Nigerian governor to address UK business leaders on Brexit opportunities as nation celebrates 60th anniversary of independence.

Wednesday 21 October, 2020

- **Nigerian state governor to tell Institute of Directors: “There is a huge status to buying British in Nigeria, but in recent years, Britain has prioritised Europe in its trading relationships, allowing counties like China and Japan to take advantage. Brexit is the perfect opportunity to think again”.**

A Nigerian state governor will next month showcase the post-EU opportunities for UK companies in Africa’s largest economy – when he becomes the first African to address an influential group of British business leaders.

Lagos state governor, Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu, will address the Institute of Directors - UK’s oldest senior business leaders’organisation. The engagement will make him the first African to do so and provide a platform for extensive discussion of available investment opportunities in Nigeria for British businesses post-Brexit.

Governor Sanwo-Olu will outline areas where the Nigerian government is actively looking to partner with British businesses, including transport and energy infrastructure, digital industries and technology, education, healthcare, environment and creative industries.

The event comes shortly after Nigeria celebrated the 60th anniversary of its independence from Britain.

Mr. Sanwo-Olu, who is the governor of Nigeria’s economic capital, said:

“Nigeria is a continental powerhouse - one of the World’s biggest emerging markets and Africa’s largest economies. With a population of over 200 million people, our nation alone offers UK businesses a potential market half the size of the European Union and a gateway to the wider West African region.

“Nigerian leaders such as myself want our nation to become less reliant on oil hence our putting policies in place to unleashour national potential, foster innovation and diversify our economy.Britain is an ideal partner in that ambition.

“There is a huge status to buying British in Nigeria, but in recent years Britain has prioritised Europe in its trading relationships, allowing counties like China and Japan to take advantage of the trading opportunities offered by Commonwealth nations like ourselves. Brexit is the perfect opportunity to think again.

“If my own state of Lagos were a country is would have the fifth or sixth largest economy in Africa. UK businesses have so much to gain from post-EU trade with Africa, even on a regional level.

“This forum provides a veritable opportunity to highlight that even 60 years after independence, Britain and Nigeria have a prosperous and co-operative future ahead of us”.

Governor Sanwo-Olu was elected the governor of Lagos State – the centre of the Nigerian financial services sector – in 2019. Prior to that he was Managing Director of the Lagos State Property Development Corporation (LSPDC). He was also previously General Manager and Divisional at some of Nigeria’s leading financial institutions.

His speech will detail the THEMES agenda of his administration. THEMES is an acronym for Traffic Management &Transportation & Traffic Management, Health & Environment, Education & Technology, Making Lagos a 21st Century Economy, Entertainment & Tourism, and Security & Governance. The THEMES agenda mirrors areas of investments and opportunities in the country.

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His speech takes place on Wednesday November 18th
at 12noon. The event will take place online due to Covid-19 social distancing guidelines.

More details can be found at www.iod.com

Company Contact:

Rate Your Leader

T. 0333 335 5018
E. media@rateyourleader.com
W. https://www.rateyourleader.com

Additional Contact(s):
Joel Popoola - 0333 335 5018

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