industrialization and economy

development aimed at creating employment opportunities, export growth, attract foreign direct investments, and diversification of government revenue earnings.

The country's signing off to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) has then helped to power the country's aforementioned objectives for adopting the free zone concept.

It is, therefore, imperative to state that, a number of local investors have keyed into the free zone scheme and are doing excellently well within the corridor. These local industrialists in the zones have been able to broaden their business expertise and perfected their acts on international trade so much so that they now have the right cutting edge to compete favorably in intra-Africa trade AfCFTA promotes.

There is however, a teething challenge of the 'Rule of Origin' where goods manufactured in the zones are not considered to have originated from Nigeria. This is actually a concern and negotiations are on to resolve this grey area. The AfCFTA should provide us with unrestricted opportunity of trading in the continent whether from the customs territory of a nation or from the free trade zones corridors.

In trying to further widen the scope of the gains, the Authority and the Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA), the umbrella body of owners of zones, enterprises and key stakeholders have always ensured the right information that can enhance the exploitation of the agreement.

Interestingly, this played out more copiously between November 20 and December 2, 2022, when Nigeria marked the 30th Anniversary of the Free Trade Zone in Abuja. That event also saw participants from 46 African

nations for the 7th African Economic Zones Organisation (AEZO) meeting and the 5th African Union Business Symposium. It was indeed an eye opener for Nigeria free zone stakeholders and their responses to catch up with the trend have been sustained since then. We are also ensuring that only standard goods and services fit enough for export are allowed to leave the zones via the shores of Nigeria so that the country can remain competitive in the Africa emerging market.

Q: Thoughts on global emerging trends in FTZs and implementation in Nigeria, especially ‘Virtual’ FTZs/partnership with Binance and Talent City.

Ans: The World Economic Forum (WEF) predicted that by 2022, 60 per cent of the world economy will be digital. The World Bank had earlier in 2019 reported that Nigeria was uniquely positioned to reap the benefits of a digital economy.

The report was predicated on fact that Nigeria accounts for 47 percent of West African population and that half of the country's 200 million population is under the age of 30.

On this premise, the Authority is re-imagining on how to create, distribute and capture value in this new environment. This challenge has emboldened us to pursue this mandate with vigour. As you may be aware the Authority last year in its investment promotion prospecting trip to Dubai, opened engagement with Binance and Talent City for the establish of the first ‘Virtual Free Trade Zone in Africa’. The partnership is gradually building up to

crescendo. We will immediately hoist the zone for global participation once the legal frame work that we are developing to guide its operation is perfected. The federal government is in support of our strategy to leverage on the virtual technology to position our operation for global competitiveness.

The support was further displayed recently with the presidential approval of the Ekiti Knowledge Special Economic Zone and the Delta State Special Economic Zone respectively. It is also our expectation that the approval for the University of Abuja Special Economic Zone shall be granted soon. We were encouraged by the government's unflinching support, and that assisted in the acceleration of our mandate of fast tracking the country's industrialization in last seven years.

End

NEPZA NEWLY PROMOTED DIRECTORS



**Engr. Godwin
Okimba Ekpe**

Director, Planning, Research
and Statistics



**Mrs Saeed Binta
Dantsoho**

Director, MD Office



**Mallam Musa
Mu'azu Sahabi**

Director, Kano Free Trade
Zone (KFTZ)



**Ibekwe Chika
Faith (Mrs.)**

Director, Zones Operations

FG commences zero fossil energy emission regime with Deep Blue Industrial Park's approval



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, Managing Director of the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) says the licensing of Deep Blue Industrial Park in Lagos commences a deliberate regime for zero fossil energy emission in the country.

Adesugba made the remark during the handing over ceremony of the Declaration Licence to Mrs Anita Omoile, Managing Director/CEO of the new free trade zone in Abuja.

The NEPZA Chief Executive Officer said the Authority had fully keyed into the Federal Government's 'Eco-Friendly' initiative in the operation of the free trade zones' ecosystem.

The NEPZA boss also stated that the government had made history with the approval given the first zero fossil energy emission zone in the South-West region at Imoore, Amuwo-Odofin area of Lagos measuring 115,503 hectares.

"This positions Nigeria as the leading continental hub for regional eco-friendly industrial activities and logistics services with free trade zone status.

"The new dispensation will still witness active manufacturing activities without the usual emission of destructive carbon energy into our space. This is in line with the federal government policy on promoting

green environment.

