

Nigerian

# Waterways



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Newsletter of the National Inland Waterways Authority



## One Year in Office

Mustapha, Amaechi, Permsec  
Commend Moghalu



**W**elcome to the new edition of the **NIGERIAN WATERWAYS**. This edition is Special in many respects. Firstly, it is the edition that drew the curtain on 2020, a very challenging year, the year of Coronavirus but also a year that gave our Managing Director/CEO Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu an opportunity to excel against all odds.

This edition is also Special because it ushers in 2021, a year we believe, God willing, the Pandemic would be brought under control, enabling the Management to forge ahead with its laudable programmes for the Authority.

Finally, this is a Special issue because it is fully loaded with positive and celebratory stories; stories you can't afford to miss.

The MD/CEO celebrated his first year of sterling performance in office, marking it with courtesy visits to the Secretary to the Government of the Federation Mr. Boss Mustapha and the Honourable Minister of Transportation Rt. Hon Rotimi Amaechi. As expected, this is our cover story.

That's not all. For the MD/CEO, it was a season of awards and honours, all fully covered in this issue, in addition to staff who celebrated their weddings, retirements and promotions. Our heartfelt congratulations to our MD/CEO and everyone who had reasons to celebrate last year.

Among the other stories we are paying attention to this edition: NIWA's 2021 annual budget, All Heads of Maritime Agencies Meeting, test running of cargo haulage from Onne Port to Onitsha River Port, upgrading Onitsha River Port to a port of final destination, enhancing inland waterways for more efficient transportation and harnessing the potential of inland waterways in Nigeria. The interesting point to be made is that all these constitute a feather in the cap of the MD/CEO.

It is an exciting mix of news stories, features, interviews and of course pictures, in which we celebrate our people. As you settle down to enjoy this edition, let me, on behalf of the entire team of **NIGERIAN WATERWAYS**, wish you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

#### Jibril Darda'u

Ag. General Manager (Corporate Affairs)  
Editor-In-Chief (Nigerian Waterways)

## Day Nnewi Honoured its Own

**F**or a moment on December 28th 2020, time stood still in Nnewi, Anambra State. It was to make way for a well-deserved honour for one of Nnewi's most illustrious sons, Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu.

The chieftaincy title of 'Ohamadike' of Nnewi was conferred by His Royal Highness Igwe(Dr.) Kenneth Orizull, CON, Igwe of Nnewi at the Igwe's Palace in Nnewi North.

The honour was in recognition of Dr. Moghalu's outstanding performance and tremendous achievements within one year in office as the Managing Director/CEO of NIWA, and also in appreciation of his consistent humanitarian services to the society.



BEHOLD, THE 'OHAMADIKE OF NNEWI': Chief (Dr.) Moghalu with his wife shortly after the conferment of the title in Nnewi.



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu celebrating with other titled chieftains



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu celebrating with Jubril Darda'u, Acting GM, Corporate Affairs, NIWA and Mu'azu Dan'azumi, Acting GM RPE

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# NIWA Budgets N6.6bn for Water Transportation in 2021



The MD/CEO Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu with his Management Team at the 2021 budget defense at the National Assembly, Abuja.

**T**he National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) has budgeted N6.6bn to boost Water transportation in 2021.

The Managing Director of NIWA Chief (Dr.) George N. Moghalu disclosed this recently in Abuja during the Authority's budget defense session organized by the Senate Committee on Marine Transportation. He said the N6.6bn capital component of the

Authority's 2021 budget was essential to the completion of all ongoing projects and enhanced revenue generation.

The MD regretted that NIWA could not achieve actual project implementation in 2020 as a result of the delay in capital releases occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic.

He, therefore, appealed to the Senate to put necessary legislation in place to help the agency develop and boost inland waterways in Nigeria.

His words: "In line with the economic recovery growth plan of President Muhammadu Buhari, the Authority reiterates its determinations, now more than ever, to upscale the developments of Inland Water transportation in Nigeria.

"I, therefore, seize this opportunity to appeal to the senate to use your good offices to ensure and facilitate conducive financial and legal environment that would provide and boost the need for NIWA to achieve its full potential."

## Management Names 3 New Acting GMs



**Mr. Abdullahi Aliyu Dabai**

(Ag. GM Human Resources & Administration)



**Engr. Fidelis Ejike**

(Ag. GM Project Management Special Duties.



**Surv. Henry Adimoha**

(Ag. GM Survey department)

**T**he Management of NIWA approved the appointments of three new Acting General Managers to head their various Departments.

The new appointees are Mr. Abdullahi Aliyu Dabai, Acting General Manager, Human Resources & Administration; Surv. Henry Adimoha, Acting General Manager, Survey Department and Engr. Fidelis Ejike, Acting General Manager,

Project Management & Special Duties.

The appointments, which were in a bid to enhance service delivery, were sequel to the retirement of the previous occupants of the offices. The new appointees were the most senior officers in their respective departments.

# NIWA Hosts Flood Response Parleys



A group photograph of members of 2021 flood response and management

permanent solution to the issue of flood, which has become a yearly occurrence in Kogi State. The meeting adopted short, medium and long term measures to mitigate its effects.

The meeting was expected to come out with a blue print report on flood reduction and mitigation in Nigeria, Kogi State as a case study.

Engr. Asindi said it was the responsibility of government to protect lives by relocating the affected flood victims to safer areas.

The meeting identified the following areas as flood prone in the state: Lokoja, Kogi, Ofu, Ajaokuta, Idah, Ibaji, Igala/Odolu, Bassa,

Omala and Adavi.

Apart from NIWA, agencies represented at the meeting included:

- Kogi State Town Planning, Kogi State
- Ministry Of Environment
- National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
- Nigerian Metrological Agency (NIMET)
- Federal Ministry of Mines and Steel Development
- NSREA
- Kogi State Emergency Management Agency (KSEMA)

**T**he National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) has hosted two meetings to strategise on the response and management floods in 2021.

The meetings, which drew participants from relevant Federal and State agencies, were held at the NIWA Conference Hall in Lokoja.

At the opening of the first meeting, the Chairman of the Committee Engr. C. Asindi, General Manager (Engineering), disclosed that the Managing Director of NIWA Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu had approved the parley to proffer a

## NIWA Trains 400 Youths

### ... Plans Modern Jetty at Badagry

**T**he National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) has conducted a two-day training workshop on the Safe Handling of Small Craft for ferry operators and services on inland waterways in Badagry. The programme was in conjunction with SIMTOP Ventures.

NIWA also plans to build a modern multimillion naira jetty in the coastal area.

The Managing Director Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu, who disclosed this while visiting with the Akran of Badagry, His Royal Highness DeWheno Aholu Menu Toyi I at his Palace, said the aim was to decongest the roads and seaports.

Dr. Moghalu expressed gratitude to the Royal Father for supporting the development of the waterways in Lagos and Nigeria. He pledged that NIWA would continue to work with its partners to develop the waterways in order to take the pressure away from the roads and seaports.

He spoke further on measures adopted to ensure safety on the nation's waterways: "We are also very much concerned with safety and have taken measures to make sure that all our captains are qualified, well trained and licensed. No one will also be allowed on board without wearing a life jacket."

Addressing participants at the venue of the workshop, the MD expressed happiness at the large turnout, as well as the choice of the community chosen for the training. He thanked SIMTOP Ventures for putting together the program while also calling for everyone's support to help build the industry.

"The only way to decongest our roads and seaports is through

the waterways and I hope that the trainees will put the training to good use, in ensuring that no life is lost on the waterways again. Also, this programme will not be a one-time event, it will be continuous," he added.

The Oba, speaking through the Bale of Topo Community, Chief Abosu, thanked the MD and appreciated the effort of NIWA in organizing the workshop as well as its role in making Inland Waterways a safe means of transportation in Lagos. He advised that the Workshop should be organized at least twice a year to sensitize the people on the issues of safety and opportunities in the sector. He also suggested that more jetties should be built in locations such as Topo and Ajido communities to ease the stress off their people having to come all the way to Marina before boarding or alighting from the ferries.

The Lagos Area Manager Engr. Sarat Braimah thanked the participants for taking advantage of the opportunity presented by the workshop to gain more knowledge. She also stated that arrangements have been completed for Badagry to have a modern multimillion naira jetty soon.

The participants were lectured on the domestic and international protocol on Small Crafts Operations in keeping with the standards stipulated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a specialized agency of the United Nations among other subjects.



