



Submission No 53

Inquiry into Australia's Overseas Representation

Name: Jeff Hart
Special Adviser

Organisation: Australian African Mining Industry Group (AAMIG)
PO Box 1018
West Perth, WA, 6872

From: Jeff Hart, AAMIG

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To: Carter, John Gordon (REPS)

Canada's two way trade with Nigeria in 2011 was 2.7 billion - Nigeria is Canada's largest sub-saharan African trade partner. Canadian exports to Nigeria have increased by more than 300 percent since 2003 which is partly attributed to the return to Nigeria of Export Development Canada, based in the Lagos Consulate. Canadian commercial involvement is across a range of sectors including oil and gas, telecommunications and engineering as well as education services.

Australia's two way trade with Nigeria in 2010 was 302 million largely made up of Nigerian exports of crude oil to Australia. Australia has no dedicated trade promotion or development presence in Nigeria. Australian commercial involvement largely comes about because of one off special efforts by individuals or firms. Nigeria is also working hard to attract investment in the mining sector where there are some interesting developments involving Australian firms.

In 2010 Canada issued 1308 student visas to Nigerians. Canada regularly participates in Education Fairs in Nigeria - as far as I am aware Australia has never done so - and we would issue perhaps 25 student visas annually - if that. Nonetheless Australian education institutions and Austrade recognise the large potential pool of students in Nigeria wanting high quality education in English, and for example the University of Melbourne expressed interest in exploring opportunities in 2009 but did not follow up (as far as I am aware).

All in all we could say that the levels of Australian and Canadian commercial engagement with Nigeria do reasonably parallel the respective levels of government engagement in the country.