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FROM THE EDITOR

Our dear readers,

This 1ssue 34 of Africa's Premier Law Journal, Law Digest features a legal "wizard" and transformationist. The edition is captioned: "Prof. Damilola Olawuyi, SAN…. Traversing the Limits of the Law in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI)".

This special edition celebrates uncommon attributes and achievements of a scholar and international supertaster. Professor Damilola S. Olawuyi, SAN is an international lawyer, policy adviser, and professor of law. He is among world's renowned experts in natural resources, energy and environmental law. He has provided expert advice and opinion on oil, gas, renewable energy, mining, agriculture, infrastructure development and clean technology projects in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. He is a Deputy Vice Chancellor as well as Chancellor's Fellow and Director of the Institute for Oil, Gas, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (OGEES Institute) at Afe Babalola University, Nigeria. He is the UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development at HBKU Law School, Doha, Qatar where he teaches energy and environmental law courses. Formerly an international energy lawyer at Norton Rose Fulbright Canada LLP, Calgary, and much more.

This edition also features other practice and academic articles from experts. Oghenevwogaga Odjugo, "Legal Accountability in AI Decision-Making" wherein the author argues that across all sectors, the theme of legal accountability for AI is the same: organizations must anticipate that they will be held responsible for the decisions and actions of their AI systems. Whether through corporate liability in negligence, new regulatory compliance duties, ethical oversight requirements, or precedent-setting lawsuits.

Oluwaseyi Ebenezer's piece focuses on "Assessing Policy Gaps In Nigeria's Solid Waste Management Framework". The author pointed out that Solid Waste Management (SWM) in Nigeria remains a critical issue that demands urgent and strategic intervention.

Mutiat Mobolanle Abdulsalam article offers critical insights on "Attaining Nigeria's Blue Economy Development Potentials through Stringent Regulation of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing" while Eghosa O. Ekhator's piece focuses on "Environmental litigation and Access to Justice in Nigeria: Implications of the Nigerian Supreme Court's judgment in Centre for Oil Pollution Watch v NNPC". Dr. Oyeniyi Abe centers on a new dimension to right-based discourse. The author critically examined "Remedies for Victims of Corporate-Induced Human Rights Violations in Nigeria". However, in her piece, Dr. Jennifer Heaven Mike's focuses on a rather topical but equally controversial issue of "Securing Access to Assisted Reproductive Technologies as a Human Right".

This edition promises to be a good value for your time and money.

Happy reading!!!



Prof. Yemi Oke, SAN, Ph.D, FCArb, FCTI,





Prof. Damilola Olawuyi SAN

Traversing the Limits of the Law in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI)"

Professor Damilola S. Olawuyi, SAN is an international lawyer, policy adviser, professor of law and recognized expert in natural resources, energy and environmental law. He has provided expert advice and opinion, on oil, gas, renewable energy, mining, agriculture, infrastructure development and clean technology projects, in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. He is Deputy Vice Chancellor, Chancellor's Fellow and Director of the Institute for Oil, Gas, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (OGEES Institute), Afe Babalola University, Nigeria. He holds the UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development at HBKU Law School, Doha, Qatar where he teaches energy and environmental law courses. Professor Olawuyi provides legal services as a Senior Counsel and Arbitrator at McNair International Law Firm, a global law firm with presence in the UK and Qatar. He was formerly an international energy lawyer at Norton Rose Fulbright Canada LLP, Calgary, where he served on the firm's global committee on energy investments in Africa.

Professor Olawuyi has published several influential journal articles and books. He has been an expert speaker and commentator at several international conferences. His recent book publication Environmental Law in Arab States (Oxford University Press, 2022) received the 2023 American Society of International Law Certificate of Merit.

In recognition of his substantial contribution to legal scholarship and jurisprudence, Professor Olawuyi was awarded the rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) in the year 2020, aged thirty-seven, therefore becoming the youngest academic ever elevated to the rank, and the very first graduate of a private university to become Senior Advocate of Nigeria. From 2020-2022, Professor Olawuyi served as an Independent Expert on the African Commission's Working Group on Extractive Industries, Environment and Human Rights. In 2021, he was appointed by the Federal Government of Nigeria as a member of the Governing Board of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI). In 2022, he was appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council as an Independent Expert on the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights. In 2024, he was honoured with the Weeramantry International Justice Award.