# Maritime Agencies Close Ranks, to Harmonise Their Operations



The MD/CEO Chief (Dr.) Moghalu in a group picture with heads of the Maritime Agencies (l-r) Mr. Pascal Nnorli, representing Nigerian Railway Corporation, Duja Effedua, Rector Nigerian Maritime Academy, Oron, A D Makande, representing Nigeria Customs Service, Dr. Bashir Ibrahim, D-G, NIMASA and Barr Hassan Bello, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Shippers Council.

**M**aritime Agencies in the country are forging closer ties and may soon harmonise their operations to improve services and strengthen the Nigerian economy.

The Managing Director/CEO Chief (Dr.) George N. Moghalu, who dropped the hint in Lokoja recently, said that the Agencies have agreed to move their co-operation to the next level to complement each other in various areas of operations and services.

The MD disclosed this while briefing the Press at the end of All Heads of Maritime Agencies Monthly Meeting hosted by National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) at the Authority's Headquarters in Lokoja, Kogi State.

According to Chief Dr. Moghalu, the Meeting looked at issues of maritime security and safety, enforcing the protocols to reduce the carnage on the nation's waterways and the removal of wrecks, which is being addressed by all the sister agencies in the country. The maritime heads received briefings from both the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and NIWA, and deliberated on efforts made so far in the areas of trade and manpower development.

He said the meeting set up a committee on multi-modal approach to cargo delivery. In that regard, there was also a briefing by Nigerian Railway Corporation for its support on cargo movement from the ports to

“It is very important for us in the Maritime Sector to have decided to setup a platform we can share ideas, synergize where we can contribute our quota in developing policies and building the Maritime Industry.”

the dry ports, especially in Kaduna.

The committee also discussed the movement of cargoes from Lagos Port to Onitsha River Port and other ports within the country. The aim was to determine how the proposals under consideration would put the waterways into active use.

In his opening address, the MD said: “It is very important for us in the Maritime Sector to have decided to setup a platform we can share ideas, synergize where we can contribute our quota in developing policies and building the Maritime Industry.”

“This is our third meeting and it is expected that



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu (2nd r) arriving with heads of Maritime Agencies of Nigeria for their third meeting at NIWA headquarters, Lokoja

this meeting will continue as we set issues that concern the Maritime Industry.

We will discuss to find solutions so that we can put them to use in our various establishments and at the same time bring solutions to the government at large.”

During question-and-answer session on flooding sensitization, security and safety on the waterways, Dr. Moghalu told the gathering that NIWA had a department that was dedicated to monitoring and collecting data on floods. He said such the department's reports were usually made available to other agencies to create awareness and ensure precaution. NIWA has also been running radio jingles and newspaper advertorials to sensitize the general public on flood disasters.

On waterways safety and security, Dr. Moghalu said government was conscious of its responsibilities, and has adopted measures to ensure that the waterways were safe and secure at all times. He stressed that safety on the waterways was essential for economic viability as well as the image of the country.

In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of Nigerian Shippers' Council(NSC) Mr. Hassan Bello urged the organised private sector to play a more leading role in driving the maritime economy while

the government should create an enabling environment for the private sector to operate.

His words: “We are also going to see mass participation of the private sector in rail sectors. The rail as we see today will not be the same. It is important we synergize.

“We are looking at digitalizing our ports; that means one needs not to be at the port to clear one's cargo. Automated ports or contactless ports, that is also very important. We are also considering multi-modal evacuation and delivery to the ports.”

There was an update from the Director-General/CEO of NIMASA Dr. Bashir Jamoh on the deployment of a modular floating dock.Dr. Jamohalso addressed the issue of maritime security. He said security was a key component because it stabilized the shipping trade, stressing, that once there is hindrance to easy access to a country there would be problems with the ships coming to the country.

The meeting was also attended by Mr. Sam Nwakohu, Registrar, Council for the Regulation Freight Forwarding in Nigeria (CFFN) and representatives of Nigerian Customs Service and Nigerian Railways Corporation.





Honourable Minister of Transportation Rt Hon Rotimi Amaechi with Chief (Dr.) Moghalu when he paid a courtesy visit in Abuja to mark his one year in office

## Mustapha, Amaechi, Permsec Commend Moghalu as He Marks One Year in Office

The Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) Boss Mustapha has commended Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu for the remarkable achievements recorded in the past one year as the Managing Director/CEO of the National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA).

The SGF spoke on the heels of similar commendations by the Honourable Minister of Transportation Rt. Honourable Rotimi Amaechi, who praised Chief (Dr.) Moghalu for his “effectiveness” in managing the affairs of the Authority and the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Dr. Magdalene Ajani, who congratulated him for a successful first anniversary in office.

The SGF made the commendation in his office in Abuja recently when the Managing Director paid him a courtesy visit as part of the celebration of his one year anniversary in office. While extending his best wishes to Dr. Moghalu, the Management and Staff of NIWA, the SGF also pledged his support for the Authority on all issues at all times. Mustapha, who himself is a former Managing Director/CEO of NIWA, said about 75 percent of heavy duty cargoes that are being moved on Nigeria's highways should rather be transported on inland waterways.

“This is because almost 75 percent of items being moved as cargoes on our highways ought not to be on the highways,” Mustapha said, adding, “These commodities include cargoes such as petroleum products, heavy duty commodities like cement, limestone etc. Also, other things that you think are heavy enough not to be on our highways can effectively and efficiently be run or transported on inland waterways.”

According to him, the country has two major rivers and these two rivers have networks that connect into 28 of the 36

states in Nigeria.

The SGF also advocated for the sustenance of intermodal means of transport in order to reduce pressure on the highways in Nigeria.

On his part, the MD of NIWA Chief Dr. George N. Moghalu said that NIWA has been working hard to develop inland waterways across the country, noting that the Authority had recently put the Onitsha Port back into operations.

Similarly, the Honourable Minister of Transportation Rt. Hon. Amaechi applauded Moghalu for his effectiveness in steering the affairs of the Authority, urging him to do more. The Hon. Minister issued the commendation when the Dr. Moghalu visited him to mark his one year in office.

The Honourable Minister said: “You did well, go ahead and carry out your duty very well. The most important thing is that we are able to reform the transportation sector together. I want to make sure that the Onitsha River Port is finished, then we can talk about the Aba railway”

Reiterating his support for NIWA, Rt. Hon. Amaechi said: “You have done noble, and be rest assured of my support any time any day.”

Earlier, the MD had thanked Rt. Hon. Amaechi for recommending him for the office of the MD of NIWA and for supporting the activities of NIWA. He further thanked President Muhammed Buhari and the Ministry for helping the Authority in developing the inland waters of the nation.

His words: “Today is October 8th, precisely about a year ago, I reported in NIWA in Kogi State and it was a beautiful thing. Also in this sitting room you told me that you have recommended me as the MD, of the National Inland Waterways Authority.

“I felt that today is one-year to the glory of

“You did well, go ahead and carry out your duty very well. The most important thing is that we are able to reform the transportation sector together. I want to make sure that the Onitsha River Port is finished, then we can talk about the Aba railway”



SGF Boss Mustapha presenting a gift to Chief (Dr.) Moghalu, the MD of NIWA in his office in Abuja

God I have spent in that office, that the right thing is to come in this same sitting room with my management team to appreciate you."

At a separate meeting with the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Dr. Ajani congratulated Dr. Moghalu for his one year in office which, which was marked with the flag off of activities at the Onitsha River Port.

The permanent secretary said: "I want to sincerely thank you and all that made this day a memorable one. I feel greatly honored and I want to thank you all for coming to this Ministry. This is indeed strategic and I believe that every appointment given is destined spiritually. I know that your coming here today is to the glory of God.

"Thank you and congratulations. I rejoice with you for having one year in tenure and I also want to say thank you to your management team. The beautiful thing is that we are reviving our inland waterways and I was glad to read in the media yesterday that you ran the test with barge, which arrived safely to Onitsha from Onne. This is something that we are waiting for, we all know about the crisis and gridlock on Apapa."

She said the Ministry of Transportation was determined to remove the gridlock through a multi-model transportation system. She explained that "if we can move containers on badges from Lagos and Onne ports through our inland waterways thereby freeing our roads from the hefty trucks that are destroying them because these are quite heavy instruments....by so doing, we will be able to say that we have done something."

Dr. Ajani said that as part of the inter-modal system, the Government would complement the inland by exploiting the rails that are still connected to the ports.

Speaking further, the Perm Sec said that "by rails through our

inland waterways we can move these containers to their various destinations. We are also aware of the inland dry ports, people have to be able to stay somewhere and have their goods purchased and delivered to them virtually at their door post.

"That is what transportation is all about and that is one of the mandates of Mr. President to the Ministry: to make us this multi-modal transportation system and network them so that people and goods can move from one destination to the other safely, efficiently and increase productivity in the economy.

