



**REMARKS**

**BY**

**DR DALHATU SARKI TAFIDA, OFR  
HIGH COMMISSIONER OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED KINGDOM**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMMISSIONING OF  
THE NEW VISA HALL,  
NIGERIA HIGH COMMISSION,  
LONDON, THURSDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2010**

## **PROTOCOL**

I am delighted to welcome you to the commissioning of the new Visa Hall of the High Commission.

You will recall that I launched a comprehensive programme of reforms of the immigration and consular services on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2009. On that occasion, I promised that this Hall would be made more user-friendly. This is an essential component of our efforts at improved service delivery. I am pleased that today, we have been able to deliver on that specific commitment.

As you will no doubt observe, the main features of the new-look Hall are the reconstruction of the floors, which has now been done with granite; new conveniences (toilets) for clients; personalised public address systems; more service points, including an Information Desk and better electronic queuing system with barriers; separate sections for visas and passports, among others. There is also a provision of a Business Centre, which will make it unnecessary for clients to go outside the building for photocopying and internet services.

Besides the Visa Hall, the implementation of other aspects of the reform has continued apace. Staff in the Immigration Section has been reshuffled. Those found performing below expectation have been re-deployed. New hands have been hired and new equipments purchased, to make the work of the Section easier. As you will also recall, the Mission's web site was re-designed and re-branded, to popular acclaim.

As part of the reforms, the Visa and Consular visa fees were reviewed downwards early in the year. This was done in response to economic trends and to ameliorate the economic impact of the old fees on Nigerians.

I am pleased to note that, from the positive comments and commendations of many Nigerians, applicants and unbiased observers, our reforms have led to better customer satisfaction. We no longer experience delays in the processing of passports, visas and other services. The incidence of touting has been drastically reduced. Nigerians no longer have the need to patronise them in the light of ease with which they can now access our services.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, we recognise that a lot still need to be done to perfect the system. Let me therefore assure you that we will continue to fine-tune our internal processes and mechanism, to further reduce waiting period and enhance the quality of services.

In furtherance of this commitment, and to ease the inconveniences to Nigerians outside London who have been coming to the High Commission for issuance of passports, a mobile passport production machine has just been acquired. This is based on our representation to the competent authorities in Nigeria, who were kind enough to respond positively to our request. Once the logistics are worked out, we will commence the operation of this service to Nigerians in major cities and centres outside London.

**Distinguished Ladies  
and Gentlemen,**

While the High Commission will continue to improve on its services, we will like to appeal for patience, understanding and support of all Nigerians. Applicants are advised to visit our new website, to familiarise themselves with the requirements for services before they apply and to pay correct fees. They should also avail themselves of the dedicated telephone lines that have been opened for Immigration enquiries. I will like to reiterate my earlier appeal that applicants should desist from patronising touts, no matter their circumstances.

It is now my honour and pleasure to officially commission the new Visa Hall. I will like to dedicate the Hall to all Nigerians and friends of Nigeria, who may need the services of the High Commission.

Thank you for coming and God bless.