"The Deep Blue Industrial Park is a manufacturing space that promotes Food Processing, Textile & Garment production, Renewable Energy & Electric Cars as well as Research & Development Services with over 50 international enterprises ready to move to the site in earnest," Adesugba said.

On her part, Omoile expressed satisfaction in the seamless and speedy manner in which the approval was given, adding that the Authority under the management of Adesugba had taken the 'Ease of Doing Business' policy of the government to a new effective level.

"Our partners across the globe are enthused with the development and this shows that the country is beginning to create the right business environment to attract the needed Foreign Direct Investments," Omoile said.

She further explained that the Industrial Park would generate over 10,000 jobs and inject an estimated 100 million US Dollars annually into the economy.

June 8, 2023

Trade Zones: NEPZA attracts \$346.6m, N360.7bn investments in 39 months

The Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) says it attracted \$346.6 million Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and N360.7 billion local direct investments to the Nigerian economy through free trade zones in the country from 2020 to first quarter of 2023.

Managing Director of NEPZA, Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, made this known while giving an overview of his performance between 2020 and 2023 at a media parley with Commerce and Industry Correspondent Association of Nigeria (CICAN) on Monday in Abuja.

While saying a total sum of \$18.49 million FDI was attracted in the first quarter of 2023, the NEPZA boss revealed that N9.18 billion was also injected into the nation's economy as local investments in the same period through the trade zones.

Giving a further breakdown of his performance, Adesugba said that trade zones in the country generated 30,741 employments from 2020 to first quarter of 2023, adding that skills transfer within the 39 months period was put at 8,157.

He, however, lamented that out of 55 free trade zones in the country, only 30 are functional while others are being refurbished or constructed for operations.

According to Adesugba, Nigeria can do more by providing enabling

environment for trade zones to turn around the economic fortunes of the country.

"So far we have 541 enterprises operating in the free trade zones but we need to be more aggressive in making Nigeria's free trade zones more enterprising as the target is to have at least 10,000 free trade zones. Ogun State and Delta State are already leading the way. This is very important because these zones not only serve Nigeria but also the African continent with over 70,000 jobs being created" he said.

Speaking further, he said NEPZA has approached the Central Bank of Nigeria with a proposal to have a bank administering the operations and transactions at the free trade zones, expressing optimism that the apex bank will approve the Authority's proposal.

Adesugba also said efforts are also in top gear to drive a robust free trade zones operation in Nigeria by liaising with the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

"NEPZA is working with the Nigerian Stock Exchange to have speedy listing of companies of free trade zones on the stock exchange. All stakeholders have agreed and we are only waiting for the endorsement of the Federal Ministry of Justice. The plan is to have this achieved within the first 100 days of the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu."

The reports indicated that the 55 Trade Zones in the country account for an estimated \$35 billion combined investment profile.

June 20, 2023

Free Trade Zones Attracted N18bn Investments in Q1



Free trade zones in Nigeria have attracted a total of N18 billion both in foreign and domestic investments in the first quarter of 2023, the Nigeria Export processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) has said.

Managing Director of NEPZA, Prof. Adesoji Adesugba who stated this yesterday in Abuja during an interview with journalists also disclosed that Nigeria has 55 Free trade zones, out of which 30 are functional while others are being refurbished or constructed for operations.

"About 18.4 million dollars foreign direct investment and N9.1 billion local direct investment was attracted by free trade zones in the first quarter of 2023. Also, these free trade zones recorded \$17 million international exports and \$126.37 billion domestic exports while customs duty collected from these free trade zones amounted to N11.68 billion.

"So far we have 541 enterprises operating in the free trade zones but we need to be more aggressive

in making Nigeria's free trade zones more enterprising as the target is to have at least 10,000 free trade zones. Ogun State and Delta State are already leading the way. This is very important because these zones not only serve Nigeria but also the African continent with over 70,000 jobs being created" he said.

Speaking further, he said NEPZA has approached the Central Bank of Nigeria with a proposal to have a bank administering the operations and transactions at the free trade zones, expressing optimism that the apex bank will approve the Authority's proposal.

Adesugba said as part of efforts to drive a robust free trade zones operation in Nigeria, the agency is also liaising with the Nigerian Stock Exchange to register and list all functional free trade zones.

"NEPZA is working with the Nigerian Stock Exchange to have speedy listing of companies of free trade zones on the stock exchange. All stakeholders have agreed and we are only waiting for the endorsement of the Federal Ministry of Justice. The plan is to have this achieved within the first 100 days of the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu."

