

ARI ASSUMES DUTY AS ITF DG; CALLS FOR FAITHFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF ITF MANDATE

Newly appointed Director-General of Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Sir Joseph Ari has stated that for Nigeria to successfully negotiate the prevailing economic recession, the mandate of the Fund must be faithfully implemented.

Delivering his inaugural address after taking over the mantle of leadership of the ITF during the handing over ceremony at the Fund's Headquarters yesterday, Sir Ari said other countries had used organisations with similar mandates as the ITF to overcome recession.

In his words: "We are presently in an economic recession, which no doubt is a global phenomenon, but that notwithstanding Nigeria remains the giant of Africa.

"And to my mind, I'm excited about this appointment; I'm excited because it's during difficult and challenging times that the tough gets going".

The DG stressed that, "I believe that we can get round it and get out of the recession. And to me, I very strongly believe that Nigeria can get out of this recession through the faithful implementation of the ITF mandate and the support of other key stakeholders.

"We have seen it before; we have seen it in other climes. We have seen it in Brazil through SENAI; we have seen it in Germany through the German experience, in Singapore through the ITEES, in Canada through the ACCC, in the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Japan among others; how did they do it? They used agencies similar to the Industrial Training Fund in their countries through human capital development and that is the key mandate of the ITF".

He warned that "Anything done outside skills development, the development of the human capital, cannot work. That is one sure way out of this recession".

According to him, President Buhari and the citizenry expect a lot from ITF, "and we cannot afford to betray the trust that is being given to us".

"We must note that our activities must be carried out with utmost commitment and total dedication".

He charged the workforce and other key stakeholders to think outside the box, contribute meaningful and innovative ideas that will reinvigorate industry and commerce in Nigeria, adding that "we pride ourselves as the three Es,- experienced

staff, with great expertise, with an expansive network; and we can only portray this in our activities”.

A former staff of the ITF, who had served the Agency in various capacities, the DG pledged to run a transparent and accessible management, described his appointment as an opportunity to re-unite the ITF family and further contribute to the growth of the organization.

“I view my appointment as an act of God. And for me, this is a home coming to my home in the ITF and it is more opportunity for me as a member of the ITF family to further unite the ITF family”, he said, adding that “I have been a faithful member of that family and have contributed my quota to the progress of the ITF through my membership of various committees such as the ones that fashioned out the Blue Print, the 10-year Strategic Plan of the ITF, the Amendment Act in 2011, the expansion of the ITF structure to 10 Departments and 4 Units and the 4-Year Road Map amongst so many other policy documents”.

In earlier remarks, the out-gone Acting Director General, Dickson Onuoha, who had held forth since the removal of Mrs Juliet Chukkas-Onaeko in February, said the ITF has trained 10,100 youth in the 5th phase of the National Industrial Skills Development Programme (NISDP).

Onuoha explained further that, the trainees were from 18 States of the Federation and the FCT- 500 trainees per State and an additional 600 from the Internally Displaced Persons camps in Maiduguri, Borno State.

He listed other achievements during his seven month stint including the approval of long and short-term staff development for hundreds of staff, revival of the revolving housing, vehicles and motorcycles staff loans scheme and resumption of contributions to the NHIS Scheme.

The newly appointed Director-General has extensive media and public service experience. He was until recently, a staff of the ITF where he occupied several positions including, the Director of Human Resource Management, Corporate Planning and Business Training Development Departments.

He had previously served the Plateau State Government as the Permanent Secretary in-charge of Government House Administration, General Manager of Plateau Publishing Company and Plateau Radio Television Corporation.

Sir Ari also served two Governors as Chief Press Secretary.