



NATION FIRST, ALWAYS FIRST

Commemorating 75th Independence Day Of India

High Commission of India, Abuja (Nigeria) Hosts Flag Hoisting Ceremony



India again came into global spotlight of applause and commendations as greetings, messages of goodwill and solidarity continues to pour in from governments, leaders of nations, key development stakeholders, multilateral institutions, partners, lovers of India, among others on the occasion of its 75th Independence commemoration. Towards preserving this treasured liberty and democracy, the nation is constantly

reminded of the sacrifices made by patriots and partners in the emergence of a free India. The founding leaders recognition and promotion of independence celebrations have also become enviable legacy now fostered by successive governments and national leaders.

Since its sovereignty in 1947, India has transformed tremendously, gaining prominence and respectability in Good Governance, Science & Medicines, Agriculture, ICT, Space Exploration, Quality Educational Growth, Cultural prominence, Development Cooperation, International Awards, and in Sports, with sterling performances at the just concluded 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Through highlighting nationhood's accomplishments; honoring heroes of independence and promoters of nation-building; enhancing traditions and ethical values, positively projecting their country, and laying down pathways of national continuity; the land of ideas, innovations, actions and resolves is proud to be endowed with unique sets of people (Indians) with priorities and pursuits on **Nation First, Always First**.

Progressively rising from the global impact of Covid-19 devastations, the Indian Government and its missions across the world celebrated the 75 years milestone in unique traditional styles the nation is proudly known for with Prime Minister Modi unfurling the flag at the Red Fort, in New Delhi, India. In Nigeria, the Indian Mission, a respected and frontline diplomatic representation hosted a flag hoisting ceremony to mark the event. Grand celebrations of the 75th Independence Day at the High Commission in Abuja on 'August 15th' were attended by over 400 community members, friends and families, as invitees also attended its Lagos occasion. High Commissioner Abhay Thakur unfurled the National Flag and read out Rashtrapati's address, while the Head of Chancery, Office of the High Commission of India in Lagos, Mr. Rachit Rawat unfurled the Lagos Flag and read Rashtrapati's remarks.

The Abuja event had a scintillating 2-hour performance including patriotic songs, dances, skits and poetry followed, while the Lagos event was spiced by songs presentation from students of the Indian Language School in Lagos. Refreshments, paintings, photo-sessions, display of photo-gallery of India's historical and modern attainments, and mingling among guests comprising Citizens of India, Persons of Indian Origin and Friends of India added colour to the ceremony. As it celebrate the occasion of the Amrit Mahotsav of freedom 'Incredible India' has a lot of things to be grateful for at 75. **LONG LIVE THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA**



High Commissioner Abhay Thakur delivery the President Message in Abuja



Head Of Chancery in Lagos, Mr Rachit Rawal delivering the Rashtrapati's message in Lagos



Cross-section of guests at the High Commission in Abuja



Cultural and Dance presentations by the combination of Children and Adults in Abuja during their song presentations



Cross-section of guests at the Office of the High Commissioner in Lagos

UNITED STATES CONSULATE GENERAL IN LAGOS HOSTS A PROGRAM ON 'A CONVERSATION ON PRESS FREEDOM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND CIVIC SPACE IN NIGERIA'



Consul General Claire Pierangelo delivering remarks during the event

United States of America is known to play strategic roles in global humanitarian and societal improvements. Through its enormous democratic, diplomacy and defense commitments, U.S. vanguards crucial development interventions seen and felt across the world. Its philosophies, politics, promotions, power, philanthropy and people are geared towards supporting a free, safe and improved world. Being a steadfast

supporter of the continent's growth (Nigeria inclusive), the U.S. strengthen actions for Africa's Advancement through the promotions of a free press, media development, safety and empowerment of journalists, expressions of fundamental rights, pursuits and realizations of improved and peaceful societies, among others.

Towards these, and in view of Nigeria's continuing suspension of Twitter and recent moves to push through two bills to amend the National Broadcasting Act and the Nigeria Press Council Act—the U.S. Consulate General, Lagos, through its Public Affairs Section (PAS), organized the program on: *"A Conversation On Press Freedom, Freedom Of Expression And Civic Space In Nigeria"*. Gathered at the event, which took place at the Consul General Residence at Ikoyi, Lagos, to discuss the threats affecting press freedom and freedom of expression in Nigeria and the way forward are major media organizations, prominent media practitioners, academic dons, NUJ executives, veteran and renowned journalists, etc..