June 20, 2023





EKO ATLANTIC



NEPZA, OGFZA, NCS, stakeholders, set to remodel FTZs operation processes. procedures



In the bid to tighten all loose ends in the administration and management of the country's Free Trade Zones, the two regulatory bodies, the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA), the Oil and Gas Free Trade Zone Authority (OGFZA), as well as Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA) and the Nigeria Customs Service have agreed to remodel the scheme's processes and procedures for greater impact on the economy.

This agreement was reached when Prof. Adesoji Adesugba MD/CEO NEPZA, his counterpart in OGFZA, Sen. Tijjani Kaura MFR and Mr Toyin Elegbede, Executive-Secretary of NEZA, paid a working visit on the Acting Comptroller-General of Customs, Mr Bashir Adewale Adeniyi on Friday in Abuja.

Earlier, Adesugba had described Adeniyi's appointment as a boost for the industry, noting that the growth of the scheme was largely stunted due to years of uncooperative posture of the customs' top leadership.

The NEPZA boss explained that it was incumbent on the Nigeria Customs Service to help the regulatory bodies drive the success of the free trade ecosystem by allowing seamless trade facilitation across the landscape.

"We are here to first felicitate with you on your appointment by His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. We are elated that this appointment came from within the service and we pray that this culture is sustained.

"Since my appointment in 2020 as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of NEPZA, this is the first time that customs honoured our request for a courtesy visit. This evidenced how uncooperative the former leadership was toward the overall success of the scheme.

"We are all now in agreement that only a collaborative partnership among the key stakeholders can reposition the scheme to begin to have significant impact in the economy and for global competitiveness," the NEPZA chief executive said.

Adesugba, therefore, added that a Joint Committee comprising of members from NEPZA, OGFZA, NEZA and NCS was urgently required to address all the teething challenges affecting the smooth operation of the scheme.

Kaura, on his part, explained that the regulatory bodies and all the free trade zones' stakeholders were willing to establish a more cohesive and collaborative partnership with customs, adding that such partnership had already been established between the two regulatory bodies and with all the free trade zones' investors through NEZA.

The OGFZA boss further stated that the Joint Committee would be in the right position to deal with all the key issues that would be listed as the Terms of Reference (ToR).

"We want the customs leadership to understand that the Free Trade Zone is a unique economic landscape guided by both the Act of Parliament and Global Rules and Regulations. Any country that seeks to adopt it must also be prepared to accept these rules.

“We are happy that the service now has an individual who is a professional in Investment Promotion, Investors Relations & Services as well as Trade Facilitations. We again, thank His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for giving us such a complete professional and it is indeed a new dawn for us,” Kaura said.

The Acting Comptroller-General, expressed his delight on the visit, stating that the Free Trade Zones scheme could be used to realistically drive the nation’s economy.

Adeniyi said that the suggestion for the setting up of a Joint Committee to remodel the processes and procedures to manage the various

administrative engagements among key stakeholders was a novelty, adding that all hands must be on deck to salvage the country’s ailing economy through the scheme.

“I must, however, state that we should also study and re-evaluate our various Acts to see those areas of conflicts and overlapping functions and to assiduously work toward amending them.

The Executive-Secretary of NEZA, however explained that the Free Trade Zones’ Investors were confronted with mirage of challenges that included intermittent disagreeable execution of duties by some customs officers, adding that

the incentives that were the main attraction to zones must continually be allowed.

Martins Odeh PhD
Head, Corporate Communications,
NEPZA.

Saturday July 29, 2023.



Ashtavinayak
Hydrocarbon Limited ("AHL")

SOCIAL *Page*



. Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA (right), decorates his Police Orderly, Adegbite Michael, to his new rank of Police Inspector... Thursday, June 1, 2023.



Hajia Zainab Aliyu, Director, Monitoring & Compliance (2nd left), on behalf of Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, presents the best Compliance Officer Award to Shehu Muhammed (2nd right), of the Lekki FTZ., Lagos.



Happy birthday, beautiful Miss Esther Adoo Gum (3rd left), of the Corporate Communications Unit. May God almighty bless you with a life full of joy and happiness... Thursday, April 20, 2023.



Congratulations to Miss Daniel Kyaharmun Bigwan, CNA, on her successful completion and award of Certified National Accountant, CAN... Wednesday, July 5, 2023.



Happy birthday to Barr KD, Deputy Director, Monitoring & Compliance, a gentleman per excellence, as he cuts his birthday cake with an infectious smile supported by his loving wife. Thursday, June 22, 2023.