"We all know what will happen when we have an effective transportation system; people can come out of their farms, put their products on the transport and get them to consumers. That will definitely drive the economy.

"And I encourage you to continue in focusing and opening up of our Inland Ports because that is where we will be able to know how much we are impacting on the society."

Responding, Dr. Moghalu thanked God for the opportunity to serve and pledged to work towards ensuring success in the Ministry of Transportation.

Moghalu said: "Your success is our success. If you have any challenges it also reflects on us so I want to say once more that I am happy for this tremendous opportunity; to God be the glory."

Members of the Management team that accompanied the MD were Danladi Ibrahim (GM Legal), Alh. Usman Ndalada, former (GM Human Resource & Admin). Engr. C.I Asindi (GM Engineering), Engr. Joseph Ororo (GM Marine), Engr. Fidelis Agbahi (GM Area Office Coordination), Yusuf Girei (GM Finance and Account), Da'azumu (Ag.GM Research, Planning and Environment) and Jibril Darda'u (Ag.GM Corporate Affairs).





The Honourable Minister of Transportation Rt. Hon Rotimi Amaechi with Chief (Dr.) Moghalu and his Management Team during the courtesy call on the Hon Minister



The SGF Boss Mustapha receiving a delegation of NIWA led by Chief (Dr.) Moghalu during a courtesy visit to office to mark the MD/CEO's one year in office.



From the L-R Perm Sec Chief (Mrs.) Magdalene Ajani, MD NIWA Chief Dr George N Moghalu and GM Legal Services and Company Sec Ibrahim Danladi



The Hon Minister of Transportation Rt. Hon Rotimi Amaechi with Chief (Dr.) Moghalu when he paid the Hon Minister a courtesy visit to mark his one year in office.



Perm Sec FMOT Dr. Dr. (Mrs.) Magdalene Ajani receiving briefing from the MD of NIWA to mark his one year in office

# FG to Upgrade Onitsha River Port to Port of Final Destination- MD



MD NIWA Chief Dr. George N. Moghalu addressing the business community of Anambra State on the economic viability of Onitsha River Port, at Onitsha.

**T**he Managing Director Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu has reiterated the Federal Government's commitment to gazette Onitsha River Port as a port of Final Destination. The MD said this in Onitsha recently during a stakeholders' meeting with the business community of Anambra State on the economic viability of Onitsha River Port.

Dr. Moghalu explained that the move was aimed at reducing congestion at the Lagos ports as well as ease business activities in the South East part of the country.

According to him, more than five million containers come to Onitsha, Nnewi, Aba and other South Eastern states yearly, which he noted, accounts for the gridlock on highways.

In his words, "The Onitsha River Port is not yet a port of final destination, but the process is on a very high speed to make it a port of destination. We are also waiting for a report of a technical adviser, which would be presented to the Federal Executive Council for approval."

The MD explained that "goods can only then be cleared at Onitsha when it is made a destination port," assuring that he would drive the process to conclusion as NIWA MD.

He added that the NIWA was engaging the Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Police Force and the Army in collaboration with NIWA Police to beef up security on waterways, especially Onitsha to Onne and Onitsha to Lagos Ports.

Dr. Moghalu said to make the business process comfortable for investors, the agency had made the issue of insurance cover mandatory for all barges and vessels plying the routes.

The Managing Director disclosed that the Authority had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Nigeria Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas (NUPENG) to move bulk petroleum products from Lagos to Onitsha, Baro and Lokoja ports to

encourage water transportation.

Dr. Moghalu, who expressed delight at the successful haulage of cargo from Onne Port to Onitsha River Port recently, solicited the support of the stakeholders to ensure full operations.

"We are now more determined than ever to make more waterways navigable to facilitate marine transportation across the country," he assured.

Earlier, the President of the Onitsha Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ONICCIMA), Mr. Chris Ukachukwu expressed hope that the commencement of the full activities at the Onitsha River Port would boost economic activities and create employment opportunities.

Ukachukwu listed the benefits of the Onitsha River Port to include reduction in road traffic congestion, elimination of illegal Customs and Police checks, charges on roads and increased revenue for the three tiers of government.

Others benefits, he said included reduction in crime and youth restiveness, longer lifespan of roads and increased water transportation, among others.

The President, however, raised questions regarding the operation of the port such as whether the port had been gazetted as port of Final Destination, if there were plans for dredging the River Niger channel and the nature of security architecture on ground, among others.

While commending the management of NIWA for the job done so far, Ukachukwu appealed to the Federal Government to urgently consider linking the Onitsha River Port to the national rail network.



# Board Backs Mgt. as MD Assures of Better Welfare



Vice Admiral I.I. Ibrahim (Rtd) Chairman Board of Directors NIWA



Chief (Dr.) George N. Moghalu MD/CEO, NIWA

**T**he Chairman Board of Directors of National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) Vice Admiral I.I Ibrahim (Rtd) has thrown his weight behind the Management to ensure success in the admiration of the affairs of the Authority.

The Chairman made the pledge in his address at the NIWA 2020 end of the year get together and sent forth for all 2020 retired staff of the Authority at its Headquarters in Lokoja.

Admiral Ibrahim, a former Chief of Naval Staff, described NIWA as a family, stressing that both Management and staff must keep the flag flying high at all times. He encouraged staff to continue to be efficient and dedicated to their duties.

The Chairman added that the Board would strive to support the Management to achieve its set goals for the Authority. He congratulated the retirees for their successful exit from NIWA after years of meritorious service.

In his address, the Managing Director/CEO Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu thanked the Board members for gracing the occasion to honor and send forth the retired staff.

The MD disclosed that Management was introducing a new honours system of recognising not only the retired General Managers, as done in the past, but also all retired staff that have served the Authority

meritoriously.

He told the gathering that he wanted to leave a legacy of NIWA as a family, adding, “we should love and appreciate each other.” Dr. Moghalu praised all NIWA staff for their devotion to duty despite the challenges of COVID 19 in 2020 and prayed that 2021 will be a glorious year.

As part of the Management's efforts to motivate staff to put in their optimum performance in the development and growth of NIWA, awards and gifts were presented to Area Offices and individuals who excelled in 2020. The Best Performing Area Office award was clinched by Hadeija Jammare Area Office in Kano State, which took home a plaque and a token of N100,000 in recognition of their outstanding performance in surpassing their revenue target in the year 2020 despite all odds. Mr. Ibrahim M.M Onimisi of Lagos Area Office emerged the Best Staff of the Year 2020 and was awarded a plaque and a token of N50,000 in recognition of his outstanding performance.

Equally, all the six retired General Managers went home with gifts of Plasma Television set each while other retired staff went with plaques in appreciation of their meritorious services to the Authority.

Amongst the highlights of the event was dinner served to all staff and invited guests.



MD NIWA having a close discussion with the Chairman Senate Committee on Marine Transport Sen. Danjuma Goje at the National Assembly Abuja



MD NIWA presenting TV plasma to retired GM Engr Sameul Gazama



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu presenting award to the best performing Area office



MD NIWA George Moghalu in a discussion with GM Legal services Danladi Ibrahim Esq at the end of the year get together



MD NIWA and his management team making presentation at the National Assembly during the 2021 budget defence.



Chairman Board of Directors NIWA with MD NIWA Chief (Dr) George Moghalu



A Cross section of the general staff at the end of the year get together



A Cross section of NIWA management at the Authority's 2020 get together party





Chairman Senate Committee on Marine Transport Sen. Danjuma Goje and some members of the committee during NIWA's 2021 budget defense at the National Assembly Abuja



Chairman Board of Directors, some members of the board, MD NIWA, and management team approaching the venue of the end of the year get together 2020



R-L Mrs Katara Obi, Engr Rufos Oladimeji (Area Manager Abuja), GM Corporate Affairs Mr Jibril Dardau and Alhaji Awwalu Yakasai after receiving Award of Excellence on behalf of the MD in Abuja



GM Corporate Affairs Jibril Dardau receiving award on behalf of the MD NIWA at Rockview Hotel Abuja



Mr Jibril Dardau GM Corporate Affairs together with some staff from Area office Abuja while receiving award of excellence on behalf of the MD NIWA in Abuja



Mr. Jibril Darda'u receiving the Award of Excellence on behalf of the MD/CEO of NIWA



Chairman Board of Directors NIWA Vice Admiral I.I Ibrahim (Rtd) (right) presenting a tv plasma to retired GM Surv. Denis Osawanta



Area Manager (Hadejia Jammare Area Office) Mr Nasiru Maude after receiving an award of best performing Area office at the end of the year get together



Mr. Darda'u displaying the award and the certificate at the event in Abuja



## 2021 BUDGET ESTIMATES: NIWA to Complete Ongoing Projects



The Managing Director/CEO Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu exchanging pleasantries with distinguished members of the Committee



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu with the Distinguished Senators



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu consulting with a Distinguished Senator

**M**anagement has pledged to complete all ongoing projects at its waterways facilities across the country.

The Managing Director/CEO Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu gave the assurance while presenting a Budget proposal of N3.10B for 2021 to the Senate Committee on Marine Transport in Abuja recently.

