

BEING A TEXT OF THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. VICTOR OYEGOKE PRESIDENT/CEO OF CRASoN AT THEIR 5TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY AND 4TH EDITION OF THE NATIONAL COOPERATIVE AWARDS, SYMPOSIUM & EXHIBITIONS HELD AT NICON LUXURY HOTEL ABUJA ON SATURDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2022

What a pleasure and honour it is to welcome you all here today, on behalf of our Board of Advisors, Management Team, and Employees of CRASoN.

We are delighted to have you all here today, to share in the joy of this special occasion, the celebration of the 5th Year Anniversary of our organization's establishment and that of the Fourth Edition of the National Cooperative Awards, Symposium, and Exhibitions this year 2022.

It is a reminder to us, of the kind of value that this program exudes, to see many of you travel long hauls just to be a part of this. And for us at CRASoN, we do not take this for granted. We are inspired to up our strategies to ensure that this is a brand you all are proud to be associated with.

It was in 2012 when the CRASoN idea was first conceived, while the initiative got officially registered as an entity in the year 2017 with the aims to enhance awareness, and further promoting Co-operatives' socio-economic impacts, good governance, and sustainable business model by demonstrating to Governments, Policy Makers & Development Partners the socio-economic importance of Cooperatives. Modeling Best Practices, Highlighting Successful and Innovative Cooperative Stories, increasing their Profile, and giving Visibility to individual Cooperatives and Cooperators either in a Single or Multipurpose Society, Primary, Union, or Tertiary Level. Improve Statistical and Data Methodology to allow for a better analysis of Coops Economic Performances and Social Impacts that would lead to the Growth and Development of the Cooperative Sector including its key Stakeholders.

This Project kick-started in 2018, as a pilot scheme that is to run for the first five (5) years out of which 360 cooperatives will be selected annually for ratings through the analysis of data generated, while appropriate appreciation and recognition were given, with a National Cooperative Economy Report made. The Projects, having been scrutinized and endorsed by the Federal Department of Cooperatives under the aegis of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development (FMARD), Abuja, is annually organized by CRASoN.

In the year 2018, the 1st Edition was tagged "The Game Changers" and themed "Driving the Economic Recovery & Growth Plan through Cooperative Entrepreneurship" it was successfully held in Lagos, where the then Minister of Agriculture, Chief Audu Ogbeh was the Special Guest of Honour, SSA to the President on SDGs, Princess Orelope-Adefulire was the Keynote Speaker, Governor of Gombe State, Alh. Dr. Ibrahim Hassan Dankwambo was the Guest of Honour and the then Governor of Lagos State Mr. Akinwumi Ambode was the Chief Host all ably represented and were made Patrons. In attendance were Commissioners, Permanent Secretaries, Directors from MDAs, and other VIPS across the Country.

Also, in the year 2019, the event was held in Abuja with Top Dignitaries and VIPs in attendance. It was tagged “The Pathfinders” with a theme; “Strengthening Cooperatives to serve as the Catalyst for Nigeria’s Socio-Economic Development”. The event was hosted successfully with a lot of entertainment and funfairs.

In 2020, we could not host the event because of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the last year done in 2021, the 3rd edition of the event was held again in Lagos State with the theme “The Cooperative Stakeholders: Synergizing for Growth & Development in the New Normal.” The Minister of Agriculture – Mr. Mohammed M. Abubakar was the Special Guest of Honour, the Osun State Governor – Mr. Gboyega Oyetola was the Guest of Honor and the Lagos State Governor Mr. Babajide Sanwoolu was the Chief Host. The Keynote Speaker is Dr. Tope Fasua FCA, MIOD, Ph.D. ex-Presidential Candidate of ANRP & CEO, Global Analytics Consulting Ltd. Our Guest Speaker was Mr, Hafiz Ololade Bakare former MD/CEO of Keystone Bank. We also have in attendance other VIPs and Distinguished Guests from the public and private sectors.

This Year’s event promises to be the most glamorous, best, and biggest of all cooperative events in Africa, with a full line-up of activities we had with the Keynotes and guest speakers’ deliveries, Panel Discussions, & Masterclasses from experts and professionals in the morning, we are hoping to have fun tonight in an atmosphere of music, dance and Comical Interludes to spice up the Award Show to be more educative, fun-filled and entertaining to all in attendance. I’m sure you already got a glimpse of that from the paparazzi, Glitz & Glamour, and Spotlight Interviews on the Red Carpet.

A very big thank you to everyone who has contributed enormously to making this event a success. especially all the Cooperative Societies here represented today, you all made this happen and without your contributions, this wouldn’t be a possibility. Your efforts are appreciated. I am grateful for the support always.

Once again, a warm welcome to everyone, and I do hope you have an amazing time today.