

Monday 15th February 2016, Abuja

The visit was overall very successful thanks in large part to the organisation, help and support of those on the ground in Abuja and Lagos. Numerous positive contacts were made. The strong message I take is the need for more trade missions and more physical engagement with Nigeria. We should:

- Reflect Buhari's economic priorities (eg agriculture, solid minerals, ICT etc);
- Include extensive work with UKTI, business groups including industry trade groups and friendly Nigerians to identify where UK companies can take advantage - and identify which UK companies are in the best position to benefit;
- Where UK companies are new to the market ensure support and guidance is available to them including UK Export Finance, help in finding the right NG local partner, market intelligence. UKTI, the British High Commission, the Nigerian High Commission and the Nigeria Trade Envoy John Howell MP should be aligned and supportive on this.
- Use the UK Nigerian diaspora to amplify positive messages on trade and investment and work with the Special Presidential Advisor for the Diaspora.
- Use the Nigerian High Commission to promote positive messaging to Nigeria.

Meetings in Abuja involved the entire delegation apart from those with the Mr Ohuabunwa, the Nigerian States Governors Forum , and the President.

Briefing by British High Commissioner Paul Arkwright.

Paul provided a very helpful, wide ranging briefing on the current political and economic situation in Nigeria.

Last year's peaceful handover of power is the first in Nigeria history – so much so that the previous President Jonathan is now considered a statesman because he handed over after defeat.

The government of President Buhari focusing on number of key issues

1. Security and the defeat of Boko Haram (BH). Currently, BH are not completely defeated but they are significantly reduced. They continue to use sporadic suicide bombings tactics, often by using young girls as carriers. There is also rising Biafra nationalism in the south east and the arrest and prosecution of British/Nigerian dual citizen, Mr Kanu, has not helped. In middle belt of the country climate change is pushing herders south onto arable land, leading to disputes between the farmers and nomadic herders in search of grazing land to feed their livestock.
2. Anti Corruption: In this area personal example, rhetoric and actions so far are all good, but, people will need to see results There have been major arrests, some recovery, and prosecution before the courts of a number of people. More arrests and prosecution are expected.
3. The economy - 90% of government revenues is from the oil industry, with the significant reduction in the nation's income occasioned by falling oil prices, diversification of the economy into agricultural, manufacturing, and solid minerals is now the focus of government.

Nigeria's population is projected to double by 2050 and be the third most populous country in the world by the end of this century on current trends. Estimates put the Nigerian diaspora in UK as 2 million yet UK provides only 11% of Nigeria FDI.

A soon to be published report from PWC, commissioned by the HC, identifies UK opportunities to include manufacturing, particularly heavy machinery, transport, fashion, oil and gas and in services on telecoms and ICT

Godfrey Ohuabunwa

I met briefly with Godfrey who runs a number of companies in Nigeria including Gospell, Multimesh as well as holding the Kenwood franchise. His particular concern was the Set Top Boxes he is distributing for Inview for Nigeria's Digital SwitchOver. He was concerned the contract would be cancelled following changes in leadership at NBC. He also emphasised concerns over multiple taxation, right of way, and delayed infrastructure investment. He also has a film production company.

Email with regard to Africa APPG

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo

The Vice President was very welcoming of the delegation. He emphasised the priorities of security, anti-corruption and the economy. On the economy he spoke of the impact of the falling oil price but also that despite it, and perhaps using borrowing, they intended 15Billion infrastructure investment which would focus on energy and roads. When I raised the issue of digital infrastructure he repeated that their focus was on the basics, energy and support for agriculture. He emphasised the need to add value in food processing.

Foreign Minister Geoffrey Onyeama

The Minister was very supportive and welcoming of the delegation. The priorities of the government/Ministry include security, anti-corruption, employment/economy. Their diplomatic core has a presence in 119 countries. The Minister wants to build a strong economic diplomacy capacity including

- a) matchmaking database
- b) intra Africa trade including an African G7 to promote free trade.

On the West African EPA he has some concerns but was recently reassured by Ghanaian trade minister with whom he will have further discussions. All countries in West Africa have signed apart from Nigeria and Gambia.

The importance and role of the diaspora in supporting trade and positive engagement with Nigeria was emphasised by the APPG members.

16th February Abuja

Trade and Industry Okeckhukwu Enelamah

The Trade and Industry Minister is determined that the Department would be the champion and shop window for Nigerian goods and services. They plan to open 'Africa Houses' at or near embassies which will sell goods. Recognises the importance of improving processes and standardization of product for trade. Plan to create 'one stop shop' and zones at ports where everything is in the same place. Recognise need to put everything on line and working with consultants to achieve that. Nigeria is looking to make the most of the relationship with Britain. He believes the state must create the right enabling environment, create a service culture. Nigeria's road to Industrialisation requires Partners. He quoted an 'African' saying 'When a road is good you travel on it more than once'. That is what he intends his ministry to achieve. The importance and role of the diaspora in supporting trade and positive engagement with Nigeria was emphasised by the APPG members.

Governors Forum with the Chair of the Governors Forum, the Governor of Zamfara and the Governor of Kebbi State.