Professor Olawuyi serves on the management committees and boards of several organizations. He is Vice Chair of the International Law Association, President of the Nigerian Branch of the International Law Association, Chair of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African Universities, Chair of the Academic Advisory Group of the International Bar Association's Section on Energy, Environment, Natural Resources and Infrastructure Law; and Chairman of the Legal Education Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association. He is a member of the Governing Council of Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti.

Professor Olawuyi holds a doctorate in energy and environmental law from the University of Oxford; a master of laws (LL.M.) from Harvard University; and another LL.M. from the University of Calgary. He has been admitted as Barrister and Solicitor in Alberta, Canada; Ontario, Canada; and Nigeria. He is a regular media commentator on all aspects of energy, environment and sustainable development.



WITH Prof. Damilola Olawuyi SAN

Who or what has made the most profound influence on your life and career?

I have benefitted and learned a lot from several mentors both in Nigeria and abroad. I have also been inspired by the success stories of many, both working in proximity and from afar. It is however an open secret that my greatest mentor of all time is Aare Afe Babalola, SAN, OFR, LL.D, the Chancellor and Founder of Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti (ABUAD). I grew up reading about his many giants strides as an erudite lawyer, administrator and philanthropist of global esteem. However, I first came in direct contact with him in my late twenties when I was just wrapping up my PhD studies at Oxford University. Since then, he has had a profound influence on my professional development and career. Notwithstanding my age at the time, he appointed me as the founding director of the Institute for Oil, Gas, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (OGEES Institute) at ABUAD which has since grown to become one of the leading research institutes in Nigeria and Africa. As you may already know, through Aare Afe Babalola's mentoring and support, I have since been able to record many firsts, including becoming one of the youngest professors of law in Nigeria having been promoted to full professorship at 32 years; youngest deputy vice chancellor at 36 years, and the youngest senior advocate of Nigeria (academic) at 37 years. So, you can totally understand the high regard that I hold Aare Afe Babalola, because only very few individuals support, mentor and inspire others like he has selflessly done for me. If I can achieve just a few of what he has achieved in his distinguished career, then I would count myself fortunate.

You are a renowned law scholar, an international lawyer, policy adviser, professor of law and recognized expert in natural resources, energy and environmental law; what informed your choice of career and areas of specialization?

Nigeria's unfulfilled promise as a leading exporter of oil, gas and solid mineral resources was my main motivation. I recall studying environmental law and oil and gas law under the able tutelage of Professor Lawrence Atsegbua, SAN during my Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) program and I found his lectures and comparative approach to be very compelling. During this time, I was intrigued to learn about the perennial economic, environmental and social challenges that have trailed the commercial development of Nigeria's vast resources, unlike other resource rich countries such as Canada, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia amongst others that have been able to turn the corner in the use of their natural resources. I therefore decided to pursue further research in this area, which led me to obtain advanced degrees abroad in the discipline. After practicing as an international energy lawyer at Norton Rose Fulbright LLP in Canada for a few years, I decided to focus my career on research and teaching by joining the academia, later becoming a full professor of international energy and environmental law. As a scholar-practitioner, I continue to contribute to research, publications, and dispute resolution on international energy investments and infrastructure projects. I hope to remain at the forefront of proffering innovative legal, contractual and dispute resolution approaches that could in no time help our country to fully maximize and leverage its resource wealth to become the energy and economic hub of the world.

In 2021, you were appointed by the Federal Government of Nigeria as a member of the Governing Board of the Nigerian Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (NEITI), in addition to your work as Director of the Institute for Oil, Gas, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development. Given your vast experience and expertise in international energy law, do you have any hopes for sustainable energy future for Nigeria?

