

ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NIGERIAN SAFETY INVESTIGATION BUREAU, MR. ALEX BADEH.

Distinguished guests, colleagues, fellow Nigerians,

It is with a profound sense of humility and responsibility that I stand before you today as the new Director-General and Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau. I am deeply honoured by the trust and confidence President Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR has placed in me, and I am acutely aware of the immense weight of this responsibility.

To my predecessor, Mr. Akin Olateru, you have contributed enormously to improving transport safety in our nation. Your service has laid the foundation upon which we can all build, and I pledge to carry the torch of safety to greater heights. I extend my sincere gratitude for your service and wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

As I take the helm of this crucial agency, I do so with a distinct vision - not solely mine, but one harmoniously aligned with the visionary directives and foresight of the Honourable Minister of Aviation and Aerospace, Mr. Festus Keyamo SAN. The Honourable Minister has charted a clear course through his five-point agenda for the ministry, under which the Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau is domiciled. I am honoured to be a part of the team navigating this course and I am fully committed to implementing the first point of the agenda, which focuses on ensuring strict compliance with safety regulations and continuously enhancing Nigeria's rating by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

I stand before you not just as a seasoned aviation professional, but as a concerned citizen. I have seen the scars of tragedy, felt the sting of loss, and understand the ripple effect of a single accident. It is this understanding that fuels my passion, drives my resolve, and compels me to dedicate every ounce of my being to ensuring that no journey ends in sorrow and no life is lost in vain.

I see a future where Nigerian skies are the safest in Africa, our trains glide seamlessly across the land, our waterways are traversed with confidence, and every journey, by any mode, is undertaken with the utmost assurance of safety.

My vision for the NSIB is to be an agency defined not by the tragedies we investigate, but by the transformative advancements in transport safety that we inspire. We will not simply react to accidents; we will proactively prevent them from occurring. We will harness the power of data, technology, and human ingenuity to build a future where every journey is undertaken with peace of mind, every mile traversed with the assurance of a safe return.

My path forward is paved with four key pillars:

First, STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE. As the Director-General, my foremost duty is to act as an extension of the Minister's mission by prioritising the adoption of international safety standards across all modes of transport. Our commitment to excellence will extend beyond compliance; it will also be devoted to driving transformative change for a safer tomorrow. Our goal is a multimodal transport system that is accident-free all year round. It is indeed an ambitious goal, but possible. To achieve this, we will leverage cutting-edge technology to revolutionise safety protocols, proactively identifying and addressing potential risks, while also offering intrepid recommendations to the relevant authorities.

Second, INTER-AGENCY AND INTER-SECTOR COLLABORATION. The NSIB team will work closely with the Ministry of Aviation and Aerospace, as well as stakeholders across all government ministries, departments, and agencies, including airlines, maritime authorities, rail operators, road agencies, and most importantly, the Nigerian people.

In aviation, we will collaborate with the airlines and regulatory bodies to strengthen safety management systems.

We will work with maritime stakeholders to enhance safety measures across all operations, from passenger ferries to fishing vessels and cargo ships.

We will engage the leadership of the railway corporation on implementing modern technology to significantly prevent incursion, collision, derailment and protect railway workers.

We will also partner with the Federal Road Safety Corps to tackle the leading causes of road accidents such as speeding, distracted driving and alcohol impairment.

Based on a comprehensive baseline analysis of transport safety that the NSIB will commission, we will develop specific collaborative efforts and launch targeted public awareness campaigns to make our transport network safer for everyone.

Third, UTMOST TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY. Transparency and accountability are cornerstones of our commitment to safety at the NSIB. Under my leadership, we will strive to uphold the highest standards and professionalism at every level. This includes keeping the public informed, engaging in meaningful dialogue, and holding ourselves accountable for our actions. This is how we earn and build trust.

Furthermore, strict adherence to established standard operating policies, procedures, and protocols is mandatory for everyone involved. This obligation extends not only to NSIB staff but also to our valued partners in the transport sector.

Let me unequivocally state today that any deviation from laid down standard operating procedures (SOP'S) or compromise on safety protocols, whether by NSIB staff or transport operators, will not be tolerated. Swift and severe punitive actions will follow any such infractions.

Conversely, I want to state that professional excellence will be recognised and rewarded. Together, through this commitment to transparency, accountability, and excellence, we shall encourage as well as reinforce safety and responsibility within the NSIB and beyond.

Fourth, PROMOTE SAFETY AWARENESS, SENSITISATION AND EDUCATION. From the youngest school children to the most seasoned travellers, we will raise awareness and sensitise the general public about the importance of safety in every aspect of our lives and how they can play their part in this collective responsibility.

I understand the challenges that lie ahead, The complexities of our transport network, the human factors that can lead to error, and the ever-evolving technological landscape. But I also see the immense potential of this nation, the resilience of its people, and the unwavering spirit of innovation that burns brightly within us.

This journey, however, will not be easy. Accidents may occur, and lives may tragically be lost. But in the face of any tragedy, I promise that the NSIB will stand firm. A promise to those who entrust their lives to the wings of planes, the rails of trains, the

waves of ships, and the asphalt of roads. It is a promise that safety and zero-accident will always be our utmost priority, and in the face of unforeseen circumstances, every necessary measure will be taken to ensure the well-being of those involved, and learn from it, ensuring that every step forward is a step towards a safer future for all travellers.

However safety is not a solitary pursuit, it is a composition of collaboration. Under my watch, the NSIB will become a partner, educator, and advocate for transport safety. We will engage every stakeholder, from pilots in the cockpit to mechanics in the workshop, from policymakers in the Federal Capital Territory to passengers at the bus stations. Together, we will transform Nigeria into a land where every journey is safe, every landing is a celebration, and where the only turbulence we encounter is the thrill of progress unfolding before us.

To the talented and dedicated staff of the NSIB, I say this: you are the backbone of this agency. Your expertise, commitment, and passion are the fuel that will propel us forward. Together, with the support of the Honourable Minister, we will build an NSIB that not only reflects credit upon the Ministry of Aviation and Aerospace but also stands as a beacon of safety for the entire nation.

This task is not for the NSIB team alone. I call upon every stakeholder, from the seasoned veterans to the bright-eyed newcomers, to join us in this noble endeavour. Let us become the guardians of safety, the silent sentinels who stand watch over every road, every rail, every waterway, and every skyway.

And to the Nigerian people, I say this: your safety is our sacred trust. I pledge that the NSIB will be your tireless advocate and your unwavering voice for safety. We will work tirelessly, day and night, to ensure that every journey, take-off, departure, and arrival is a safe one.

My journey as the Director General of the NSIB begins today, but it is a journey we must take together. I invite you, my fellow Nigerians, to join me on this mission. Let us make safety not just a slogan, but a way of life. Let us build a transport safety system where every journey is taken with assurance, and every life arrives at its destination safe and sound.

Now, Let the journey begin!

God bless you all

God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria