

DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S VISIT TO GOVERNOR OF KADUNA STATE



TEXT OF AN ADDRESS BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE INDUSTRIAL TRAINING FUND (ITF), SIR JOSEPH N. ARI DURING A COURTESY VISIT ON THE GOVERNOR OF KADUNA STATE, MALLAM NASIRU AHMED EL-RUFA'I ON MONDAY 31ST OCTOBER, 2016 AT SIR KASHIM IBRAHIM HOUSE, KADUNA

Protocols

I feel highly honoured and indeed privileged to be received in audience by His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Mallam Nasiru Ahmed El-Rufa'I despite other pressing matters of state.

Before I continue, I wish to, on behalf of Management and the entire staff of the Fund, convey our warm regards to the Government and the good people of Kaduna State that have been such wonderful and truly accommodating hosts since the ITF established its presence in the State in 1975, and to also commend the Governor on his numerous strides particularly in the capacity development and empowerment of the youth as exemplified by its collaboration with the Department for International Development, DFID, for the equipping and retooling of some Business Apprenticeship Training Centres across the State as platform for equipping youths in the state with relevant technical skills.

Your efforts, Sir, are not laudable only in tandem with the Fund's mandate, but also the surest way to tackling the twin problems of unemployment and poverty on one hand and the achievement of the economic diversification Agenda of the Federal Government on the other.

As you may be aware, the Industrial Training Fund was established 45 years ago, precisely on October 8, 1971, through decree 47 on 8th October 1971 and vested with following mandate:

- To provide, promote and encourage the acquisition of skills in industries and commerce with a view of generating a pool of indigenous trained manpower sufficient to meet the need of the national economy,
- Provide training for skills in management for technical and entrepreneur development in the public and private sector or the Nigerian economy,
- Set training standards in all sectors of the economy and monitor adherence,
- Evaluate and certify vocational skills acquired by apprentices craftsmen and technicians in collaboration relevant organizations

Despite this clearly challenging and tasking mandate, we are proud to say that ITF has equipped over 14 million Nigerians with skills in various trades and crafts. Currently, the ITF is training 10100 youths in 18 states and the FCT through its National Industrial Skills Development Programme (NISDP). 500 youths from kaduna state are being trained in domestic electrical installation and maintenance, fashion designing and interior decoration. From our tracking of beneficiaries in earlier phases of the NISDP, over 70 percent of that were supported by their respective governments were able to set up their businesses as against 20 percent that were not supported. We therefore appeal to the State to extend to NISDP beneficiaries starter packs and other forms of assistance in order to fully exploit the benefits of the skills they have acquired.

But in spite of our achievements, we have since the assumption of the incumbent management on 29th September, 2016, come to the conclusion that we should do more if the country will successfully negotiate the prevailing recession and drive the Federal Government's economic diversification programme.

To this end, the Fund has developed a plan to radically reposition and refocus the organisation to more effectively deliver on its mandate. The objective of the plan, which

has a number of Quick Wins, Medium Term and Long Term goals is equip as many with skills for employability and entrepreneurship.

Your Excellency Sir, although details of our plans will be contained in a presentation that will be presented shortly I will seek the

Under the Quick Win Strategy, Your Excellency, it is intended to be the building houses for the realization of an immediate impact by spreading our tentacles to other sub-sections that have hitherto been neglected in the past. Such include reviving agriculture where we intend to promote and encourage participation in agriculture especially by the youths.

I am glad to inform His Excellency that Kaduna State has been chosen as one of our eight pilot States to site a demonstration farm where 1,000 youths from each State will be provided with requisite skills in agro-allied sub-sector and to broaden and up skills farmers on new agricultural techniques.

Furthermore, we are focusing on providing exposure for practical hands-on experience in trades under the construction industry notably welding and fabrication, re-enforcing metal works, domestic electrical installation, hiring, masonry, plumbing and pipe-fitting and plaster of pains (POP) making. The plan here is to train 500 youths per State and the FCT which will in turn give us 18,500 employable youths to man our industries. ITF will also conduct a 'Trace Study' to ascertain the number of such trainees who are gainfully employed: we assure His Excellency that Kaduna State is at the heart of all our youth empowerment and poverty alleviations.

It goes without saying that Kaduna State now is emerging as the home of peace-as a result of your concerted efforts and people-oriented programmes and policies. The youths are now fully engaged and they are no longer "idle to become the devil's workshop"

Our passionate appeal to His Excellency is to key into all these aforementioned skill areas which is in tandem with the President's policy on poverty reduction and tackling unemployment, we, in ITF believe that the nation is on the path of greatness and industrialization.

We are also making an appeal to His Excellency to encourage Government Agencies and Parastatals to patronize ITF programmes as it has recently been observed that this has been no patronage by such agencies of government. It is worthy of note that ITF is the foremost human resource organization in the country.

Kaduna has had privilege of hosting and ITF Area Office since 1975 considering its strategic position and history. Till date, ITF has remained visible and even commissioned its present structure in 2011 to establish its prominence within the heart of the city.

However, early in the year, we were sent a notice of demolition by KASUPDA of plans to demolish our multi-million naira Area Office Complex for not meeting the required standard of 4-storey building. In view of this development, we hereby pleads that His Excellency allow us to develop the adjoining land which equally belongs to the ITF to the required standard of 4 –storey building but covert the existing structure to a skills training centre. We will be most grateful if such a noble request is granted by His Excellency.

While thanking His Excellency for us despite crowded schedules, we again plead that the State Government supports the NSDP scheme by providing starter-paces to indigent trainee's in order to hit the ground running at the end of the programme.

We equally appeal to His Excellency to beckon on Heads of State-Owned Agencies, Parastatals and Institutions to remit their annual training contribution to the ITF as doing the contrary is unlawful.

Thank you, Your Excellency for this audience and warm reception accorded us. May God continue to bless and guide you as you strive to make "Kaduna great again".

Thank you all for listening.



Finally Sir, may I on behalf of the ITF inform you that our doors are opened for any form of collaboration with the State Government particularly as it relates to human capital development particularly for job creation.

On this note Your Excellency, I want to thank you for granting us this audience to be with you.

Thank you and God bless.