Congratulations to our amiable Director of Finance & Accounts, Dr. Oyekunle Oyesola Rasheed, on his birthday. Sir, may God bless you beyond measure and satisfy you with long life and good health. Cheers!!



R-L: Hajia Haleema Sani-Kamba fnli, Director, Corporate Services; Comrade Alhaji Issa Obalowu Aremu, DG/CEO, Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies; and Dr. Martins Odeh, Head, Corporate Communications, NEPZA,



Hajia Haleema Sani-Kamba fnli, Director, Corporate Services (left), confers with Fellow of the National Labour Institute (fnli) by Comrade Alhaji Issa Obalowu Aremu, DG/CEO, Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour Studies, in Abuja... Wednesday, May 24, 2023.



. Happy birthday to Mr. John Uche (left) and Joy Member Gyem, both of Internal Audit. May God's abundant blessings be with you both. Cheers!!... Thursday, April 20, 2023.



The Corporate Communications Unit (CCU), celebrates and send forth Maimunatu Nnako Isah, as she successfully completes her mandatory NYSC scheme with the Authority... Tuesday, March 7, 2023.



For He's a Jolly Good Fellow: Mr. Thomas Yahaya (right), retires from service in April, 2023, as he receives a gift from Barr. Ahmadu Abdulkadir, Dep. Director, M&C (2nd left), supported by Mr. Oladimeji Oyegoke (left), on behalf of NEPZA's Christian Fellowship.

LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF NIGERIA EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES AUTHORITY



The Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority was established in 1992 pursuant to the provisions of the **Nigeria Export Processing Zones Decree NO.63 of 1992 now Nigeria Export Processing Zones Act, CAP N107, Laws of Federation of Nigeria, 2004.**

Section 2(1) of the Act provides as follows:

"There is hereby established for the Nigeria Export Processing Zones, an authority (in this Decree referred to as "the Authority")

Section 2(2) of the Act affirms the legal status of the authority as a body corporate with perpetual succession and capacity to sue and be sued in its own name, among others.

By virtue of the provisions of the Act, there are three main organs of the authority, namely, the governing board, the executive management team and the general staff.

a. The Governing Board

Section 3 of the Act generally provides for the establishment and membership of the Governing Board of the Authority, while First Schedule to the Act provides for the proceedings of the Board.

The Board consists 12 members under the leadership of the Chairman who is appointed by the President and Commander-in -Chief of the Armed Forces subject to the recommendation of the supervising Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment.

Other members of the Board include NEPZA Managing Director, one representative each from the Federal Ministries of (1) Commerce and Tourism and (2) Industries and Technology. Membership also include some relevant Agencies of Government such as the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Nigeria Ports Authority (NPA), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) as well as representatives of Manufacturer Association of Nigeria (MAN), Nigeria Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), Association of Nigeria Exporters (ANE) and 2 persons from the private sectors.

It must be noted that due to the re-arrangement or change in the nomenclature of some Federal Ministries, there has been an increase in the number of members of the Board. For instance, the Federal Ministry of Commerce and Tourism has been separated into two different Ministries, namely, (1) Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment and (2)

Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism. In the same vein, the Federal Ministry of Industries and Technology now has the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology. Invariably, instead of 12 members the Board now has 13 statutory members.

b. Management Team

The management team is headed by the Managing Director appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Honourable Minister and pursuant to the provision of section 5(1) of the Act. The Management team comprised the heads of departments and units of the agency. The main responsibility of this organ under the leadership of the MD/CEO is to carry out the statutory functions of the authority listed under section 4 of the Act towards the realization of the national objectives for the establishment of the free zone scheme in Nigeria.

c. General Staff

These are the employees of the Authority that are engaged to assist the Management in the performance of the statutory and incidental functions. The employment, welfare, conduct, discipline etc. of these staff are regulated by the NEPZA Condition of Service as well as the Public Service Rules of Nigeria.

NEPZA staff are usually posted to various departments and units of the Authority at the Abuja headquarters, the Lagos liaison office as well the various free zones in Nigeria as administrators of the scheme within the respective free zones.

OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE NIGERIA FREE ZONE SCHEME:

Declaration/Designation of Zones in Nigeria

Section 1 (1) of the Act provides as follows:

The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces may, from time to time by order, upon the recommendation of the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority established under this Decree, designate such area as he thinks fit to be an export processing zone, (in this Decree referred to as “a Zone”).