The occasion also featured a panelist session moderated by veteran journalist Mr. Mike Okwoche, of TVC News. Distinguished members of the panel who spoke diversely and did justice to the subject theme includes:

- Mr. Fisayo Soyombo, Founder, Foundation for Investigative Journalism. The revered investigative journalist gave an instructive perspectives on when, where and how investigative journalism can help enhance media promotions and relevance in Nigeria.
- Ms. Ijeoma Nwogwugwu, Managing Director, Arise TV. The media icon and first female to lead a media organization in the country during her contributions highlighted some of the threats confronting press freedom and how they can be mitigated towards moving the industry and practitioners forward.
- Mr. Jiti Ogunye, Principal Counsel, Jiti Ogunye Chambers. The public analyst and human rights activist on his part gave an in-depth legal perspectives on how human rights and media freedom can be preserved and enhanced in the country, urging national leaders and related development stakeholders to always respect rights and uphold press independence and promotions.

Speaking during her remarks, the Chief Host, U.S. Consul General Claire Pierangelo, emphasized on the value of promoting and protecting a free press as an essential pillar of responsive and accountable democracies, and why the media and Civil Society Community and representatives must remain alert to their responsibilities on these. Mr. Lekan Otufodunrin, the CEO, Media Career Services, and the President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors, Mr. Mustapha Isah, respectively highlighted the challenges confronting media freedom and the triumph that awaits if the consciousness and unified efforts in the fight are sustained. Mr. Stephen Ibelli, the new Consulate Public Affairs Officer, anchored the highly informative and interactive program. *Acclaim*

Nigeria International Magazine senior officials also participated. **ANN**



Consul General Claire Pierangelo's Remarks

A Conversation on Press Freedom, Freedom of Expression and Civic Space
Wednesday, August 4, 2021, 11:00 a.m. Consul General's Residence, Ikoyi

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen:

First, let me say that I am very delighted to see you all here this morning. In particular, I would like to warmly welcome:

Mr. Lanre Arogundade, Executive Director of International Press Center. Mr. Jiti Ogunye, Principal Counsel of Jiti Ogunye Chambers; Ms. Ijeoma Nwogwugwu, Managing Director of Arise TV; Mr. Fisayo Soyombo, Founder, Foundation for Investigative Journalism; Mr. Mustapha Isah, President, Nigeria Guild of Editors and Mr. Mike Okwoche, Senior Anchor for TVC News who will moderate the panel discussion.

Thank you all for honoring our invitation today.

The U.S. Consulate General is honored to host this "Conversation on Press Freedom, Freedom of Expression and Civic Space in Nigeria" because we believe that media freedom and freedom of expression are vital to a thriving democracy.

The Biden-Harris administration is committed to putting human rights at the heart of our foreign policy and that includes press freedom and freedom of expression.

You will agree with me that a free press is a core pillar to a democracy. There's a reason why the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees freedom of expression by prohibiting Congress from restricting the press or the rights of individuals to speak freely.

I have been in Lagos as Consul General since 2019. I have spoken with hundreds, perhaps thousands of Nigerians about democracy, elections, and the history of Nigeria. These conversations have shaped my perception that Nigeria has a vibrant democracy and a relatively free press.

However, some concerns remain about the freedom of journalists to do their job. We take note when legislation is introduced which could have significant consequences for the freedom of the press.

In addition, Nigerian government's ongoing suspension of Twitter and stated intent to introduce registration requirements for other social media platforms is deeply worrisome. Banning or significantly restricting social media, including under threat of prosecution, undermines Nigerians' human rights and fundamental freedoms. We are encouraged by the meetings between Twitter and government technical committee last week aimed at resolving the suspension.

In view of these recent developments, you — reporters, editors, media executives, and civil society representatives — must remain vigilant to protect the right to freedom of expression and press freedom. To fulfill its highest civic purpose, the press must be both independent and unbiased. Without independence, a media outlet functions as a public relations mouthpiece for the government and other powerful interests.

In the same breath, history is full of cautionary tales showing that when governments try to limit citizens' right to talk about certain topics, important conversations are pushed into the shadows allowing individuals to express their opinions — no matter how much the government and other citizens may disagree with them. Rigorous debate promotes transparency and social stability.

The United States, however, understands that with more freedom comes more responsibility. Advances in technology and increased reliance on social media platforms as sources of information make the accuracy and objectivity of your reporting crucial. More than ever before, good journalism relies on accurate, in-depth, and critical reporting of facts on matters of public concern or interest.