The proposal comprised of N1.370B for recurrent expenditure and N1.411B for capital expenditure.

The MD/CEO said priority would be given to projects that aligned with the policy objectives of Government's Key Priority Areas and improvement of Public Investment Management.

In his appeal to the Committee for approval, Dr. Moghalu said: "I therefore conclude that in line with the Next Level vision of His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, the Authority reiterates its determination now more than ever to upscale the development of Inland Water Transportation in Nigeria. I therefore seize this opportunity to appeal to the Chairman and this Distinguished Committee to use your good office to ensure and facilitate a conducive financial and legal environment that will provide the boost needed for the National Inland Waterways to achieve its full potentials."



# Enhancing Inland Waterways for More Efficient Transportation

*David-Chyddy Elekwrites on the twin challenges before the Managing Director of National Inland Waterways Authority, Dr. George Moghalu, in his effort to make the Onitsha River Port functional and also ensure that over 10,000 kilometers of waterways in Nigeria is navigable*

On October 6th, Onitsha, Anambra State and the entire South-east business community came alive with excitement over the arrival and reception of barge conveying containers in Onitsha River Port from Onne Port in Rivers State. The barge landed with several containers belonging to businessmen in the commercial city of Onitsha Anambra State and other South-eastern states. It would be the first time in over 40 years that such ever happened. The implication of this is that, the trauma businessmen face in going to Lagos to clear their containers and now hire trucks at very exorbitant rates to bring them down to the east, the high cost of settling security men on road and the risk of accidents involving the truck and loss of wares would be a thing of the past, if this continued.

In Anambra State, the excitement soon snowballed into a political argument, as some supports of Muhammadu Buhari veered off, praising him for doing what no past president has done, while those against him dug deeper to report that the barge was not a full cargo vessel sailing into the port from outside the country, but a barge carrying containers, which were moved from Onne Port to Onitsha, whatever the argument was, it was still a huge feat.

Recently, the National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) called together the business community in Onitsha for an interactive stakeholders meeting. The event which was also attended by Managing Director of NIWA, Dr. George afforded him the opportunity to clear the air about the state of Onitsha River Port and the plans of the authority towards making the Nigeria waterways navigable and the benefit inherent in it.

Pharmacist Chris Ukachukwu, the President of Onitsha Chamber of Commerce, Mines, Industry and Agriculture who presented a paper at the event, set the tone by raising various questions that have agitated the minds of the members of the business community in the South East about the Onitsha River Port.

“Onitsha Chamber Of Commerce as the foremost city chamber in Anambra State has remained in the forefront of proactive policy advocacy on issues relating to the ports and its effect on trade and commerce for the Onitsha business community ad South East zone. At various for a in the past, the chamber consistently engaged various stakeholders to seek ways to fast track the possibility of achieving the full utilization of the

Onitsha River Port.

“Therefore, it was with great excitement that we welcomed the arrival of a barge from Onne Port to Onitsha on the 6th of October, 2020. We must commend your management of NIWA for this historic achievement.”

As much as he commended the MD for his proactiveness, Ukachukwu raised some very pertinent questions about the state of the River Port.

He asked, “Is Onitsha Port gazetted as a port of final destination? If so, when will the port commence full ports operation? Can goods be cleared in Onitsha Port, or people have to travel to Lagos to do the paper work? What is the security architecture on the ground to ensure safety of vessels on arrival? Given the navigational challenges associated with dry season, are there plans for channel managers to see to the dredging of the waterways thus guaranteeing navigability all round the year?” These and many more questions he raised about the Onitsha sea port.

Moghalu since assuming the leadership of NIWA has garnered accolades with his efficient management of the organization, but here at the stakeholders meeting, he was confronted by his own people, who though acknowledged he had done a lot, but were seeking more from him, and expect not just the usual rhetoric that politicians offer explanations to issues, but were waiting for how whatever plan he had could be achieved.

Taking the questions one after the other, Moghalu did not only allay their fears about the Onitsha River Port, but stated that he as the Managing Director of NIWA is saddled with a greater responsibility, which is making the waterways in Nigeria navigable, adding that there are inherent benefits in decongesting the roads by using water transport.

“We are greatly encouraged by the reaction generated by the maiden flagging off the haulage of cargo from Onne Port to Onitsha River Port penultimate week. This no doubt to my mind marks another milestone achievement for the intermodal transport system in Nigeria. I am optimistic that this epoch revival will generate substantial business activities and create employment through its operations. Other transport agencies will have a boom in Nigeria and southeast in particular.

“Besides, creation of jobs to our youths, movements of cargoes will help greatly in reducing the congestion in our roads and



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu reading the communique at the end of the meeting of all heads of Maritime Agencies in Nigeria at NIWA headquarters Lokoja

and we are working on that. We know that the economy of the country also depends on this, as wares will begin to move faster, and will also reduce the prices of goods, because water transport is also known to be very cheap. So, it is not only about Onitsha River Port, but about the entire waterways in Nigeria.

"Presently, Onitsha River Port is nearing congestion, as you can see. This is an indication of the volume of cargo expected to be hauled on the inland waters. The port is currently undergoing continuous improvement. The route from Onne Seaport to Onitsha River Port are also undergoing similar improvement vide route update and improved navigation aids," he assured.

For an average importer in Onitsha, the inability of the Federal Government to put the Onitsha River Port to full use has

kept the people of the South East backwards, and its economy perpetually stagnant. This is because the people are predominantly traders. An importer Mr. Simon Amaude, who deals in clothing materials, in an interview with *THISDAY*, lamented that "my greatest challenge in business is not being able to clear my goods here in Onitsha. I sell jeans trousers and chinos in wholesale. My container lands in Lagos, and I now travel all the way there to do the paper work, and afterwards I still have to spend up to N700,000 to N800,000 to transport the container back to Onitsha. Within that period, my fellow importer in Lagos who also imported the same products as myself have begun making sales, without additional expenses. The indication is that he sells lower than myself who has incurred additional cost of bringing the goods to Onitsha. I have not included the risk of the trailer being involved in an accident, in which I will be spending additional money to get another trailer for trans-loading. It is not fair."

Another trader, Okwudili lamented that the trouble trailers undergo at Apapa after leaving the wharf was a story for another day. He lamented that once, his container spent two days, just for the trailer to move out of the Apapa area of Lagos, because of congestion.

"Time is money in this business. Christmas is fast coming now, and the profit you make depends on your turnover. So how can you turn over when the roads are blocked, yet there are customers waiting to buy your goods," he said.

However, with the assurance of the MD of NIWA, reprieve seems to be on its way to meet the business community in Onitsha and the South East.

Moghalu who called for collaborative efforts to beat the challenges said, "At this point, partnership with private sector cannot be over-emphasized, hence this parley, which is geared towards sensitizing our business community in Anambra and the South East to tap into this lofty initiatives of the federal government.

"Your participation in this regard is a guarantee that this initiative will not fail. I therefore seize this opportunity to urge all the stakeholders in and out of the country, importers and exporters, maritime transport support companies to key into the federal government efforts in the development of water transport into the hinterlands."

■ From *THISDAY* of November 4, 2020.

seaport through effective transshipment to our River Ports in the hinterlands, thereby reducing the incidences of road mishaps. We are now determined than ever to make more waterways navigable to facilitate marine transportation across the country. In view of the growing transportation needs, particularly moving bulk commodities, containerized produce into the hinterland, our country needs to focus on the development and harness the benefits of inland waterways".

He stated that efforts are at top gear for the concessioning of the Onitsha river port, adding that it is now at an advanced stage, an only when that is achieved can the port be designated as a port of final destination. He said once this was achieved, what it meant was that from anywhere in the world, traders can channel their goods to Onitsha river port, receive their goods there and also conclude the paper work in the port and take their goods. This elicited applause from the business community Onitsha.

Speaking about security on waterways, Moghalu asked, "Do you know that NIWA has its own police? Yes, we have NIWA Police, whose duty is to ensure safety on waterways. Besides that, we also have the Navy, which we are working closely with, and just recently, I met with the Police hierarchy, to see how they can also offer assistance to us, and they gave their words. So, do not be afraid of security once our waterways become very functional.