Pursuant to the provision of section 1(1) of the Act, the President and Commander -in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is the only person vested with powers to declare/designate any piece of land as a free zone in Nigeria. Any person(s) interested in having a piece of land so declared and designated as a free zone would have to submit an application to the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) expressing interest for the declaration of a definite and identifiable piece of land as a free zone.

The submitted application would be processed by NEPZA officials in conjunction with the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment (FMITI). If the Authority is able to ascertain the viability of the proposed zone if granted a free zone status, a recommendation for such declaration would be made through the FMITI to the office of Mr. President for the declaration.

The process for zone's declaration is as follows:

1. The promoter of a proposed zone is expected to submit a letter of application requesting that a particular piece of land be declared and designated as a free zone.
2. He would also submit relevant documents in support of his application to the Authority. Some of the documents required include title documents to the land, especially the Certificate of Occupancy (C of O), survey plan, feasibility report, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), etc.
3. Lastly, he is expected to pay application fee applicable at the time of application,
4. The application would be reviewed by NEPZA officials who would communicate feedback to the applicant whether to request for additional documents or some clarifications on the documents already submitted.
5. Thereafter, a date would be fixed for inspection to the proposed land by a committee of relevant experts from NEPZA.
6. Upon a successful review of the application and visit to the land, recommendation would be made to the Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment for his consideration. If satisfied with the application, the Minister would in turn forward the application to Mr. President for

his approval and declaration. It must be noted that the Minister may also require, if necessary, a further review of the application before the same is finally sent to Mr. President for approval.

7. Where the application is successful and approved by Mr. President, the approval is communicated to NEPZA through the Honourable Minister.
8. It is the responsibility of NEPZA to notify the applicant of the outcome of his application whether successful or otherwise. Where the application is successful, NEPZA would issue a Declaration Licence in favour of the applicant with regards to the proposed zone.

In conclusion, it is right to state here that the exercise of the President's power with respect to zone declaration under the Act is conditioned upon the strict compliance with the provision of section 1(1) of the Act which requires the prior recommendation for zone's declaration by the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority to the President.



Enyimba Economic City

The Global Business Hub in Nigeria



M. Saleh & Co. Ltd.

CHECKLIST FOR SETTING UP A FREE ZONE IN NIGERIA

- Application letter indicating interest to establish a Free Zone, and its location in the country.
- Payment of USD 1000 processing fee.

SUBMISSION OF THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS

- Acquisition and issuance of Certificate of Occupancy for the proposed site.
- Perimeter and topographic survey of the site.
- Survey plan for the site with beacon numbers.
- Master-plan for the proposed site (4 copies).
- Environmental Impact Assessment report (EIA, 4 copies).
- Federal Ministry of Environment develop and regulate checklist for implementation and compliance.
- Detailed feasibility study (4 copies)- study guideline.
- A brief description of the project clearly defining the scope of business and the objective for the establishment of the zone.
- Name and resume of the promoter and detained definition of the zone management structure.
- Location and size of the zone as well as evidence of unencumbered title ie compensation plan/ evidence of payment for compensation for existing inhabitants and farm lands and other economic value already present on the land.
- Location of the site.
- Proximity of the proposed zone to existing infrastructure/facilities. (e.g. Airport, Road, Rail, Seaport, Power, and settlements around etc) if any. Alternatively, plans for the provision and development of support infrastructure that would attract and sustain investment in the zone.
- Inventory of existing infrastructural facilities on the proposed yard for the zone, if any.