One of our founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson, put it well when he said, "Our liberty cannot be guarded but by the freedom of the press, nor that be limited without danger of losing it." Jefferson also added, "[W]ere it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

A very special program is in store for everyone today. Our distinguished speakers and panelists have taken time out of their extraordinarily busy schedules to join us to share some valuable insights about press freedom, free speech, and the civic space. Thank you for joining us.

In closing, I just want to thank all of you seated here today for the work you do to expose abuse, to hold leaders accountable, to empower people with the information that they need to lead healthy, productive lives and to engage meaningfully in the Nigerian political and civic space.

You have already met Stephen Ibelli, our Public Affairs Officer. Jennifer Foltz is our Deputy Public Affairs Officer, Temitayo Famutimi is our Media Specialist and Chibuike Ohiaeri is our Social Media Coordinator. Please find some time while you are here today to speak with our team about the professional exchange and training programs we have for the press.

I wish everyone a fruitful discussion. Thanks so much for joining us today for this exciting program.

'Envoy Extraordinaire'

BOLSTERING U.S.-NIGERIA DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION



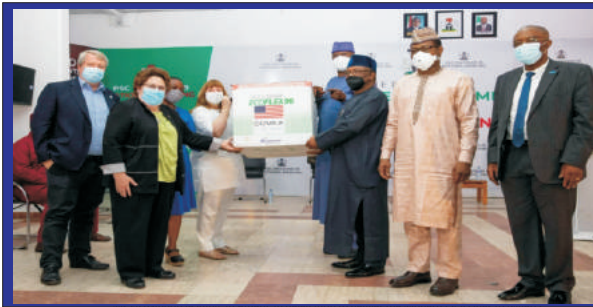
Kathleen FitzGibbon
Deputy Chief of Mission
U.S. Embassy, Abuja, Nigeria

Nigeria continues to enjoy effective and commendable representations from the U.S. Missions and Agencies in the country: men and women who selflessly strive to ensure that the nation and the Nigerian people, and profitable partnership currently enjoyed by both nations move in the desired direction. And, one of these representatives: a distinguished diplomat, well-trained and experienced, dedicated to duty, development promoter and committed to diplomatic cause and course is **Ms Kathleen Fitzgibbon**. The current Charge d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria is a woman of resplendence, reachouts and respectability, whose vast task is complementing the leadership of Her Excellency, Mary Beth-Leonard, the Head Of Mission, to rightly deliver on US-Nigeria multilateral and development collaborations.

Kathleen FitzGibbon is the Deputy Chief of Mission since June 2019. In this capacity, she assists the Ambassador in leading the U.S. Mission's nearly 1,000 American and Nigerian employees in Abuja and Lagos to advance U.S. strategic goals in security cooperation, democracy and governance, economic growth and trade, and development and humanitarian assistance, among other areas. Prior to returning to Nigeria, Kathleen was the Director of the Office of Africa Analysis in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (2016-2019) and the Division Chief for West and Southern Africa (2015-2016). Before this tour in Washington, she spent 11 years in various assignments in Africa. In Freetown, Sierra Leone, she was the Deputy Chief of Mission (2012-2015) and served as Charge d'Affaires, a.i. from October 2013 to October 2014. She was a key player in the international response efforts against Ebola. She was the Deputy Chief of Mission in Libreville responsible for Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe.

As the Political/Economic Chief in Kampala, Uganda from 2006 to 2009, Kathleen focused on negotiations with the Lord's Resistance Army and northern Uganda's recovery from decades of conflict. As the Political Officer in N'Djamena, Chad from 2004-2006, she assisted the Bureau of Refugees, Migration, and Population with managing the influx of 200,000 Darfur refugees and was a State Department negotiator at the Darfur Peace Talks in Abuja. She served as the Political Chief in Lagos, Nigeria as the country returned to civilian rule. Kathleen also was the Senior Reporting Officer in the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons covering Africa, the Middle East, and Southwest Asia. Through this and other Washington positions, she has built expertise on human trafficking, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and bilateral military training, refugee affairs, human rights, democratic and economic reforms, commercial advocacy, and health diplomacy.