On the many benefits of making the waterways in the country navigable, he said, "You all know the high cost of moving a container from Lagos to the east. From Lagos to Onitsha, I know that you all spend between N800,000 to N1 million to move one container down here. From Port Harcourt is about N300,000. This also has effect on the goods you have brought in, in terms of pricing. While your counterparts in Lagos clear their goods and start making sales, you have to go through the troubles of paying additional cost to bring it to the east. There is also the risk of accident involved and also the many security checkpoints on the road.

"Also, we have talked about the benefits of our roads lasting longer when these trailers are off the road. If a barge carries 60 containers to Onitsha by water, the tendency of 60 trailers have been moved off the road, and this will help our roads to ease off a little. There are a total of 10,000 kilometers of waterways in Nigeria traversing 28 states of the country, but right now, only 3,000 kilometers are navigable.

"We have the task of making all the 10,000 kilometers navigable,





Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu and his Management Team in a group picture with the Chairperson of the Heads of Federal Establishments in Kogi State Mrs. O. O. Olugbemi and her team ...at NIWA HQ, Lokoja.



A barge moving empty containers during the test-run from Onne Port to Onitsha River Port-2



MD NIWA Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu in a group photograph with the members of ONICCIMA after a stakeholders meeting on the economic viability of Onitsha River Port, at Onitsha.



Perm Sec FMOT Chief (Dr.) Mrs. M. Ajani with MD NIWA and his management team in a group photograph



The Chairperson of the Heads of Federal establishments in Kogi State Mrs. O.O. Olugbemi during a courtesy visit of the association to the MD NIWA



Engr. Ephraim Alphonsus Ekong & Joy Kingsley Umoh solemnised their traditional wedding on 27th November, 2020 in Ikot Abasi, Akwa Ibom State.



Wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Yetunde Latifat Yusuf of RPE Department, which took place in Kaduna State



Wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford of Warri Area Office



# NIWA to Collaborate with Presidential Amnesty Programme to Secure Inland Waterways



The MD/CEO NIWA Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu presenting a gift to Col Milland Dixon during the courtesy visit



(L-R) Engr.Ororo (GM Marine, NIWA), MD/CEO NIWA Dr. George Moghalu, Coordinator, Presidential Amnesty Programme Col Milland Dixon, A.A Dabai (GM Human Resources & Admin, NIWA) and Danladi Ibrahim (GM Legal Services, NIWA) in a group photograph during the courtesy call.

**T**he National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) is forging a collaborative partnership with the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) to enhance security on the nation's inland waterways.

Managing Director/CEO Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu disclosed the plan recently during a courtesy visit to the Coordinator of the PAP Colonel Milland Dixon (rtd) in his office in Abuja.

A press release signed by the General Manager, Corporate Affairs, Mr. Jibril Darda'u said the MD was accompanied on the courtesy visit by his management team.

It quoted Dr. Moghalu as saying, "We are here to collaborate, synergize and look for areas of partnership with the Presidential Amnesty Program in order to provide adequate security on NIWA facilities in the Niger-Delta Area and to also build confidence in stakeholders that our waterways is crime free."

He added that his visit was part of his security stratagems by engaging all the relevant security forces, such as the Police and Navy to beef up security on the waterways.

Responding, the Coordinator Col Dixon thanked the MD for the visit and said, "I am very happy with your coming. The Amnesty Program is also willing to meet with NIWA to look at areas of partnership in order to provide and create jobs for the Niger-Delta youths."

Earlier, Dr. Moghalu had congratulated Col Dixon on his appointment by President Muhammadu Buhari as the Coordinator of the Programme, describing it as a well-deserved appointment considering his past records.

The PAP was established in 2009, at the height of militancy in the Niger Delta, to stabilize and fast track development in the region, which hosts some of Nigeria's largest waterway resources.

## NIWA Promotes GM, 3 DGMS, Others



**Mr. Jibril Darda'u**

*Ag. General Manager (Corporate Affairs)*

**M**anagement has approved the promotions of staff who recently sat for the year 2020 promotion exams. The newly promoted staff include Umar Yusuf Girei 9 (Grade Level (17), General Manager (Finance & Accounts), Deputy General Managers (GL. 16) Dan'azumi Mu'azu, Ag. General Manager (RPE), Barr. Biyankare Nasir (Legal) and Engr. Ogbe Daniel Garba (Marine). Other officers promoted to the rank of Grade Level 15 are: Jibril Darda'u, Ag. General Manager (Corporate Affairs), Maisaje Ibrahim Japheth, Ag. General Manager (Audit), Fidelis Ejike, Ag. General Manager (PM/SD), Dangana A. Mohammed (Engineering), Braimoh Lara Sarat (Marine), Inuwa Baba (Legal), Adejoh Joseph Atta (Engineering), Nnamani Justus Uche (R.P.E), Akintade O. Akinlabi (Marine), Onogbo Samson Izomoh (Marine), Ekawu Benard Anuha (Survey), Hamisu Musa Sale (Human Resource & Admin.).

In addition, GL.13-14 (19 promoted), GL.12-13 (19 promoted), GL.10-12 (16 promoted), GL 9-10 (40 promoted), GL. 8-9 (20 promoted), GL.7-8 (Four promoted), GL.6-7 (Five promoted) and GL 5-6 (Seven promoted).

The Nigerian Waterways heartily congratulates the promoted officers.





Five Cowries Terminal,  
Ikoyi Lagos

## HARNESSING THE POTENTIAL OF INLAND WATERWAYS IN NIGERIA

*IBRAHIM OYEWALE writes on the inherent potential in Inland Water Transportation and efforts by the National Inland Waterways Authority management to develop the system for investments and job creation*

Inland Waterways Transportation System has been described as the best transportation mode in the world. This has been in existence from time immemorial by which man transported himself before other modes were used. River Niger and Benue have very considerable influence on many human activities as indicated by geographical and historical facts.

Thus, the imperatives of waterways transportation system in Nigeria economy, the potentials, challenges hindering its development over the years and role of National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) came to front burner during the just concluded 2020 Press Week of Nigeria Union of Journalists, Kogi State Council at NUJ Secretariat, Lokoja, the state capital recently.

The theme of this year's Press Week was "Inland Water Transportation: The Untapped Potentials in Nigeria Economy" and was presented by Dr Anthony Danladi Ali, Department of History and International Studies, Federal University Lokoja.

Ali in his paper, encapsulated that Nigeria, which is well dredged by over three hundred inland rivers and waterways, has not been developed for transportation of goods and people. He stressed that it is imperative for the government to develop inland water transportation in Nigeria because it is cheaper, safer, more economically friendly, with less operating cost and cargo handling capacity.

The university don also highlighted in his paper some of

the salient problems facing the Inland water transportation in Nigeria, stressing that there was a decline in water traffic. He pointed out that during the colonial era, precisely 1870, commercial navigation and transportation into hinterlands of Nigeria grew with expansion of export trade, while passenger traffic on lower Niger and Benue rivers also grew with increase in the volume of trade.

He argued further that with the construction of new roads in 1920s and extension of the existing one in 1940s and with greater number of lorry available on the roads for transportation, water transportation came in serious competition with road transportation.

The second major problem facing water transportation in Nigeria, according to him, is poor government attention to sector. He averred that since independence in 1960, the Nigerian government has not been interested in developing water transportation as alternative to road transport and railways.

"The government marine fleets in 1907 consisted of 24 self propelled vessels, 15 poling house boats, four lighter and two pontoons. By 1956, the Inland Water Department (IWD) operated 179 units of various crafts. These crafts were used to perform a wide range of government activities such as administrative, medical ferry operation services, channel demarcation, river patrols and surveys.

Ali further argued that research had shown that the third major problem facing water transportation in the country is poor infrastructure and operation facilities. The



Tourism: tourists waiting to board a water bus at a jetty



The ever busy Obalende Waterfront, Lagos State



Fishing at sunset

guest speaker added that it was for this purpose and to motivate the investors that the Nigerian government established the National Inland Waterways Authority in 1997, adding that unfortunately it has not lived up to its expectation when compared with what happened under the Marine Department in the colonial and post colonial era.

Be this as it may, the university lecturer also enumerated the economic advantage of water transportation over other modes of transport. He stressed that water transport is efficient, affordable, environmentally friendly as waterways does not suffer traction. It is also suitable for bulky commodities such as iron ore, stones, gravel, cement, coal forest products, lower accident and cheaper cargo carrying

capacity with other potentials such as creation of jobs and sustainable commercial activities.

