

## **GOODWILL MESSAGE**

**By:**

**Prof. M.T. Okorodudu-Fubara**

**Delivered @ the ....**

**One Day Hybrid Seminar and Presentation of Findings of a Book Project on The**

**Theme:**

**Treaty Law and State Practice in a Creative, Digital, Green and Blue Nigeria Economy; Implication for Policy Decisions on Infrastructure and Sustainable Development, Trade, Investment, Industrialization and Foreign Affairs.**

**Organized by the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, Abuja, Nigeria;  
16<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 @ Rockview Hotel Classic, Abuja, Nigeria.**

*Protocols ...*

The Director-General of the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, Prof. M.T. Ladan, very esteemed Faculty and Administrative Staff, Invited Guests and Participants ... **E'kabo/Karibu**. It is my pleasure and indeed with a deep sense of positive anticipation, that I felicitate you on this *'One Day Hybrid Seminar and Presentation of Findings on the "Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies' Book Project ... Treaty Law and State Practice in a Creative, Digital, Green and Blue Nigeria Economy; Implication for Policy Decisions on Infrastructure and Sustainable Development, Trade, Investment, Industrialization and Foreign Affairs"*. The hydra headed seminar theme reinforce the hybrid trajectory of the contextual topics of the book project. That is what is so classic and unique about this particular legal research material, and will make the listening audience rush to grab a copy as soon as it is made available to the wider public after this seminar.

Today we are about to see another feather adorn the 'wig' of our erudite learned men and women of the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies under the leadership of the D.G. Prof. M.T. Ladan, iconic national and global seasoned scholar and academic technocrat. No doubt, it's a team of highly intellectual and brilliant legal minds like our learned men and women at the NIALS that can arrange this platform for what is going to be a very productive and result oriented discourse on TREATY LAW AND STATE PRACTICE.

The bane of treaty making in most countries south of the globe is the faulty foundation. Several treaties are signed or ratified, but not much to show for these... REASON...faulty planning, poor background preparation; wrong, untrained, unqualified persons representing many of these countries at the international, multilateral or bilateral treaty making fora. The good news is that we have the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies that can provide some needful training pre- and post- treaty making for this country.

The United Nations Treaty Series Online page has a listing of 250,000 international treaties registered or published by the Secretariat. Also, the International Environmental Agreement (IEA) Database Project, hosted by the University of Oregon lists more than 3,700 international environmental treaties, Conventions, and other agreements from the 1850s to the present (as at September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023). The vast majority of extant treaties are international environmental treaties... treaties that address environmental protection and

sustainable development. Are we surprised? NO!!! Why? ENVIRONMENT IS LIFE... SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS ASSURED EXISTENCE ON PLANET EARTH FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Qualified and well trained treaty negotiators, implementers, compliance and enforcement mechanisms at both national and international levels are vital for the success of treaties at local and global scales. This is why the hybrid seminar today is very apt. Treaties are more than the ceremonial stage devoted to signature and diplomacy such as the high-level week of the United Nations General Assembly 2019 Treaty Event devoted to the promotion of the 17 Sustainable Development goals through the multilateral treaty framework; highlighting Multilateral Treaties in support of sustainable development opened for signature which, addressed 'social, economic and environmental challenges, and works towards peaceful and inclusive societies and a clean planet for sustainable development; covering a variety of areas, such as the protection of human rights, gender equality, environmental sustainability, disarmament, prevention of terrorism and road safety.' The environment and sustainable combine to define the very CORE of life and meaningful existence on planet Earth.

Let's be very frank and blunt with ourselves, we are living witnesses to the global facts and evidence around us that our national and world environment is drowning under the heavy weight of unprecedented environmental challenges and moving faster and closer to the tipping point than at any other time in our world history. Certainly, understanding the interconnection of national and international [environmental] laws and treaties vis-à-vis the set Sustainable Development Goals and its practical implementation is paramount. Nigeria alongside the international community has keyed into this global policy of sustainable development, prioritizing the goal to harmonize three core elements: **Economic growth; Social inclusion; and Environmental protection.** This gathering brings together probing minds and passionate individuals who are committed to driving positive change along these lines in Nigeria and across the world, and your presence here today lend credence to this commitment to protect the environment and determination to stem the rising tide of global threat of climate change.