I am an incurable optimist when it comes to Nigeria's enormous potential to become a strategic global energy and economic hub. Nigeria is one of the rare countries in the world that is endowed with vast deposits of both petroleum and solid minerals. We also have a huge pool of talented professionals that continue to contribute their expertise both within and outside Nigeria. With such a profile, energy poverty and electricity deficits should never be mentioned in Nigeria's context. The problem over the years is that we have failed to realize that the energy sector is a cyclical and globally competitive business that must be run with a fully commercial and entrepreneurial mindset. Many years of running the then Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) as a government entity, with the associated bureaucracy, lack of transparency, and lack of technology innovation meant that we were unable to fully maximize the boom cycle of the 1990s. I am however excited about some of the innovations that we are seeing in terms of commercializing the NNPC, strengthening our participation in the global extractive industry transparency initiative (EITI) and most importantly the enactment of the Petroleum Industry Act and the Climate Change Act which have opened doors to institutional coherence and energy diversification. These developments reinforce hope that if we continue in the trajectory of making the energy sector more attractive through innovative economic incentives, then we will be able to consistently meet domestic energy and electricity needs, while competing globally as an attractive hub for clean energy investments.

You have been involved in a number of local and international arbitrations. What is your view on increasing preference for energy arbitration by parties outside of the country? Do you think Nigeria lacks the capacity in terms of local arbitration of energy disputes?

It is often a puzzle to me when I see Nigerian arbitrators and disputants at the airports flying to London, Hague, Geneva and New York to resolve disputes that mostly arose in Nigeria. Just as the government clamors for buying locally made goods, all of us as arbitrators and practitioners must make a deliberate choice to develop our homegrown arbitration institutions. Arbitration is all about the choices made by the parties, guided by their counsel. So, the process starts with integrating arbitration clauses that select Nigeria as venue and seat of arbitration, while also integrating our own homegrown arbitration institutions and rules. There is also a need to address barriers such as infrastructure challenges, technology gaps, and delays in enforcement of awards, especially avoiding unnecessary intervention by courts. The Arbitration and Mediation Act, 2023 tries to address several of these gaps, and we now need to match it with investments in infrastructure and technology that will make our centres attractive to contracting parties. There is also a need to invest in training and mentoring of the next generation to sustain their expertise and interest in arbitration. The young lawyers of today will be the ones drafting and negotiating the contracts in the near future, so we need to expose them to the rudiments and practical aspects of arbitration from an early stage. This is exactly what our Committee on International Commercial Arbitration at the International Law Association, Nigeria has been doing over the years. Our aim is to provide training, resources and capacity development that will serve as the pipeline for Nigeria's leadership in this important area.



Prof. Damilola Olawuyi SAN, Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic ,Afe Babalola University ,Prof. Elizabeta Smaranda Olarinde, Vice Chancellor, Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti Pastor Modupe Babalola, Bursar, Afe Babalola University. Prof. Ijabadeniyi , Deputy Vice Chancellor, Administration, Afe Babalola University, Ado EkitiLady Christie Oluborode, Registrar, Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti Aare Afe Babalola SAN, Founder and Chancellor, Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti

Law and Lawyering in the 21st century is becoming very sophisticated and internationalized. In your opinion, how progressive is the legal profession in Nigeria. Is Nigeria's legal profession and professionals globally competitive?

The practice of law is truly undergoing profound transformations driven mainly by globalization and rapid technology developments Not so long ago, being asked to 'think like a lawyer' meant having advanced oral advocacy and critical thinking skills to spot legal risks and win cases in court. However, in today's

increasingly globalized marketplace, thinking like a lawyer means blending knowledge of the law with project management, data analytics, technology innovation, and sharp entrepreneurial skills. Knowing the law alone is no longer sufficient to be successful in today's fast-paced world. Clients have tasted the efficiency and astuteness of consulting firms and now expect the same from lawyers. Unfortunately, however, most of our law faculties continue to train students mainly for the analogue and traditional practice of law, as well as with focus on passing the bar examination at the Nigerian Law School, instead of practice-readiness. We therefore have lawyers with little or no knowledge of business intelligence, strategic planning, and use of data analytics tools, such as Ghant and LACI charts in simplifying information of busy business executives. The result is what we see today where some young lawyers are underpaid and have no entrepreneurial skillsets to use their legal training in other contexts. We must therefore break the cycle by refocusing our legal education on practice-readiness, and this requires actively infusing all our law courses with technology innovation, business intelligence, and commercial awareness.

As a legal scholar and the Chairman of Legal Education Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), what changes would you like to witness in the form and model of Legal Education in Nigerian Universities and the Nigerian Law School to produce twenty-first century lawyers in view of the ever-changing dynamics of law and its practice?