Like he rightly pointed out, the federal government had established NIWA with a view to boost commercial activities along the coastal cities, towns and villages which will inadvertently create job opportunities for local demography in a way and change the political economy of the affected communities. Investigations further revealed that Nigeria has over 10000 kilometres stretch of waterways across Nigeria out of which 3,000 kilometres are navigable.

However in line with the federal government aims and objectives to boost economic activities through waterways transportation, help to boost Agriculture in along the riverine communities, the former president, Late Umaru Musa Yar'Adua-led administration approved substantial amount of money for the dredging of River Niger. At the flag off of the dredging of lower River Niger from Lokoja in Kogi State to Onitsha in Anambra State in September, 2009, he also approved the rehabilitation of existing river ports and construction of new river ports such as Baro, Lokoja river, Agwuata river ports while Onitsha, Warri and others were rehabilitated across the country.

In addition to these efforts, NIWA had consistently carried out maintenance dredging, while it had procured about 12 gunboats for security to be stationed at various outlet along the major waterways.

In 2017, the Minister for Transport, Romiti Chubike Amechi, while speaking at the flag of maintenance dredging at Ajaouka assured Nigerians that federal government was committed to unlocking the potentials of waterways transportation in country, calling the critical stakeholders to support the agenda.

A critic and social commentator, Mr. Mohammed Abubakar, who lauded the efforts of federal government to unlock various potentials of waterways transportation system, however tasked both states and local governments to give maximum support to the federal government, stressing that given the present scenario of an ailing economy and fall in price of crude oil at the international market now, there is no way the federal alone can single handedly finance waterways transportation in Nigeria.

In his remarks, the Managing Director, NIWA, George Moghalu, reiterated that NIWA will boost commercial activities through water transportation given the huge potentials of Inland waterways in Nigeria. Moghalu who was represented by the General Manager Marine, Joseph Ororo during the occasion corrected the impression by the guest lecturer who said that all activities that used to take place in those days are no longer taking place now as one of reasons he said there was decline in traffic as one of the first major problem hindering development of Inland Waterways transport system.

He explained that the first thing was government's neglect of the waterway transport system because up till early 1970s there were some activities taking place on the waterway and a lot of commercial activities were taking place in the waterways.

"But when we started having petrol dollars, money from the crude oil and all of that, suddenly government shifted its attention to the roads to the neglect of waterways. Then the waterways was no longer taken adequate care of, funding has reduced and a lot of infrastructure went moribund and if the waterway were no longer navigable at that time and a lot of





A drone view of waterways on Lagos Island

activities became very difficult. The intended traffic was no longer there.

“The guest lecturer also alluded to the fact that we used to have Divisional Marine Officers (DMAROs) and Divisional Marine Engineers (DMAREEs) in those days, but are no longer there and qualified people are no longer there. But the fact remains that we still have them only with change of name such as Area manager, Marine Unit head, Unit head Engineering and up till now we still have competent qualified staff in the three main technical departments of Survey, Marine and Engineering.”

Still on funding, the NIWA boss noted that people may not see a lot of activities the way the people would have wanted it because there are challenges, adding that one of the major challenges is lack of adequate fund.

“Marine as you know generally is a very capital intensive business. If you want to dredge, imagine how much was used for dredging of River Niger at that time. Even now if you want to do maintenance dredging it would cost a lot of money. For craft, boats and vessels are also very expensive. So if you don't have adequate funding how are you able to provide these things to be able to have traffic on the waterways.

“ But NIWA under the leadership of new the management had prepositioned itself to deliver more than the mandate. For instance, we are building barges not only that, we have “done barge”, which is a barge that cannot move on it own, it has to be pushed with a small boat or any other means. We also have self propelled barges we are building, which means that it has its own engine. We have top boats already and we have built passengers vessels.

“Under the watch of the present Managing Director, there is a lot that we are doing. But we can do more. If we have the kind of funding that the NIWA really needs to have, If you need like N5,000 and somebody brings N1, 000 that would not do the job. It would not be enough, that was the situation . This is not limited to NIWA alone. Almost all

agencies are crying of lack of adequate funding.”

He poisted that across the country there is a total of 10,000 kilometres of inland waterways, “we not talking of coastal water, we are are taking about rivers and creeks that form our inland waterways. Out of this, only about 3,000 kilometres are navigable all year round. Out of the 36 states, 28 states can be accessed by water, which means we have a network of rivers. When well harnessed, we can move from here to Kebbi State and to Cameroon”.

On the efforts of the states government to partner the federal government and NIWA, he said “this may be very difficult now more so that everybody are crying of lack of funds. The issue is that the states may not have enough money to spend on waterways ,this not to say that some states are not really taking some measures. What I think to be a way out is public-private partnership, individuals, corporate organisations whether within or outside Nigeria should partner NIWA.

“The theme of the lecture of NUJ week was “The Potentials of Inland Waterways in Nigeria Economy”. The potentials are very huge for tourism and for damming purposes. With all these potentials, NIWA is inviting private sector to come talk to the management as it is ready to partner those who want to invest in Inland waterways transportation. It is win-win situation.

“Only recently, the Kogi State government inaugurated a committee that has to do with issues of developing the Inland waterways, the managing director spoke with Commissioner for Transport and there was a robust discussion with the head of Private Public Partnership of the government. He stressed further that the potentials are there and there is nothing wrong in developing a ferry transport/passenger system between Lokoja and Onitsha and even further down.”

• *From ThisDay of November 17, 2020*



Onitsha River Port

## ONITSHA RIVER PORT: GOLDMINE IN SOUTHEAST — DR. MOGHALU, MD/CEO

**W**hen the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA), Dr. George Moghalu, assumed duty on October 8, 2019, in Lokoja, one of the many challenges that confronted him was getting the Onitsha River Port fully functional. Coming more than four decades after, the project which was initiated in 1983 appears set to come on stream.

In this interview with MOSES AKAIGWE of The Sun Newspaper, he reviews the past one year, and gives more insight into the much applauded flag-off of the movement of containers with barges from Onne to Onitsha, noting that efforts are on top gear to start moving cargo from Lagos to Onitsha soon.

Chief Moghalu describes the port as a goldmine with world class facilities, “My target is for Onitsha River Port to become functional because I know its potential and economic benefits to the south-east. That is where my eyes are focused.”

### What we're doing at NIWA

I remember very clearly that when I became the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of Nigerian Inland Waterways Agency (NIWA) one observation I made, which by the support I am receiving, we are trying to change the narrative, is the fact that NIWA is under-reported. And I appealed to the media to help me, so that we can bring the Authority to the consciousness of Nigerians. I am so glad that the response and support I have been receiving have been quite

encouraging. In a nutshell, NIWA's major responsibility is to manage, maintain, and control activities on all our waterways — by ensuring all-year-round functional, open channels. It is also the responsibility of NIWA to manage our right of way, ensure that we build ports, and jetties, like you see us doing...everything geared towards managing and maintaining inland waterways.

### What we've done over the last one year

You are right if you say one year, because it was exactly on October 8, 2019, that I assumed office in Lokoja (head office of NIWA). Like I said to the few people I have talked to who have asked me questions, and you can also hear it if you watch our one-year-in-office documentary. NIWA was extremely under-reported. So, a lot of people didn't know what we do, who we are and what they are expected to do for us. That I saw as a major challenge, because if you don't say who you are, nobody will say thou art.

Another thing I saw which I needed to address immediately, was staff morale, because I needed to get both the management staff and the junior staff, to understand my vision, understand my position, and understand where I wanted to take NIWA to, so that they could have a comprehensive buy-in, believing that if I was able to do this, then the challenges would be drastically reduced. A lot of people do not agree with you, because they don't understand you, neither do they understand your vision. But, when they



understand you and understand your vision, then the likelihood of keying in will be there, and that is exactly what has happened, because when I came, the morale was quite low, and we worked towards that so we changed the narrative.

We needed also to develop some jetties that were of strategic importance in the country. We needed to repair some of them that we felt were in a very poor state. There were a lot of things we wanted to do, but when the COVID-19 came, it changed the entire equation, because the pandemic never announced it was coming, and nobody was prepared for it. So, we were confronted with that as a major challenge, and as an agency, we had to key into the national programme on the issue of COVID. But, thank God we were

able to do a lot in terms of protocol observance and enforcement, as well as support for the institution that was managing the COVID challenge.

We also saw that our headquarters was not looking the way it should look as the national headquarters of a big agency like ours. We saw a lot of things that needed to be done, and what we now did was to confront them. Some of our vessels then were in a very bad shape. I am somebody who is very insistent on maintenance. I can only think of new procurement if what we have are bad to the extent that they cannot be maintained. So, when I noticed that some of our vessels and equipment were in a very bad state, we needed to aggressively maintain them to bring them up to speed and standard so they could be put into use. There were quite a lot of challenges, and there is a list of what we met on ground and the much we have done. We had to confront the challenges: As we identify them, we address them.