Before joining the Department of State, Kathleen taught African Politics, International Development, and American Government at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, VA. Kathleen's hails from the village of Caledonia in western New York. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from Hartwick College in Oneonta, NY. She has an M.A. in International Relations and is A.B.D. in Comparative Politics-African Studies from the University of California, Davis. She is an incurable Arsenal fan and plays soccer, golf, and tennis. Nigeria is indeed blessed to have **Kathleen FitzGibbon** in the US mission team in Nigeria at this crucial period of national growth and **Acclaim Nigeria International Magazine** acknowledge and acclaim your many salutary works. **ANN**



Ms FitzGibbon leading an American delegation to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to Nigeria



Ms FitzGibbon with NNM Editor-in-Chief, Olumide Ogunsola & Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Ademola Ogunsola at the U.S. 2019 Independence Day celebrations in Lagos



Ms FitzGibbon representing the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria on Nation Building pursuits

...INNOVATION. PROFITABILITY. ECONOMIC GROWTH



Green Technology from Poland

Embassy
of the Republic of Poland
in Abuja



Polish Investment
& Trade Agency
PER Group

In pursuant to Poland's global investment drive, the expansion of its businesses, the inflow of FDI to the country and its interest in Nigeria's economic prosperity evidenced by its foreign mission pursuits under the pragmatic leadership of **Ambassador Joanna Tarnawska**; the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Abuja in conjunction with the Polish Investment & Trade Agency, PAIH hosted and invited the public on the 4th of August 2021, to an interactive online presentation & Networking Event on **Green Technology from Poland**,

The virtual program which drew wide range of companies and individuals interested in Green Technology, Federal Government Representatives, States Governments Representatives also afforded participants to connect and learn more on the most innovative green technology from Poland in the following areas: **Water Treatment. Biomass Technology. Hydropower. Energy Saving Housing Technology.** As part of its agenda, a Knowledge Sharing, Interactive Sector Presentations and Individual Networking Online B2B Meetings sessions were held through breakout-rooms that helped in providing first-hand information on various Polish innovative and eco-friendly initiatives, products and investment opportunities to prospective Nigerian investors and environmental development practitioners. Ms. Justyna Sitarska, of Polish Investment & Trade Agency, PAIH, was one of the event co-hosts and moderators and look forward for further enquiries.

Acclaim Nigeria International Magazine representatives also participated in the online program. **ANN**

Swiss Consulate -General in Lagos Boosts Trade Growth and Economic Partnership Between Nigeria And Switzerland

Consul General Thomas Schneider Affirm Switzerland's Development Efforts During ANIM visitation



Photo session of Acclaim Nigeria International Magazine with Consul General Schneider at his office

As governments and people of Switzerland and Nigeria seek new ways to promote and consolidate on the gains of bilateral ties, Swiss mission in Nigeria is also ensuring these collaborative and development efforts produce more beneficial and enduring outcomes.

Swiss Consulate-General in Lagos is relentlessly working in establishing and fostering economic, cultural, educational and academic ties between Switzerland and Lagos (and its surrounding states). The mission also acts as Trade Point for Switzerland Global Enterprises to support Swiss SME's in setting-up a business relationship with Nigeria. The Lagos mission consults with Swiss investors seeking the Nigerian markets and aims to add to the over 50 Swiss companies contributing to socio-economic improvements and overall development in Nigeria.

Towards encouraging these strives, *Acclaim Nigeria International Magazine* (ANIM) crew paid a visit to the Consul General and Head of Trade Point in Nigeria, **Mr. Thomas Schneider**, at his office in Lagos. The Envoy, a respected Information Tech and International Development expert, was delighted at the visitation and received the media organization with warmness typical of Swiss hospitality.

He seized the opportunity of the call to further reel out the Consulate-General pursuits and affirm his country's development commitments to Nigeria. While noting Covid-19 effect on interactions, businesses and survivability, Mr Schneider is boosting efforts through ongoing consultations, visitations and strategic collaborations to continually place Switzerland in Global map from Lagos. *ANIM* appreciates the warm reception it received during the media-visitation and commend the efforts of the team in Lagos. It also recognize ongoing works at the Swiss Embassy in Abuja, and applauds the leadership of His Excellency, Ambassador Georg Steiner, a diplomat per excellence, whose diplomatic impact is contributing to national progress. **ANN**

LET'S JOIN HANDS TO STOP COVID -19 SPREAD IN NIGERIA

- CHOOSE VACCINES OVER VENTILATORS—BE VACCINATED WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY AVAILS
- WEAR A MASK IN PUBLIC PLACES
- WASH & SANITIZE YOUR HANDS AND OBSERVE GOOD HYGIENE PRACTICES
- PRACTICE SAFE DISTANCE ALWAYS
- AVOID CROWD PLACES AS MUCH AS YOU CAN
- CALL AND/OR REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO DESIGNATION QUARTERS ON COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AND SICKNESS
- STOP FAKE NEWS AND RUMOURS ON COVID-19 THAT COULD HARM GENUINE EFFORTS AND SOLUTIONS
- HELP END THIS PROLONG PANDEMIC IN NIGERIA AND GLOBALLY THROUGH POSITIVE ACTIONS



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