The well-tested academic easily exudes stallion intellectual energy in the output of their research and publication. In recognition of this, against the backdrop of

the hybrid seminar theme, I want to specially commend the authors, speakers, and organizers of this event for their pragmatic effort and going beyond mere theory in shedding light on the intersections of treaties, national and international environmental laws and policy, sustainable development goals and State practice. Undoubtedly, investment treaties, specifically, the Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) are vital from the stand point of protection of the host economy and foreign investors, by encouraging the adoption of market-oriented domestic policies that treat private investment in an open transparent, and non-discriminatory way. Treaties support the development of international law standards consistent with these objectives... most notably, the basic principle of law of treaties, ***“Pacta Sunt Servanda”*** culled from **Article 26** of the *Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties* governing treaties in international law, which requires that ***“every treaty in force is binding upon the parties to it and must be performed by them in ‘good faith’***. Your collective efforts here today, I am convinced will not only advance the frontiers of broad spectrum knowledge and legal research; in fact, the content of the book for presentation and holistic discussion emerging from the theme of the seminar are essential for the well-being of our nation and planet Earth which is seriously threatened by climate change and other severe environmental degradation.

I believe we are all in for an intellectually stimulating and rewarding experience as we are treated to robust discussion on treaty law and state practice propelled by deep insights, perspectives, and knowledge throughout this event. I encourage everyone to engage actively, ask questions, and peaceably interrogate the emerging facts, data and ideas. By fostering positive and productive dialogue, we can harness the collective power of our diverse perspectives and experiences.

I also want to express my appreciation to the organizers for virtually and widely spreading the net of participation to include more participants and make this event accessible to both in-person and virtual attendees (including myself); and ensuring that there are no geographical boundaries, artificial fence or walls blocking the dissemination of vital knowledge and ideas in our global digital era.

As I wish the participants constructive deliberation, it is my hope that the discussions today will lead to meaningful and constructive insights, innovative solutions, and a more strengthened commitment to our national implementation, compliance and enforcement of treaties which Nigeria is signatory to and ratified;

not JUST seat back at mere ratification and domestication of these treaties. The outcome of this hybrid seminal should offer some guiding light on improving the current situation and leveraging the PROTECTION our environment for present and future generations *in tandem* with the **Global Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs)**. I am so delighted as I am aware that the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies has keyed into the goals of sustainable development, and under its current leadership is one of the foremost global educational institutions researching into and working with partners nationally and across the globe for a more sustainable future, a future that assures us a legacy of **“... development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their on needs.”**

I am imagining that one of the salient takeaways from this seminar today will include the practical elucidation of the intractable conundrum of ‘*sustainability*’ within the broader concept of “*sustainable development*”. **“Sustainability is thought of as a long-term goal while sustainable development refers to the many processes and pathways to achieve it.”** The scholarly hybrid style of this book project provides the perfect pathfinder, driving force and navigator that demonstrates and project the clarity inherent in the duo concepts. Scholars and practitioners will find this very enriching.

Again, thank you all very much for your dedication to the holistic cause of global sustainable development in general, and a **Green and Blue Nigeria Economy** in particular. This is certainly within the political will of the government and personal decision of every one of us to attain, if we are truly committed to the **Global Goals and Agenda 2030; Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want; and the Nigeria Investment Policy (2023-2027)**. We can use the platform of our presence here today, collectively to renew our commitment to these laudable global, continental and national goals and together let us embark on this journey of reengagement, enlightenment, partnership and collaboration. **Yes! We can do it.**

Before I conclude this goodwill message, let me sincerely express special words for the DG, Prof. M.T Ladan who is one of my favorite and highly esteemed professional colleague. Distinguish DG, I sincerely congratulate you for taking the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies to the **NEXT LEVEL** as a leading institution nationally and globally. Observing you over the years, and since the inception of your tenure at NIALS, your brilliance, talent, resourcefulness,

creativity and passion for the job you do at the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies are just incredible and clearly visible for all to see and highly commend.

You literally took the **NIALS Mission Statement** by the horns, focusing on the diverse trajectory of its Vision with resolute deployment of your excellent skills, proficiency of IT, and mastery of the modern internet communication technology, churning out e-copies and hard copies of multiple well researched books, papers, articles and reports. I am incredibly proud of you and your accomplishment. You set an amazing record for the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies which I am sure succeeding DGs will emulate. Your ability to navigate the most curious and oftentimes difficult legal issues with intentional research energy for finding the solutions to legal, economic, political and some of the most intractable national and global problems with rare legal intellectual brilliance, innovative talents and skills has contributed in no small measure to improve the quality of our national and global legal knowledge systems. In doing all these, you firmly kept in focus the **NIALS Vision: "To be a world-class institution that is the primary source of information, training and advice at the highest level of policy formulation on legal matters, effectively impacting on local and international institutions in the development of law."** Obviously, your rare style of academic and administrative leadership is key to your amazing personal professional success and the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies' institutional success and global recognition under your watch. You have set an amazing footprint and registered a milestone as a legacy of your tenure as Director General at the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies and I am very sure many more success will follow! CONGRATULATIONS, Very Distinguished DG and CONGRATULATIONS the Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies ... Bravo, well done!!!

Thank you all for listening.

**Prof. Margaret T. Okorodudu-Fubara**

**MTLAWJURISCONSULTS.**

**16TH November, 2023.**