The Governors formally welcomed the delegation and spoke of the importance of working in and with the states. The focus was on agriculture and allied-industries, and solid minerals, and how UK business could support States' attempts to build up these sectors. The Governors felt that the UK was not 'present' enough as before, and would like to see the return of major UK companies that use to be in Nigeria. The importance and role of the diaspora in supporting trade and positive engagement with Nigeria was emphasised by the APPG members.

President Buhari

The meeting with President Buhari was organised by Bashir Gwandu who also attended. The President emphasised how Nigeria needed to diversify its economy from oil, focusing on manufacturing, agriculture and solid minerals. He reminded us that it was the British who built Nigeria's manufacturing and agricultural sectors before the discovery of oil. He specifically mentioned Dunlop and Unilever amongst other Major British Companies, and how concerned he had been when they left. He suggested that we should help bring them back to Nigeria. Very focused on manufacturing and agriculture and long term patient investment. I emphasised UK strengths in food processing and digital industries as well as the importance and role of the diaspora in promoting positive engagement in these and other areas. This was also reflected by the other APPG members, as well as the importance of the relationship to the UK.

Put Trade and Industry in touch with Manufacturing Food Association.

British High Commission

The day closed with a very well attended reception at the British High Commission and the opportunity to meet the Governor of Bayelsa State, the Minister for Communications and the newly appointed Special Diaspora Advisor to the President amongst others. The Minister for Communications – a lawyer that is keen to improve his knowledge of the ICTs was keen for me to suggest a good conference in the UK which would benefit his knowledge of cutting edge technologies and provide an avenue for further engagement with APPG. He is attending MobileWorld in Barcelona.

17th February Lagos

MTN Exec Committee

The meeting focused on the recent fine which has taken up nearly 100% of the Executive Committee's time since it was announced. I had not realised that it is in effect the Government's implementation of identity cards for Nigerian citizens, they are using SIM registration to provide identify authentication only there are significant issues with data capture, exchange and storage. The identify authentication is in accordance with FBI standards but the systems are not. I referenced the UK Government's Verify programme.

There was also a very useful update on MTN. When I left MTN they were still a startup. Now they are the dominant player in Africa's largest mobile market, which brings its own challenges. **MTN is the largest music distributor in Africa, which is not a significant part of any UK business case.**

Digital Economy Roundtable

This was hosted at the Deputy High Commission in Lagos, introduced by the Head of UKTI Nigeria, with an excellent attendance from ICT, Telecoms, Banking and Startup sectors. Google and Microsoft confirmed attendance but did not show.

Infrastructure

Those around the table made a number of points on Chinese investment. **As well as low-cost funding, supported by Chinese banks**, the Chinese bring training and localisation of technology. They also bring leadership and speed. The UK can do more to emulate that. UK need to be more adaptable and more present. Companies can only buy what they are aware of. It was observed that UK Universities are coming to Nigeria for trade fairs but not UK tech companies.

But there was support for the high quality of UK equipment and its durability, with some examples from companies present of excellent working partnerships where Nigerians added value to UK products potentially providing exports from Nigeria to the rest of the world.

Regulation and Government policy was cited as a problem by many. Nigerian Government policies on planning and way-leaves are not helpful. **Might be useful to share best practice on regulation with Ofcom and also collaboration between UK and Nigeria parliaments.** It was observed that in both countries technology was not top of the political agenda and that industry could do more to address this.

There was general agreement that Cloud would greatly benefit the sector, enabling lower cost, more flexible solutions. There are regulatory barriers to its development, especially for multinationals, including a law against hosting data outside the country. CBN and SEC jointly regulate this sector.

Services

Education was described as being outdated in digital terms with many schools still teaching Fortran. Better education essential to securing the ambition of 3 million IT jobs in Nigeria over the next 3 years. **Opportunity for UK and Nigerian universities to work together to improve curricula and skills.**

Admiration for the work of UK's Digital Government Services and requests for support and exchange. It was mentioned that personal interests could play a part in holding back digital government and frustrating initiative. Digitising salary payments for the public service for example would create huge efficiencies, and will highlight numerous ghost workers.

Foreign exchange availability continues to impact e-retailers, as with most companies in Nigeria at present.

Also contacts identify contacts in Tech City and APPG Fintech and put Tech UK in touch with UKTI

Fintech in Nigeria is hampered by what was described as CBN NECC standoff around e-payments, where responsibility falls between the CBN (on the finance side) and NCC (on the comms). The sector had the ability to benefit Nigeria massively by moving it away from cash. Also suggested that **DFID should give money to local businesses as well as NGOs.**

The Business to business market was emphasised including telehealth, power and of course telecoms.

Culture roundtable

This was hosted by the Bogoburi Cultural Centre with a range of attendees from the arts and culture organised by the Lagos British Council.

The discussion was wide ranging but mainly centred on the impact of corruption on Nigerian culture and identity, and the role of culture in the Nigerian identity. There was a split between those saw themselves as 'getting on with it' and those who wanted to construct structures/eliminate corruption to enable culture to flourish. The only action to come out was to **identify fashion manufacturing contacts**.