- ☐ Economic viability.
- ☐ A clear analysis of the economic costs and benefits of the project into its financial cost and benefits.
- ☐ Availability of raw materials
- ☐ Linkages between the FTZ industrial activities and domestic economy. The likely impact on domestic economy.
- ☐ Specific output. The output of the proposed project needs to be specified, i.e the likely number of enterprises that will be located in the zone and nature of their products in line with the expectations of the zone.
- ☐ Employment generation.
- ☐ Condition of service should be clearly spelt out.
- ☐ The projected number of employees that may be required (local and foreign) and the grade of labour needed.
- ☐ Projected profitability of investment.
- ☐ Risk Assessment of Project.
- ☐ Implementation strategy for the project.
- ☐ Details of Developmental pattern/Phasing of the proposed internal & external infrastructure facilities including land use distribution pattern supported with timelines of work schedule.
- ☐ Details of EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) work packages, i.e. site preparation EPC, Process plant EPC etc.
- ☐ Health, Safety and Environmental (H.S.E) compliance program of proposed Zone.
- ☐ Evidence of Companies, if any, which have indicated interest in locating in the proposed Zone and future targeted prospective companies or clients that would be admitted in the Zone.
- ☐ Any other information such as Agreements, MoU and Concessions that will assist the consideration of the proposal.
- ☐ Please note that upon receipt and study of the aforementioned documents, the Authority will commence project due diligence to evaluate the legitimacy of the venture within the ambit of the Free Trade Zone regulations and laws and any other legislations as may be applicable, consider proposed site enabling issues as well as socio-economic matters relating to the zone.
- ☐ Inspection of the proposed site by NEPZA officials.
- ☐ Upon review and approval of the project, the following fees shall apply:
- ☐ Licensing fees of USD \$400,000-Free Zone status declaration Fee.
- ☐ Licensing fee of USD \$500,000-Industrial City/Park status declaration Fee.
- ☐ USD \$100,000 Operation Licence (OPL) Fee to be paid along with declaration fee in the first instance and thereafter as annual renewal fee.
- ☐ The amount stated above is subject to review by the Authority.



Lekki
Free Zone







PROF. ADESOJI ADESUGBA

DBA, MBA, M.Sc., LL.B., BL, B.Sc., FCI Arb

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, the Managing Director/ Chief Executive Officer of the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA) is a thoroughbred investment promotion professional. He was appointed to the position by His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari (GCFR) June 26th, 2020. His proficiency in organizational development and institutional reforms has endeared him to several organizations and institutions that seek after his expertise. Adesugba combines his long years in both public and private sectors to achieve set goals.

AWARD

INDUSTRIALISATION DIGEST QUARTERLY
OUTSTANDING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



It is apt to describe Adesugba as a socio-economic engineer, a lawyer, a teacher as well as an investment promotion practitioner. He started his professional journey as an officer of the Nigeria Customs Service (NSC) in 1982 after his National Youth Service and degree program from the University of Lagos. He voluntarily resigned from the customs service in 1999 to join the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) and the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE) at various periods respectively.

Between 2009 and 2013 he served as the Chairman of the Industrial Arbitration Panel (IAP), a Federal Government of Nigeria Agency in charge of resolving industrial disputes. Having committed some appreciable number of years in the public sector, he decided to spend time in the academics and lectured Investment Promotion and Business Administration at the Baden International Business School, Switzerland, American University of West Africa, Banjul Gambia and at the Roegate College, Dublin.

Adesugba later found it expedient to switch to the Organised Private Sector (OPS). With that decision, he became the National Legal Adviser of the National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), a position he held until his appointment at NEPZA. Adesugba is presently the 2nd Deputy President of the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI).

In 2017, he founded the Gemological Institute of Nigeria (GIN) after studying gemology at the UK based Gem-A

Institute. Adesugba holds a Doctorate in Business Administration with the highest distinction from the California Southern University in the USA, Doctorate of Education Management from the University of Zambia, M.Sc. Degree in Investment Promotion and Economic Development from the Edinburgh Napier University in Scotland, UK, MBA from the Ogun State University Nigeria, B.Sc. Degree in Business Administration from the University of Lagos in 1981, as well as LL.B. from the University of Lagos in 1987.

He was called to the Nigerian Bar in 1989. He also holds a certificate in Leading Economic Growth; certificate in Implementing Public Policy both from the Harvard Kennedy School Boston, USA, a certificate in Chinese Economic Development from the Normal University, Beijing China, a Diploma in International Commercial Arbitration from the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK), and a certificate in International Commercial Arbitration from the Columbia Law School in New York. Adesugba is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK), a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Mediators and Conciliators, a Fellow of the National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria, a Fellow of the Chartered Taxation Institute of Nigeria, and a Member of the Advertisement Practitioner Council of Nigeria (APCON).

He is happily married and the marriage is blessed with children.

PERSONAL DATA



State of Origin

Ondo

Local Government Area

Akoko North-West

Date of Birth

07/05/1959

Institutions Attended With Dates

2018 - 2023

UNICAF - University of
Zambia

2014 - 2018

California Southern
University, USA

2007 - 2009

Edinburgh Napier
University, Scotland, UK

2000 - 2003

Ogun State University

1989

BL at the Nigeria Law School

1984 - 1987

University of Lagos- Faculty
of Law

1977 - 1981

University of Lagos, Faculty
of Business Administration

1975 - 1977

St. Gregorys College, Lagos

1971 - 1975

Methodist Boys High
school, Lagos

1967 - 1970

Surulere Baptist School,
Surulere, Lagos

Academic Qualifications With Dates

Ed.D (Education Management)

University of Zambia, 2023

M.Sc. Investment Promotion and Economic Development

Edinburg Napier University, Scotland, 2009

BL.

