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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE
AND TRADE,

PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA,

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA.

THROUGH: THE COMMITTEE SECRETARY

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IKIRUN
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ATTENTION: INQUIRY INTO STRENGTHENING TRADE AND INVESTMENT WITH AFRICAN NATIONS.

OUR SUBMISSION: INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE, DAGBOLU AS AN AFCFTA GATEWAY FOR AUSTRALIA THROUGH STRUCTURED, LETTER-OF-CREDIT-BACKED MODEL FOR MUTUAL EXCHANGE OF GOODS.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This proposal is respectfully submitted in response to the Australian Parliament's Inquiry into Strengthening Trade and Investment with African Nations, with particular emphasis on enterprise-driven trade, risk mitigation, SME participation, and AfCFTA-enabled market access.

It introduces the International Trade Centre, Dagbolu (DITC), Osun State, Nigeria, as a ready, de-risked AfCFTA gateway through which Australia can structure sustainable, scalable, and bankable two-way trade with Nigeria and the wider African continent.

2.0 STRATEGIC RATIONALE

Africa's greatest trade constraint is not demand, but risk perception, especially regarding:

- I. Market certainty.
- II. Payment settlement.
- III. Counterparty trust.

The Dagboli International Trade Centre directly addresses these constraints through a structured trade framework anchored on bank-backed Letters of Credit (LCs), providing commercial certainty for both Australian exporters and African producers.

3.0 ABOUT US: INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE, DAGBOLU (DITC)

The Dagboli International Trade Centre is a large-scale inland trade and logistics hub located in Osun State, South-West Nigeria, strategically positioned to serve:

- I. Nigeria's domestic market.
- II. ECOWAS trade corridors.
- III. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

DITC is designed to function as:

- I. An inland trade aggregation hub.
- II. A logistics and warehousing centre.
- III. A structured import-export exchange platform.

IV. A gateway for AfCFTA regional value chains.

4.0 THE STRUCTURED LC-BACKED TRADE MODEL (OUR CORE INNOVATION)

4.1 IMPORTS INTO NIGERIA VIA DAGBOLU

All goods imported into Nigeria through DITC benefit from:

- I. A Letter of Credit issued by a Nigerian commercial bank.
- II. Guaranteed payment settlement within 90 days.
- III. Institutional coordination through the Trade Centre.

IMPLICATION FOR AUSTRALIAN EXPORTERS:

- I. Eliminates payment default risk.
- II. Guarantees off take into a structured market.
- III. Predictable cash flow and reduced transaction friction.

4.2 EXPORTS FROM NIGERIA VIA DAGBOLU

Goods exported from Nigeria through DITC are supported by:

- I. Letters of Credit issued by commercial banks in the receiving country.
- II. Guaranteed payment to Nigerian exporters within 90 days.

IMPLICATION FOR AUSTRALIAN IMPORTERS AND PARTNERS:

- I. Reliable supply from Nigeria and AfCFTA markets.
- II. Improved pricing through reduced risk premium.
- III. Confidence in long-term sourcing relationships.

5.0 ALIGNMENT WITH AUSTRALIA'S TRADE OBJECTIVES

This model directly supports the objectives outlined in the Australian Parliament's Inquiry:

(1) SME & New Exporter Participation

The LC-backed structure lowers entry barriers for Australian SMEs and first-time exporters to Africa.

(2) Diaspora-Led and Enterprise-Driven Trade

DITC provides an institutional platform for diaspora-enabled supply chains and private-sector-led trade.

(3) AfCFTA Integration

DITC enables Australia to engage Africa at scale, leveraging AfCFTA rather than fragmented bilateral markets.

(4) Risk Mitigation & Bankability

The model transforms Africa trade from perception-driven risk to bankable commercial transactions.

6.0 MUTUAL BENEFITS

I. For Australia

- (a) Secure access to Nigeria's large consumer market and AfCFTA regional markets.
- (b) Reduced trade risk through LC-backed transactions.
- (c) Diversification of export destinations.
- (d) Opportunity to establish long-term trade corridors into Africa.

II. For Nigeria & Africa

- (a) Improved access to high-quality Australian goods and technologies.

- (b) Strengthened export capacity under AfCFTA.
- (c) SME growth, employment, and value-chain development.
- (d) Enhanced trade credibility and financial discipline.

7.0 PROPOSED AREAS OF INITIAL ENGAGEMENT

Australia and DITC may explore pilot trade corridors in:

- (a) Agriculture and agro-processing inputs and products.
- (b) Cement.
- (c) Oil & Gas Products.
- (d) Food and consumer goods.
- (e) Mining services and equipment.
- (f) Renewable energy components.
- (g) Education, vocational tools, and services.
- (h) Others that may be of utmost interest to the Australia.

8.0 CALL FOR ENGAGEMENT

We respectfully propose:

- I. Recognition of Dagbolu International Trade Centre as a potential pilot AfCFTA gateway for Australian trade with Africa.
- II. Exploratory engagement between Australian trade agencies, financial institutions, and DITC.

III. Consideration of DITC within Australia's evolving Africa trade strategy post-Inquiry.

9.0 CONCLUSION

The International Trade Centre, Dagbolu offers Australia a rare opportunity to engage Africa through a de-risked, bank-backed, AfCFTA-aligned trade ecosystem.

It represents not merely infrastructure, but commercial certainty, which is the foundation of sustainable international trade.

Attached herewith is the brochure of what DITC represented and other information is available on request.

Respectfully submitted,



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