Over the last years, especially at the recent NBA Legal Education Summit in 2022, which I chaired its organizing committee, members of the legal profession have consistently called for a reimagination of legal education in Nigeria, including the need to develop practice-ready lawyers that can contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's development. I was therefore honored to be asked by the President of the NBA, Mazi Afam Osigwe, SAN to continue the task of championing a structured reformation of the legal education system in Nigeria and actualizing a system that will produce competent, commercially aware and ethically responsive legal professionals who are fit for purpose and are able to meet the legal needs of today's globally competitive market.

We are working closely with all law faculties in Nigeria, and the Nigerian Law School to communicate an agenda for transformational legal education. First is the need to develop more practical courses. Not all course such be taught in the traditional lecture format with end of semester examination. We need courses that are designed as simulations that allow students to practice legal drafting, business management, use of data analytics and artificial intelligence. Second, we need curriculum transformation to integrate new and emerging areas of law, such as digital law, space and aviation law, healthcare law, food and agricultural law, renewable energy, carbon finance law and international development law amongst others. Third, we need to support our academics with resources, training and exchange opportunities to perfect such transformational teaching approaches. We have therefore initiated periodic workshops, seminars and conferences that will provide such knowledge exchange opportunities. Under my watch, the NBA Legal Education Committee is well placed to continue this important discussion, and we look forward to working with all stakeholders in this important task.

In recent times, we have noticed increased intra-African trade. Trans-border opportunities also appear to be increasing. Do you think this will ultimately bring about trans-border legal practice among African law firms.

The growing rise in intra-Africa trade, especially with the adoption of the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AFCTA), is a positive development that will create more opportunities for lawyers and law firms. Before now, lack of a pan-Africa trade framework created artificial barriers that hindered regional trade cooperation and integration. In a continent whereby travelling from one country to the other is more difficult that going to Europe, then the prospects for regional trade integration remained bleak for many years. However, with AFCTA, we see a real prospect for those barriers to be dismantled, which should naturally lead to more business for lawyers within the continent. We are already seeing more Nigerian law firms opening offices in Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius and South Africa, and I expect more. There are also serious prospects of having pan-African networks of law firms that could fully integrate to compete for business that were exclusively reserved for the big magic circle law firms in London and New York. I do hope more of our firms can already adopt such Africa focus in their recruitments, outreach and planning. Being a regional or international law firm starts with actively participating in opportunities that expand one's practice reach beyond national contexts.

What new trends and challenges have you observed in arbitration law and practice in Nigeria and globally?

The ongoing transformations in energy demand and supply patterns as a result of the global energy transition is resulting in a new wave of disputes and arbitration. For example, we have seen a rise in investor-state arbitration by international oil companies challenging net zero legislation that hinder new developments under existing mining and petroleum licenses. Furthermore, some natural resource operators have been challenged for greenwashing and misleading consumers on the scope and impact of their net zero programs and products. We have also seen challenges relating to the application of local content provisions in the context of procurements for petroleum operations. Similarly, as more oil and gas infrastructure are decommissioned, we have seen a rise in disputes relating to the liability for the



Mr. Clement Osuya, General Secretary, International Law Association, Nigeria BranchProfessor Damilola Olawuyi SAN, President, International Law Association, Nigeria BranchDr. Kayode Fayemi, former Governor of Ekiti State.Mr Tolulope Aderemi, Chair, International Arbitration and ADR Committee

decommissioning of wells drilled after the licensee ceased to be the owner of the relevant oil and gas assets.

These trends show that arbitration will play a very crucial role as states and energy operators try to ascertain their rights and responsibilities in a rapidly evolving energy market driven by technological transformations, price volatility and the clean energy transition. As argued in our recent book Net Zero and Natural Resources Law (Oxford University, Press, 2024), these transformations call for a reinvigoration of arbitration practice to resolve these questions in a timely manner. We must also ensure that Nigerian legal practitioners and experts are actively involved in these matters in line with Section 51 of Nigeria's Local Content Act which provides for the utilization of the services of Nigerian legal practitioners in providing legal services in the energy sector, especially those that who are familiar with resolving novel energy disputes such as climate change disputes, renewable energy and energy transition related matters. I would like to see more training and courses by arbitration institutes, such as the Nigerian Institute of Chartered Arbitrators (NICARB) to enhance capacity in these areas.

