

IMMIGRATION ALERT!!

The Federal Government Introduces the Immigration Regulations, 2017



On the 20th of March 2017, the Federal Government, through the Federal Ministry of Interior (FMI) introduced the “Immigration Regulations 2017” (IRs).

The IRs are the first to be approved since the promulgation of the Immigration Act, 1963.

The Minister of Interior, Lieutenant General Abdulrahman Dambazau (Rtd), while unveiling the IRs disclosed that the Regulations will replace the old and outdated Immigration Regulations of 1963, which he said, “could not take care of modern realities such as terrorism, technology and new immigration challenges”.

The key highlights of the Regulations are as follows:

- Provision of a legal framework to cater to dynamic and unfolding migratory realities as well as ensure the effective implementation of the Immigration Act, 2015 and consolidate existing immigration regulations.
- Provision of an enhanced protection against cross border crimes.
- Establishment of an Approval process for the issuance of the Visa on Arrival (VOA) in Nigeria,
- Setting up and enforcement of an Immigration Register for foreigners
- Streamlining the process for the issuance of Temporary Work Permits among other categories of visa.
- Strengthening measures for the enhancement of internal security
- Strengthening Government initiatives for attracting foreign investors using modern technology

According to the Honourable Minister, under the new policy, the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) would be empowered to register and monitor the entry and movement of foreign herdsmen coming into Nigeria to curb incessant clashes and strengthen internal security.

The issuance of these new set of Immigration Regulations is a welcome development and supports the Federal Government’s initiatives aimed at encouraging Foreign Direct Investment by easing the often-cumbersome procedure for accessing immigration facilities. It is also expected the Regulations if implemented will stem the migration of criminal elements into Nigeria and promote the Federal Government’s on going war against terrorism and other related crimes.

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