### **Ensuring Nigeria's 10,000-kilometre waterways are navigable**

The truth about it is that Nigeria is blessed with over 10,000 kilometres of waterways, but as we speak, its only over 3,000 that is all-year navigable, and what that means is that the channels are open, and you can use them. It is a major challenge, but you don't lose sight of the fact that opening up the entire over 10,000 kilometres, is quite a capital-intensive project. In the world of dredging, you have the capital dredging, you have the maintenance dredging. Capital dredging is quite a massive investment, and funding is a challenge. It is not peculiar to NIWA. It is a general challenge, because if you remember, the resources available to government are quite drastically reduced.

Before this government came into office in 2015, oil at a point was selling for over a \$100 a barrel, and then you and I know that it got to a point where oil was selling for less than \$20 a barrel, and there has not been so much of an improvement. The maximum we have reached was about a little more than \$40 per barrel. So, the resources available to government are drastically reduced, and that is also impacting on the agencies



MD NIWA addressing the press after the meeting of all heads of maritime agencies in Nigeria at NIWA headquarters Lokoja

government usually gives money to support. That is why for now, we are laying emphasis on internally generated revenue before the arrival of COVID-19, but we are trying to overcome that.

Having said that, it is a major challenge getting all the over 10,000 waterways dredged to be able to make them all-year-round navigable and maintain them, because apart from dredging, you have to do river training, you have to lay points, you have to provide for the clearance of water hyacinth, you have to provide for the removal of wrecks, and what have you. There is quite a lot that is involved. And that is why today in NIWA, emphasis is now on maintenance to ensure that the over 3,000 kilometres are all-year-round navigable. That is why we are now investing in procurement: We have procured some dredgers and we are still procuring more, so that as an authority we can now increase the maintenance dredging {of the over 3,000 kilometres that are navigable} and ensure that all the channels can remain open and are constantly all-year-round navigable, so that vessels can ply them, while we gradually try to open more channels, depending on the resources that are available.

### **How NIWA handled safety issues, compliance with rules by boat operators**

We have challenges like that, and we observed that there is the need for us to do something concerning that. So, what we did was to embark on massive enlightenment; getting people to understand the protocols. We engaged the boat operators, drivers, boat owners, barge operators and barge owners, and everybody who has a role to play in the water business. We got them together at different instances, and spoke to them on the need to obey protocols. This was because we observed that yes, we have challenges, and we have accidents that occur, but a good number of these accidents are human. It is a matter of mismanagement. A lot of people you find them plying their vessels in the night, and a good percentage of the accidents were either in the night



A barge moving empty containers during the test-run from Onne Port to Onitsha River Port

or early in the morning. Unfortunately, most of these vessels they use do not have night navigation, and that is why today, we banned vessels taking off at any NIWA jetties after 6:30 pm. It is illegal now, because we realised that, that was one of the ways we could enforce it. We have gotten the NIWA Police to insist on it and enforce it.

You also find that most times these vessels that get themselves involved in these accidents are vessels that are overloaded. Consciously, people get their vessels overloaded and people refuse to wear life jackets. So, we enforce it in the jetties that we have absolute control over; which means you must obey the protocols, you must be properly kitted before you enter any vessel. In fact, no vessel operator will allow you enter the vessel as long as you are operating from a NIWA facility, and even if we see you on water, our Police can stop you. They have that mandate to stop you, to ensure that you obey all the protocols, because we cannot afford to allow people to be losing their lives. And those using vessels that are not certified, we impound such vessels.

There is a directive to the NIWA Police. We cannot allow rickety vessels to operate. We have even gone further to retrain boat drivers. We have a partnership with an institute in Warri where we can train drivers and re-certify them. We are going to expand the scope that if possible, that we make sure that every boat operator in Nigeria is certified. It's just like going to take a car when you are not a licensed driver that means you are going to be involved in an accident.

### **Outcome of recent meetings between NIMASA, Shippers Council and NIWA**

The meeting you are talking about was a meeting held in Lokoja. We have had two meetings: One was hosted by the Shippers Council, The other was hosted by NIMASA {Nigerian Maritime Administration And Safety Agency}. The last one was hosted by NIWA at our headquarters in Lokoja. It's a meeting of chief executives of the maritime industry. We meet to discuss issues that concern the maritime industry, to see how we can synergise to ensure that things are done properly; like 'how do we grow that industry?' 'How do we support the multi-modal transport system?' For example, we understand, and it is basic knowledge, that the best way to move bulk cargo is either by water or by rail.

In fact, the last meeting we had, the Nigerian Railway

Corporation was also part of it, because we are looking at how to grow that industry. So, we need to meet regularly. It was not limited to Onne. I raised the issue that I needed the support of all my sister-agencies in what we want to do. We want to open up that channel to make sure that cargoes now move between Onne and Port Harcourt; between Onitsha and Lagos; as well as Lagos and Onitsha. I got their buy-in, and they also keyed into that initiative because we understand the impact to add to the economy.

### **Discussion about decongesting Apapa Port roads**

Yes. It was part of the discussion. Facts show that a good percentage of the containers that arrive in Lagos end up in Onitsha and Aba, and what that translates to is that, for example, if it is one million containers that need go to Onitsha and Aba, about one million trailers will have to be on the road. But, we can avoid the pressure on our roads by moving the containers by water. It is simple logic, and that is why the idea of barging them and moving them from Lagos to the east, became an issue. And we have started working towards that. We have gone quite far.

Recently, we did a test-run between Onitsha and Onne, and Onne and Onitsha. We needed to do a pilot scheme, because we understand the human psychology. Before people can invest, before private players can be part of it, they want to see government do it first. That was what brought that initiative that made us move barge from Onne to Onitsha, picked up containers and moved them back to Onne. Now that we have succeeded in doing that one, we have broken that jinx, and we are now setting that machinery in motion to move cargoes between Lagos and Onitsha. We have even gone to the extent of signing MOUs with barging companies. In fact, some of them have gone to the extent of securing insurance package for both the barges and the consignment that they are going to carry.

### **Does it take longer to move containers from Lagos to Onitsha by water?**

What is the longer time about it? This is the same thing that people were saying, trying to discourage me when we wanted





The MD/CEO Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu flagging off the successful movement of containers from Onne River Port to Onitsha River Port

to do the test-run between Onne and Onitsha: 'No, it is impossible. Security is not there. Your people will not allow them, blah, blah, blah.' That was why we kept our mouth shut and continued doing what we were doing – putting our eyes on the ball without shifting them and eventually we moved in, and when people began to see what we have done, people now started calling to congratulate us. They never knew that it was possible but now, it has happened.

### **Was it the low key ceremony held recently which some people said ought to have been done by the President.**

The President doesn't need to do that. It was not the commissioning. The port had been commissioned long before I came into office. What happened was that barges were flagged off. I needed to cut that tape for the top boats to take off and that was what exactly happened. When people started saying commissioning, for me it was not an issue, but I felt there was no point responding to such things. Even some people turned it into politics; that it was fraud, that the pictures were photo-shopped, and I was wondering because for me, the important thing is that I want to do what I am determined to do, not minding what anybody will say.

### **Allegation in a section of the media that the commissioning ceremony was part of a “political deceit” that has lasted 42 years**

For me, it's an irresponsible issue to discuss because I felt it was not necessary, and that was why when the Corporate Affairs Department of NIWA wanted to respond, I told them to ignore it, because it wasn't necessary. Here is a port designed 42 years ago, completed, later refurbished and re-commissioned, and the port as far as I am concerned, has not been put into use. Meanwhile, it is a world class port with the entire facilities available. Yes, with all the facilities available and I stand to be challenged! And, I now said, 'why should we leave this port fallow?' 'Why don't we start some activities?' I started the process of making Onitsha port a destination

port/port of origin. The process is on.

Before I was appointed as Managing Director/CEO, there was a concessioning programme that is still ongoing even as we speak. Barely two weeks ago, we did virtual due diligence on the port of Antwerp that is supposed to manage the port with the concessionaire. And that one is one ongoing. I now said that even at that, we should start something, because I have my eyes on, 'What do I contribute to decongest the port in Lagos?' 'What do I contribute to reduce the

pressure on our roads, knowing very well that bulk cargo can be comfortably moved by water? I engaged the President of Barge Owners Association who saw my vision and agreed with me, and we sat down and discussed it, looked at all our challenges and we said the next thing for us to do is let us keep our mouth shut, let us break the jinx, let us get consignment, let us move cargoes/containers between Onne and Onitsha as an initial step, and that is exactly what we did.