Nigeria Law School, 1989

B.Sc. Business Administration

University of Lagos, 1981

Executive Certificate in Economic Development (Harvard)

Harvard Kennedy School, 2023

DBA (Management)

California Southern University, 2018

MBA (Management)

Ogun State University, 2003

LL.B Civil Law

University of Lagos, 1987

Dip. (International Commercial Arbitration)

CIArb, 2016

Diploma in Data Processing

University of Lagos, 1998

Certifications/Professional Courses Attended

• Certificate in Negotiations - Harvard Kennedy School, USA	2023
• Implementation of Public Policies - Harvard Kennedy School, USA	2022
• Leading Economic Growth - Harvard Kennedy School, USA	2021
• Training for Chief Executive Officers-Administrative Staff College of Nigeria	2021
• INDOO-Africa Cooperation in Skill Development - New Delhi	2018
• Certificate in Gemology - International Gem Society (IGS)	2017
• International Commercial Arbitration - Columbia Law School, New York City	2016
• Training on Automated Pension Benefit Computation - FINAQUEST	2016
• Certificate of Membership (Fellow) - The Chartered Institute of Arbitration	2016
• Interpersonal Skills For More Productive Work Relationships - York University Canada	2015
• Role of Lawyers in Consumer Complaints Management - Nigerian Bar Association Institute	2015
• Certificate of Membership (Fellow) - Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria	2013
• Training Programme for Arbitrators - Houston Maritime Arbitration Association's	2010
• Training on Investment Promotion - Baden, Switzerland	2009
• Training on Labour Negotiations - International Institute for Investment Promotion, Switzerland	2009
• Certificate (Fellow) - Institute of Chartered Mediators and Conciliators (ICMC)	2009
• Training on Arbitration and Alternative Dispute Resolution - UNITAR	2006
• Training on Capital Market Development and Regulation - UNITAR	2006
• Training on Performing Effectively in Multilateral Conferences and Diplomacy - UNITAR	2006
• Corporate Social Responsibility - World Bank Institute	2004
• Ecole Internationale de Francais et de Formation En Langues Etablissement Prive' d' Enseignement Superieur -	2003
• Investment Promotion Skills Training programme - MIGA	2002
• The Best Practice in Investment Promotion Training Programme- MIGA	2000
• Diploma in Data Processing - University of Lagos Computer Centre	1998

ACADEMIC HONOURS

	Sigma Beta Delta	2017
	Delta Mu Delta	2018

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS:



2020 Till date

Managing Director/CEO

Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority

Designation of 6 Private Free Trade Zones.

Designation of 4 airports as Special Economic Zones.

- Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport, Kano.
- Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos.
- Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja.
- Port Harcourt International Airport.

Forging strategic alliance with the University of Abuja and Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry to designate 11, 500 Ha of land as the country's first Education Free Trade Zone.

Strengthening relationship with Free Trade Zones' stakeholders namely: Nigeria Customs Service (NCS); Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS); Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS); the Department of State Service (DSS); the Nigeria Police Force; (NPF) among others.

Establishment of:

- Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre and Multi-Door Approach to solving industrial disputes.
- The Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA)
- The Nigeria Special Economic Zones Security (SEZSEC).
- The Nigeria Special Economic Zones Training Institute.

Acquisition of five-storey befitting Lagos Zonal Office. Building of Ultra-modern administrative office complex, road networks and investors suites at the Kano Free Trade Zone.

Development of infrastructure upgrade of public free trade zones.

Commissioning of the Lekki Deep-Sea Port at the Lagos Free Trade Zone valued at \$1.5 billion.

Deepening the impact of the Free Trade Zone scheme on Nigeria economy by hosting the 7th Africa Economic Zones Organisation (AEZO) Conference in Abuja in December, 2020 with 46 African countries in attendance.

2018-2020

Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

- Establishment of the Business Entrepreneurship Skills and Technology (BEST) Centre of the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- National Legal Adviser/Vice President, Nigeria Chamber of Commerce (ACCI).
- Provost, Business Entrepreneurship Skills and Technology (BEST) Centre, ACCI.

2009-2013

Chairman, Industrial Arbitration Panel of Nigeria.

