

BEING PAPER DELIVERED BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY (NPA), HADIZA BALA USMAN AT THE OPENING OF A WORKSHOP ON “DATA & INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM TRAINING FOR MARITIME JOURNALIST” ORGANISED BY THE MANAGEMENT OF PREMIUM TIMES SERVICES LIMITED ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3RD 2019

The Management of Premium Times Limited,

Guest speakers,

Invited guests,

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

It is with a deep sense of appreciation that I am in your midst to deliver a keynote address as the **Managing Director of the NPA** on the theme “**NPA and ongoing reforms**” on this auspicious occasion organised by a foremost tabloid the Premium Times for Maritime Journalists.

I must first and foremost congratulate and salute the organisers for putting up this event and most importantly choosing the theme which could not have come at a much better time than now for greater benefit across board.

As you are aware the developing nations of the world are presently faced with the challenge of industrial growth and development which can be assessed through the **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** of a country. Our dear country Nigeria is not an exception but other time Maritime Stakeholders have called on relevant authorities to tap from the numerous potentials and opportunities Nigeria could benefit from in view of her location with the Sub-Saharan Africa. This I believe would lead to speed in the growth of the nation within increased revenue through international trade.

Before the implementation of the reform of the sector by the Federal Government in 2006 through the concessioning of the Ports to terminal operators, the sector was faced with numerous challenges which did not allow for operators to function at optimal capacity in line with international best practices.

With the coming of the present Management of the NPA which I humbly oversee, you would recall that we promised and made commitment to all our partners, stakeholders, the public as well as gentlemen of the press that we shall build on the successes of our predecessors in taking the sector to enviable height.

Gentlemen of the press, I stand before you today and emphatically make bold to inform you that with your unalloyed loyalty as the watchdog of the sector, we have recorded tremendous progress at all fronts at ensuring that the sector competes favourably within Sub-Saharan Africa, Gulf of Guinea and most importantly before the international community.

Most recently, the NPA Management was recognised by the International Organisation for standardization (**ISO 9001 and the OHSAS 18001**) Certification for our positive step towards moving the sector to the next level.

We at the NPA strongly believe we could not have achieved this alone without your support for improved safety, environmental protection, operational efficiency and improved service delivery amongst others. With this certificates, our sector through the NPA is experiencing reduced operational expenses, better Management control, increased customer satisfaction, improve customer service and most importantly our port is now attractive before investors for National growth and development.

Allow me to state that at the NPA we have recorded the under-listed achievements as part of our reform agenda.

- Commissioning of the Command & Control Communication and intelligence centre for NPA. It will serve as surveillance of all activities and as an information network centre for Security Agencies in the Ports.
- Acquisition and commissioning of 4 new tug boats namely MT Daura, MT Ubima, MT Uromi and MT Majiya in order to further improve operational efficiency.
- Upgrade of 25years Port Development Master Plan.
- Transformation of the Authority's manpower development practices to improve the skill, knowledge and capacity of employees.
- Accomplished the signing of **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** with **Federal Ministry of Works and Housing (FMWH)** for the reconstruction of the Port Access Road.
- Just yesterday we commissioned a Simulator Centre for the training of our Pilots

As we move forward at further repositioning the sector through our operational diligence by the help of **Ease of Doing Business**, I call on your increased partnership to navigate through the troubled waters towards maximising the benefits of the sector. As a major player, we assure you that we shall explore optimally in the area of revenue generation and job creation to the benefits of the Nigerian Populace across board.

I wish to conclude my address that we intend to vigorously enforce all standards for greater efficiency and service delivery and we sincerely need your support in this regard.

Kindly use the opportunity this seminar has presented to freely discuss objectively on issues which would be forwarded to Management for the benefit of all.

Thank you for your attention and God bless.

HADIZA BALA USMAN
Managing Director, NPA