We now moved two of his barges from Onne to Onitsha, got them loaded and moved them back to Onne. What is the deceit about it? These are the things that happened. The video recordings are there. We didn't want to play politics with it. But because we are in a political dispensation, I kept telling people that politics stops where governance begins. Is it better to leave the port fallow? The answer is no. Otherwise, investments will be wasted. The business opportunities will be erased, the potentials will be allowed to die. These are things that I said would not happen in my time, and I am focused on ensuring they don't happen. Now we are putting things in place to start moving cargo from Lagos to Onitsha, and by the time we do that again, they will say it is politics; that it is deceit that we are trying to do. Very soon, it will happen. Very shortly it will happen, and you will be there. We will be moving barged cargo from Lagos to Onitsha.

### **What about claim that cargoes can't move between Onne and Onitsha by barges because of shallow draft**

Tell the person he is ignorant. Where did they get the story that barges cannot move from Onne to Onitsha? Barges have moved and carried containers from Onne to Onitsha, and back to Onne, on the same route. How did we do it? Did we put the containers in our pockets, or on our heads, and carried them to go and deliver? They are the ones that are trying to sustain a deceit, because they are only seeing it from the perspective of political mileage. 'Oh, the APC government will claim mileage,' 'George Moghalu, who wants to be governor {of Anambra state}, will claim mileage.' These are just their decisions. It is short-sightedness on their path, and I won't be dragged to their level.

### **About claims that containers were actually trucked by road from Onne and delivered to a bonded**

**warehouse opposite the port.**

That sounds stupid! They are talking about Clarion. Fine! Clarion has a bonded port opposite the port in Onitsha, and it has been there for years before I was even appointed the Managing Director. They have come to meet me, and I have gone there to inspect their facility. But, it has no business to do with what we are doing. They can truck their containers, but I am telling you that we moved containers by water, and they saw the barge. People saw the barge moving, and it was recorded on video. It was at that point that I allowed them to put it in the media for the public to know was happening. Initially, I did not want people to know until it gets to a point where the barges would move, because, the moment you start telling them what you are planning to do, some will even do everything possible to frustrate me so that I don't succeed. I don't need the credit. What I need is for Onitsha river port to be functional because I know the potentials and the economic benefits to the south-east. That is where my eyes are focused, and not on what politicians or paid writers are saying. And I won't be distracted.

### **Why has it taken so long for Onitsha port to be functional?**

It is not my business for how long it has been. I don't know, but my business now is to make it functional. I want to be part of seeing that it is functional, because this administration is committed. We have the support of Mr. President, we have our two ministers, we have the support of the entire ministry, to make sure that the ports are put into active use. It is not only Onitsha port that we are focused on. Baro port in Niger state has to be in use. There is also the Yamatai river port in Lokoja that is under construction, and when it is completed, it has to be used. The Oguta river port, when completed, has to be used. This is because they are designed to be used. They are not monuments.

### **One of your predecessors once described Onitsha port as an untapped goldmine. What specific services will it be rendering on completion?**

Yes, I agree that it is a goldmine. By the time it is fully functional, cargo will be coming to Onitsha river port from Lagos, from Onne, by water. Don't forget by the time those channels are opened, there are stop-points. Cargo cannot just move from Lagos and end in Onitsha without stops. There stop points where we have jetties along the line. I can assure you that by the time they do it repeatedly those communities along the route will develop, new towns will be built, employment opportunities will be created, businesses will grow, because by the time the business community in the south-east keys into that and goods are moving to Onitsha by



Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu cutting the tape to flag off the successful movement of containers from Onne River Port to Onitsha River Port ...recently.

water, lots of problems are solved. It is a goldmine, and even investors will come around to invest, because such businesses have their own extensions.

### **Why government preferred BPP to BOOT concessioning**

Before I came, there was disagreement with the concessioning process. People went to court which is their right. You cannot stop somebody from expressing his disagreement with any process. But, for me, that is not distracting us. We are focused; we have our eyes on the ball. The place is going to be concessioned, and it is being concessioned now. Even Baro port will also be concessioned. When we complete Lokoja, we will also propose it for concessioning. We need partnerships. We need to bring in professionals and specialists in those areas of business to help us develop and help us manage them, and it is the right thing to do.

### **My vision for the Nigeria Inland Waterways Authority**

As I said it from the first day I assumed duties that my vision is that by the time I leave office, for water transportation to be the choice means of transport for both cargo and ferry services. If am able to achieve that, I am good to go. I have not even looked at the tourism potential of water transportation. By the time we explore that, it is a massive goldmine and that is one of the things we are looking at.

*From [www.sunnewsonline.com](http://www.sunnewsonline.com) of 23rd November 2020*



# SHIPPING WORLD HONOURS MOGHALU



The MD/CEO Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu in a media interview during the Shipping World Magazine Awards in Lagos



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu displaying his award at the event



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu receiving his award



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu with Mr. Jibril Darda'u, Ag GM, Corporate Affairs, NIWA (I), Engr. Sarat Braimah, Manager, Lagos Area Office (2nd r) and other guests at the awards ceremony.



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu with Engr. Sarat Braimah, right, and her husband.



Chief (Dr.) Moghalu with Mr. Asu Beks, the Publisher of Shipping Word, at the event



The MD/CEO Dr. Moghalu with Jibril Darda'u



# A REMARKABLE YEAR



**National Inland Waterways Authority  
(NIWA)**



## ....Commemorating

**T**he first year in the life of an administration is significant in many ways. In the case of Chief (Dr.) George Moghalu's administration, which came to life on October 8, 2019, it is a time to pause and reflect on some of its accomplishments and challenges of the last 12 months.

It was a rewarding and challenging year. It was a year that, despite the challenges of Covid-19, Chief (Dr.) Moghalu and his Management forged ahead, making considerable strides to restore operational and regulatory integrity to the nation's waterways system.

On this First Anniversary of his assumption of duties at NIWA, Dr. Moghalu said: "NIWA has a great future. I am harnessing and growing its resources to bring that future to fruition. This First Anniversary gives me a unique opportunity to pay tribute to His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR for deeming me worthy of the appointment to lead NIWA at this critical moment in our nation's history."

An Anniversary is also a time to look ahead. Again, Dr. Moghalu: "As we enter the second year of my administration, I solemnly renew my commitment to continue to work harder to deliver on Mr. President's Mandate to me and his Promise to the Waterways subsector."

**Chief (Dr.) George N. Moghalu's**  
First Anniversary as the MD/CEO of NIWA.

**"I am convinced that together we will achieve the next level inspired by the timeless wisdom popularized by our President and Commander-In-Chief, President Muhammadu Buhari.... I came here to serve, and success is my priority."**

Dr. Moghalu in his maiden address to staff and management  
October 8, 2019, NIWA Headquarters, Lokoja

## Adding Value to Lives with Projects ....

- Improvement of Berthing Facilities at Lokoja Dockyard, Lokoja, Kogi State
- Digitalization of National Inland Waterways Authority
- Construction of Ilama -Iwopin Jetty, Ogun State
- Construction of Jetty at Odekpe, Ogbaru LGA, Anambra State
- Construction of NIWA Shore protection works at Marina Lagos
- Completion of Jetty construction at Yenagoa Jetty 2, Yenagoa Bayelsa State
- Construction of Shore Protection Works at Yenagoa Jetty 2, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.
- Construction of Boat Terminal at Bakin – Kogi, Adamawa State.
- Construction of Boat Terminal at WuroBoki Adamawa State.

- Procurement of One No (1) Reach stacker 45 Tonn.
- Procurement of One no (1) Mobile Boom Crane 80 Tonn.
- Procurement of 3T, 5T, and 25T Forklifts.
- Procurement of 60KVA and 500KVA Generators.
- Installation of Electronic Register for Inland Water Vessels, NIWA Assets, and Infrastructures on Inland Waterways Right-of-ways.
- Provision of Floating Jetties at Lekki Phase 1 and Oworonshoki
- Prompt Prosecution of defaulters of the Inland Waters Transportation Code with a view to ensuring deterrent to others



The Emir of Yauri, HRH Dr. Muhammadu Zayyanu Abdullahi cutting the tape to commission the boat supported by Distinguished Senator Bala Ibn Na'Allah (I), NIWA MD/CEO Dr. George Moghalu (3rd r) and other dignitaries at Yelwa-Yauri, Kebbi State....recently.



Ferry Ramp at Bakin Kogi Adamawa State



going work at Lokoja River Port



18' Jet Pontoon



**National Inland Waterways Authority**

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WaterwaysNG WaterwaysNG WaterwaysNG