

November 17, 2023

Honorable Dr. Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo
Ministry of Interior
Old Secretariat Area 1
Garki Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Ambassador Dr. Uzoma E. Eminke
Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
3519 International Court, NW
Washington, DC 20008

RE: URGENT CALL FOR ENHANCED SERVICES AT THE NIGERIAN EMBASSY IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Honorable Dr. Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo and Ambassador Dr. Uzoma E. Eminke,

We, the undersigned organizations, are urging the Nigerian Embassy to explore strategic partnerships with local Nigerian diaspora organizations to enhance consular services for the Nigerian community and its neighbors in the United States.

As representatives of the Nigerian diaspora, we recognize and applaud the ongoing improvements to passport and consular services made under your leadership. While acknowledging these advancements, we believe that a collective effort between the Nigerian diaspora and the Embassies in the U.S. can significantly improve the overall efficiency of the services and community relations.

We respectfully bring to your attention the following urgent concerns:

1. Processing Delays: The prolonged processing times for consular and passport services, along with inadequate communication on application statuses, have caused significant inconveniences to applicants. We ask that this process be better streamlined.

2. National ID Acquisition: Ambiguities in the procedures and lack of guidance have hindered community members in obtaining National ID numbers. National ID card services should also be accessible at Nigerian Embassy locations during the passport application process.

3. Embassy Infrastructure: The malfunctioning air conditioning and heating systems have resulted in uncomfortable conditions for visitors to the Nigerian Embassy.

4. Communication and Customer Service: Non-functional telephone lines and ineffective customer service have exacerbated the difficulties faced by individuals seeking assistance from the embassy.

5. Support for Special Needs: The absence of provisions for senior citizens and individuals with special needs has hindered their access to necessary embassy services.

6. Visa Processing Challenges: Complicated visa application procedures and appointment scheduling have led to dissatisfaction among visa applicants in the United States.

7. Expansion of access to the West Coast: The current Consular services exclude areas with significant Nigerian populations, such as Los Angeles, Houston, San Francisco, and Chicago. In fact, applicants in many cases have to put their entire lives on hold and have to travel to New York or Washington DC to access basic consular services.

Recommendations:

A collaboration between the Nigerian Embassy and local Nigerian community organizations presents a promising avenue for mitigating the challenges outlined above. We strongly recommend establishing these partnerships to streamline passport applications and preliminary processing tasks, including facilitating National Identity Number applications and biometric services. Moreover, these organizations can serve as vital information centers for visa and passport applicants across the United States.

We implore your office to take prompt and effective measures to address these issues and revamp the consular services offered at the Nigerian Embassy. We are confident that under your leadership, the necessary reforms will be implemented and our fellow citizens will receive efficient and respectful services of the highest standard.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter and please contact **Nkechi Illechi** at programs@nigeriancenter.org or +1 (202) 330-0352 to arrange a meeting with the undersigned organizations.

Sincerely,

Association of Nigerian Nurse Practitioners in North America (ANNPNA)
Chartered Institute of Public Management of Nigeria
Deported Asylum Seekers Assistance Project
Edo Association of Washington DC
Global African Business Association (GABA)
International Committee on Nigeria
NAPAC-CDI
Nigerian Center
Nigeria Ex-International Footballers Association
Nigerian American Lawyers Association (NALA)
Nigerian American Public Affairs Committee (NAPAC)
Nigerian American Public Affairs Foundation
Omo Yoruba Association - DMV
Rebirth Hub Africa
TANTV
United Nigerian Americans Council-MD
Utah County Nigerians Association
Yoruba Unite Of North Carolina
Ziglak Hope Foundation
Zumunta Association USA Inc