What lessons could be or have been learnt from the handling of the transaction leading to the Process and Industrial Developments Ltd (P&ID) pandemonium, the Ogun State's Zhangshan Funcheng Ind. Comm Ltd v Nigeria that led to seizure of Nigeria's jets and on-going Mambila power project arbitration?

These cases provide timely reminders that international law is a specialist area of practice, and that only those with deep expertise in international law should be involved in representing Nigeria in investment negotiation and despite resolution. As I often like to say, in international law, you don't always get what you deserve but what you negotiate. So, we must begin to take our international law representation more seriously.

For example, in the P&ID case, even the tribunal publicly lamented that Nigeria had been inadequately represented during the arbitral proceedings. In a country blessed with several leading and world class arbitrators, including the eminent members of the Committee on International Commercial Arbitration and ADR of the International Law Association, such a regrettable case of compromise and lack of capacity of Nigeria's representation should never have occurred if the right professionals were entrusted with building Nigeria's very clear and compelling case. Unfortunately, the lack of adequate representation of Nigeria's interest is traceable even to the process that led to the Gas Supply and Processing Agreement (GSPA) signed with P&ID in the first place. The GSPA had several risk points and loopholes and should not have been signed if Nigeria's negotiation team had paraded the best minds in international energy law and international investment law. Same for the Mambila power project, another dishonest agreement with several risk points and loopholes that could have been avoided with principled and qualified representation.

Unfortunately, we also paid the price for such inadequate representation with the Ogun State's Zhangshan case. State governments and sub-regionals should not enter into international agreements without the active engagement and consultation with of the Federal Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission. Given that international law cuts across different ministries and sectors, there is a need for coherent coordination. This realization has led some countries such as Singapore to appoint an Ambassador for International Law, tasked with promoting intergovernmental cooperation on international law across all ministries, sectors and sub-national entities. This is to ensure that best practices in international treaty and agreement negotiations and to provide high-level expertise to relevant ministries in every aspect of their work that intersect with international law. I think Nigeria can learn from these emerging practices and evolve a coherent framework for ensuring a more coordinated and principled approach to our international law representation and investment negotiation.

What suggestions do you have for the bar, the bench and arbitrators as to how law, justice systems, arbitration could be significantly improved upon in Nigeria?

Several of the challenges facing the effectiveness of the justice system,

including the practice of arbitration, in Nigeria can be broadly categorized into three: funding, capacity and integrity. As you rightly noted, I have been one of the most vociferous advocates for increased funding for the judiciary to enable it to properly perform its functions. We have recently seen good news in this regard with the increased budgetary allocation to the judiciary this year, in fact one of the highest so far in recent history. We have also seen recent increase in remuneration and benefits of judicial officers all aimed at boosting morale and improving their working conditions. We need more of such sustained investment in our courts and arbitration institutions, especially in infrastructure and technology to make them fit for purpose. The decayed, age-worn, and deplorable state of court rooms across Nigeria, with little or no access to modern technologies needed for the conduct of legal business must be addressed as a matter of priority to enhance transparency of judicial proceedings. Furthermore, enhancing the integrity of the justice system will require a mix of flushing out the bad eggs that give the system a bad name, as well as promoting ethical training and mentoring for all judicial officers and arbitrators including on how to avoid conflict of interest in the discharge of their functions. In arbitration, we have seen several cases of conflict of interest and dishonest representation, while our judiciary has also been bedeviled by weighty allegations of bribery, corruption and nepotism. More focus on ethics in the selection and training of judges and arbitration practitioners is therefore an urgent necessity, especially through exposure to foreign best practices, developmental trainings, and seminars.



With President of the African Court on Human and Peoples Right, H.E Hon Lady Justice Aboud

You currently serve as Africa's representative on the United Nations Working Group on Business and Human Rights, where you lead UN's effort to promote responsible investments worldwide. Do you really think economic development could be achieved without some harm to the environment?

It is indeed a great privilege for me to serve on the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights. Our Working Group has the global mandate of promoting responsible business conduct in all key economic sectors in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). This includes ensuring that investment activities respect and promote all human rights, including the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Achieving business respect for human rights requires a balanced approach that places planet and the protection of the environment above profit. This is however far from the reality in many countries including Nigeria. What we find in most cases is the tendency of business enterprises, especially international oil corporations, to place profit above people and planet, resulting in some economic progress without actual human development. The devastation of the hitherto serene ecosystem of the Niger Delta due to oil spillage, gas flaring and other irresponsible practices is a classic example of how unregulated economic activities could harm the environment and human life.

