

COMMUNIQUE

The South West Sugar Forum organized by the National Sugar Development Council (NSDC), took place at Royal Spring Holiday Inn, Ikirun Road, Opposite, Biket Junction Osogbo, Osun State, on Tuesday 15th November, 2011. The theme of the sugar forum was ***“Investment Opportunities in the Nigerian Sugar Sector”***.

The chairman of the occasion was **Honourable Muhammed Ogoshi Onawo**, Chairman, House Committee on Industries, National Assembly Complex, Abuja. The Special guest of Honour was **Mr. Richard A. Adedoyin**, the Honourable Commissioner of Agriculture and Food Security, Osun State, represented by **Mr. Adewumi, S.A.** Director, Ministry of Agric and Food Security, Osun State, while the keynote address titled: ***“Existing Potentials and Investment Opportunities for Foreign and Local Entrepreneurs in the Sugar Sub-Sector”*** was delivered by **Alhaji Lateef Salami**, Director Industrial Development Department, Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment (FMT&I), Abuja.

Goodwill messages were also delivered by the Honourable Commissioner of Agriculture and Food Security, Osun State, who was represented by Mr. Adewumi, S.A., His Royal Highness (Dr) F.R.A. Adegbesan, the Alaye of Imobi Kingdom and Mrs. Oluwakemi Atoyebi, Chairperson, Osun State Sugarcane Planters and Cooperative Union, Osogbo, Osun State.

The South West Forum was the Second among the series organized by the Council this year, and attracted participants from both public and private sectors of Nigerian economy. These include among others technocrats, academia, sugar planters and sugar processors and farmers cooperative union.

The Four (4) papers presented at the Forum were as follows:

1. Investment into Sugar-Ethanol Sub-Sector: by **Mr. Toyin Bamikole, MD/CEO, Zenith Agro-ethanol Nigeria Limited, Ilorin.**
2. Sugarcane Out grower Programme: Effective Tool for the Development of Sugar Agro-Business in Nigeria – **by Dr. S. Ngedu, Former member of NSDC Governing Board, Abuja.**
3. Sugarcane Research and Development: The Solid Foundation for Sustaining a Viable Industry – **by Prof. R.O. Fadayomi, University of Ilorin Sugar Research Institute, Ilorin.**
4. Temporary Immersion Bioreactor System (TIBS): A Panacea to Mass Production of Agronomics and Tree Crops – **by Mr. A.U. Okere, National**

Centre for Genetics Resources and Biotechnology, Moor Plantation, Ibadan.

At the end of the Forum participants agrees as follows:

- Government at all levels should demonstrate commitment and political will by creating the required enabling environment in-terms of infrastructural development and financial support to attract and sustain private sector investment in the sugar sector;
- Outgrower farmers were encouraged to form themselves into formidable cooperatives in order to harness the available opportunities provided by NSDC under its Outgrowers' Scheme;
- Federal Government privatization policy notwithstanding, participants called for increased government support, towards the establishment of sugar processing factories;
- Participants advocated for more funding for NSDC to enable the agency provided adequate financial assistance to prospective investors and support R&D;
- Government should continue to support the sugar sector and be actively involve the sugar processing as hwell as other Agricultural produce;
- Participants noted that for R&D to have some positive impacts on the sugar sector as it is practiced in the sugar developed countries, there must be clear and stable policy on sugar sector.
- Participants recognized the need for consistency in Government Policy for sustainable development in the sugar sector.
- R&D should not just concentrate on sugarcane agronomy but also on post harvest technology in terms of machinery and equipment development for small scale investors.
- Sugarcane and sugar R&D institutes should be adequately funded to adopt modern techniques in their operations for better results.

National Sugar Development Council,

Abuja

15th November 2011.