



**A GOOD WILL MESSAGE OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR
NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY HADIZA BALA USMAN
AT THE FLAG-OFF OF NIGERIAN YAM EXPORT PROJECT
PROGRAMME HELD ON THURSDAY 29TH JUNE 2017 AT
LILYPOND CONTAINER TERMINAL IJORA**

The Honorable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development

All Protocols

It is my honour and privilege to give a goodwill message/address on this occasion of the formal launch and flag-off of Nigerian Yam Export Project (NYEP) which flags off with export of yams to the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Nigerian Ports Authority encourages this Trade facilitation of the Nigerian Economy with non-oil export and improvement of our balance of trade.

As the largest producer of yams in the world, Nigeria should take advantage of this capacity to export yams and improve our export revenues.

Given the abundant mineral and agricultural resources available in most regions of Nigeria and the desire of the Federal Government to diversify the economy, the need to adequately explore the port sector as a road to boosting economic development in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized.

The Federal Government under President Mohammadu Buhari has identified Agriculture and Solid Minerals as upbeat and the Maritime Industry will play a pivotal role in the movement of these produce and minerals.

In February this year, all terminal operators and shipping companies were mandated by the Nigerian Ports Authority to set up fast-track desks for export of solid minerals and agricultural produce. Process of review of associated existing procedures and protocols has been commenced to ensure efficiency and intended results are achieved.

The Nigerian Ports Authority supports the promotion of Agriculture and agriculture products export and has designated the Ikorodu Lighter Terminal (KLT) as an agricultural export terminal to this effect.

For the Nigerian ports to play this key role in the economy an efficient rail system will be needed in moving agricultural produce and solid

Mineral from the locations of production that are usually in the hinterlands to the seaports for export.

Already, the Federal Ministry of Transportation has embarked on a US \$2 billion concession rail project to be handled by General Electric which will provide the needed intermodal support. It will cover about 3,500km (2,200 miles) of existing narrow gauge lines from the south western commercial capital, Lagos to Kano in the north and south Eastern oil hub, Port Harcourt, to Maiduguri in the North-East.

We urge the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to keep encouraging the yam exports and its processed derivatives value adding which stimulates our Youth Employment and add to our economic value.

Thank You.

