

**TEXT OF THE INAUGURAL SPEECH BY NEWLY APPOINTED DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INDUSTRIAL TRAINING FUND, SIR JOSEPH NTUNG ARI, AT THE HANDING OVER CEREMONY ON THURSDAY, 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPT, 2016 AT THE ITF HEADQUARTERS COMPLEX, JOS**

**The Acting Director General, Mr. Dickson Onuoha,  
Members of the Management of the Industrial Training Fund,  
Leaders of the two in house Unions – the SSA and AUCPTRE,  
My dear friends- members of the fourth estate of the realm,  
My dear staff,  
Ladies and gentlemen.**

Today is the day that the lord has made, we rejoice and are glad in it.

On behalf of my dear wife, Lady Victoria Ari and my entire family, I wish to express our deep appreciation to the President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, for the confidence reposed in me and for giving me the opportunity to serve our dear country, Nigeria.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I view my appointment as an act of God. And for me, this is a homecoming to my home in the Industry Training Fund, and it is an opportunity for me as a member of the ITF family to further unite it.

I have been a faithful member of that ITF family and I have contributed my quota in the progress in the Industrial Training Fund severally through my membership into various committees such as the ones that fashioned

out the ITF Blueprint, the 10-year Strategic Plan, the amendment of the Act in 2011, the expansion of the present structure of the Fund leading to the 10 Departments and 4 Units structure, the 4 year road map among so many other policy documents.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are presently in an economic recession, which no doubt is a global phenomenon. That notwithstanding Nigeria remains the Giant of Africa.

And to my mind, I am excited about this appointment; I am excited because it is in difficult and challenging times that the tough gets going and I believe that we can get around 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 with the support of other key stakeholders.

We have seen it before in other climes. We have seen it in Brazil through SENAI; we have seen it in Germany through the German Experience; we have seen it in Singapore through the ITEES; we have seen it in Canada through the ACCC we have seen it in the United Kingdom, Malaysia and Japan. 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 Industrial Training Fund. Anything done outside skills development; development of Human Capital cannot work. That is one sure way out of this recession.

Mr. President and Nigerians as a whole expect a lot from us; they expect a lot from the Industrial Training Fund and we cannot afford to betray the trust that is given to us. We must note that our activities must be carried out with utmost commitment and total dedication.

I therefore call on the management and the entire staff of the ITF and other key stakeholders to contribute innovative ideas. The time has come for us to really come together as a family and do something meaningful and different. I have noted that the President has charged members of his

cabinet to think outside the box and I expect nothing less from you. We must be innovative because we are meant to be shoulders above other persons that we are meant to develop. We must be able to work in such a way and manner that will develop the human capital to revamp and reinvigorate the industries once more.

We pride ourselves as the 3Es-experienced staff with great expertise and an expansive network- and we can only portray this in our activities. I am very glad that my brother, Onuoha has talked about the relevance of the Industrial Training Fund. The ITF is one agency that has a fantastic network across the country. We must be able to harness that and pull our human and intellectual resources so that we will give the best to our nation because our nation deserves nothing but the best from us.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this management will be transparent and accessible and I wish to call on all of you to come on board so that we justify this confidence that Mr. President and the entire people of the country have placed on us.

I like to thank the Management for holding forth and I also like to thank the entire staff for their co-operation as I solicit same from all of you so that together we can move the ITF to greater heights. We are partners in progress. I am only the *primus inter pares*-I am only the first among equals. We are all going to come together and I will grant the leadership, give the direction and we will move together.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you all for coming out en masse to give me this wonderful reception. May God continue to bless us our collective aspirations.