2005-2007

Secondment to Bureau of Public Enterprises as Head of Marketing, Communications and External Relations.

- Team reinvigorated the privatisation exercise which witnessed not less than 50 (fifty) landmark transactions.

Member, sub-committee on Marketing, Media and Publicity of the National Council on Privatisation.

2013-2018

Part-time Lecturer

- 2013-2018- Part-time Lecturer at:
- Roegate College, Dublin, Ireland.
- Baden International Business School, Baden, Switzerland.
- American University of West Africa, Banjul, Gambia.
- Establishment of the Gemological Institute of Nigeria (GIN)

1999-2009

Nigeria Investment Promotion Council, retired as a Director.

- At NIPC, Adesugba championed the South East Asia Investment Promotion Programme which attracted over \$500 million investments into the Nigerian economy.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, UK, a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Mediators and Conciliators.
- Fellow of the National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria.
- Fellow of the Chartered Taxation Institute of Nigeria.
- Member, Nigeria Bar Association (NBA).
- Member, National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA).
- Member, Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI).
- Member, Advertisement Practitioner Council of Nigeria (APCON).
- Member, Nigeria Association of Retired Para-military Officers (NARPO)
- Member, Gemstones Miners and Marketers Association of Nigeria (GMMAN)
- Member, Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR)



KEY COMPETENCES

- Prof. Adesoji Adesugba is a thoroughbred investment promotion and economic development expert.
- Entrepreneurial acumen with proficiency in organizational development and institutional reforms.
- Well-rounded experience in public and private sector.
- Multi-faceted learner with multiple-degrees and a Professor of Business Administration, Investment Promotion and Economic Development.
- Proven track record of being an architect and accelerator of economic growth, development and integration.
- Articulate communicator, astute network and relationship builder with extreme social capital.
- Serves on the board of not-for-profit organisations in the areas of ICT and Digital Economy; Youth Empowerment; Economic Development and Policy Matters.



NIGERIA EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES AUTHORITY (NEPZA)

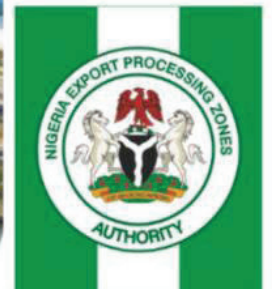


Powering Nigeria's Industrialisation

WHAT WE DO? We establish, licence, regulate and operate highly efficient Free Trade Zones (FTZs).

HOW? By providing a highly competitive incentive regime, excellent support facilities and qualitative service.

WHY? To create an enabling environment for export manufacturing and other commercial activities.



YOU CAN REACH US IN ANY OF OUR OFFICES.

Head Office: No. 2, Zambezi Crescent, Cadastral Zone A6 Off Aguiyi Ironsi Street Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria.
Telephone: +234 701 683 4729 Telephone: +234 9 780 4077 E-mail: enquiries@nepza.gov.ng

Lagos Liaison Office No. 29B, Chris Maduikwe Drive Lekki Phase 1 (Zenith Gate) Lekki, Lagos state, Nigeria.
Telephone: +234 808 3130811 Telephone: +234 803 3168771

Calabar Office Free Trade Zones, P.M.B. 1200, Calabar, Cross River state, Nigeria.
Telephone: +234 808 6340986

Kano Liaison Office Fanisau, Behind MAKIA, Kano Kano state, Nigeria.
Telephone: +234 808 313209

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VISIT TO THE OFFICE OF THE ACTING COMPTROLLER-GENERAL OF CUSTOMS

Free Trade Zones stakeholders led by Prof. Adesoji Adesugba MD/CEO NEPZA, his counterpart, Sen. Tijjanni Kaura MFR, MD/CEO OGFZA and officials of the Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA), on July 28 in Abuja paid a familiarisation visit to the office of the Acting Comptroller-General of Customs, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, to felicitate with him on his new appointment and to discuss new modalities in using the scheme to accelerate the growth of the economy.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA STUDENT (NANS) VISIT

Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, MD/CEO, NEPZA, on July 27 received the leadership of the National Association of Nigeria Student (NANS), led by the Student Senate President, Comrade Nnalue Felix Attah. The group bestowed on him a meritorious NANSLEADERSHIP Excellent Award, Life Membership of NANS, and inducted him into the NANS Hall of Fame, in recognition of his exemplary leadership in the management of the country's Free Trade Zone Scheme.





CALABAR FREE TRADE ZONE



DANGOTE

Refinery