Since the endorsement of the UNGPs in 2011, we have seen more than forty countries adopting legislation and National Actions Plans on Business and Human Rights (NAP) that spell out what responsible countries and businesses should do to balance economic development with protection of the environment. Nigeria joined that great league in 2023 with the adoption of a comprehensive NAP which spells out government expectation for businesses to conduct their economic activities in a manner that limits adverse human rights impacts, including environmental pollution. We look forward with anticipation that the adoption of the NAP in Nigeria will move us closer to an era of responsible practices by all economic actors in Nigeria. I look forward to working with governments at all levels, business enterprises, civil society actors and other stakeholders in advancing this important task.

In 2023, at the UN General Assembly in New York, you presented a report of the Working Group titled "Extractive Sector, Just Transition and Human Rights" to world leaders. What are the key recommendations and lessons for energy investors and practitioners.

As you know, since the adoption of the Paris Agreement, a lot of companies and governments have released plans to accelerate energy transition and low carbon programs. We however see how the implementation of net zero and energy transition programs may result in in adverse human rights impacts in fragile and at-risk economies and societies, especially unemployment for those in the oil and gas sector, social exclusions, land grabs, poverty, energy insecurity and conflict risks. The report therefore considers how governments, businesses, investors and other stakeholders in the extractive sector can best design and implement just, inclusive, and human rights-based energy transition programs in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Resource dependent countries such as Nigeria must accelerate energy and

economic diversification in response to the emerging demand patterns which will be increasingly unfavorable to oil and gas. This will require promoting green entrepreneurship, especially upskilling and reskilling programs that generate new investments and jobs in clean technologies sector, such as hydrogen, electric vehicles and carbon capture and storage. We have the natural resources to become the next renewable energy superpower of the world if we carefully repurpose our infrastructure and legislation to be energy-transition aligned. There are also recommendations for investors and businesses to align their business practices, policies, processes, governance structures and decisions with the goals of the Paris Agreement, most especially the requirement to 'respect, promote and consider human rights when taking action to address climate change.' Companies can avoid litigation and regulatory risks relating to greenwashing and misleading claims on their energy transition programs through clear, credible, transparent, and accessible reporting. Of course, capacity development and training will play a critical role in enabling businesses and investors to identify, prevent and address inconsistencies in their energy transition efforts and to ensure alignment with international law. We look forward to assisting all stakeholders with resources, capacity development and training in this regard.

Some have argued that Nigeria's energy sector- oil, gas, and renewable is needlessly over-regulated and explains why the country has been unable to achieve regulatory efficiency. Do you agree?

The enactment of legislation is not the problem in itself, as they are often put in place in response to contemporary problems facing the energy industry at every point in time. Over the years however, we began to see the proliferation of regulations and legislation that at times overlap, while establishing institutions with duplicative functions or without adequate budgetary resources to ensure their effective functioning in practice. Such role duplication frustrates investors and stakeholders in the energy sector who have had to cope with multiple licensing and reporting requirements, exorbitant administrative fees by different agencies, and bureaucratic delays and red tape in different aspects of the process.

I have therefore been one of the most consistent advocates for regulatory harmonization in the energy sector to reduce overlaps and role duplication. The Petroleum Industry Act is a positive step in this direction as it has created greater synergy in the petroleum sector by bringing several functions under the purview of the Nigerian Upstream Regulatory Commission, and the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority. We do hope this will bring an era of streamlined and more efficient project licensing and approval process. As Nigeria develops its net zero and renewable energy agenda, we must also avoid the temptation to establish more agencies and institutions. Net zero programs can effectively come under the purview of the Energy Commission of Nigeria or the National Council on Climate Change without the need for another standalone entity. Also, agencies and institutions should promote greater interoperability, knowledge and information exchange to advance coherence and efficient implementation.



With H.E. Governor Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State.


With billionaire investors and agriculture entrepreneurs, Margarita Louis-Dreyfus and Chairman of Agrico Qatar, H.E Ahmed Hussain Al-Khalaf