

Nigeria Wins Bid to Provide Communications Satellite Technology to Belarus

By Dele Ogbodo

ABUJA, Nigeria, December 29, 2015 (This Day) — The federal government, through the Nigerian Communications Satellite (NIGCOMSAT) Limited, on Wednesday disclosed that it had won the bid to provide communications satellite technology services to the Republic of Belarus over a 15-year period.

Besides leasing transponders to neighbouring Ghana, Gabon, Cote'dVoire and several other countries using its NIGCOMSAT -1R infrastructure, winning the Belarus satellite bid has further positioned Nigeria among top global communications satellite players.

Addressing the media after tour of its facilities in Abuja, the Managing Director of NigComSat, Ms. Abimbola Alale, who was represented by the Head of Public Affairs of the company, Mr. Admu Idris, hinted that the Minister of Communications Technology, Mr. Adebayo Shittu, will be leading a Nigeria delegation to Minsk for the launch of the Belintersat-1 in January 2016.

Specifically, the Alale said NIGCOMSAT, through the bid, would provide In-Orbit Test (IOT) and Carrier Spectrum Monitoring (CSM) services for the Belarus Satellite known as Belintersat-1 Satellite, using Nigeria's ground satellite facilities in its Abuja office.

The good news, according to Alale, was conveyed by the China Great Wall Industries Corporation (CGWIC), known for its expertise in satellite manufacturing and also a technical partner to NIGCOMSAT Limited.

She said: "The IOT/CSM services agreement has been signed between NIGCOMSAT and CGWIC and work has since commenced. By this agreement, the NIGCOMSAT would support the activities of CGWIC by providing necessary facilities to test communication payload of the Belintersat-1 satellite over Africa using the NIGCOMSAT ground station infrastructure in Abuja. NIGCOMSAT will also provide services to monitor the performance of Belintersat-1 and transmit

the data in real time for the life of the satellite."

The MD added: "But the main thing is that it has opened doors for Nigeria's satellite outfit and will now be counted among countries that play in the international satellite industry.

"That shows that we have the capacity and competencies that we can do that job. There are other operators who have over 20 years experience that bided with us but we were chosen ahead of them because we proved that we have the competencies to deliver having operated the NIGCOMSAT-1R successfully in the last four years.

On the significance of winning the bid, Alale admitted that the feat shows NIGCOMSAT and indeed Nigeria as having the capacity to provide highly technical services in the industry, adding that this is in its addition to its traditional services of transponder leasing, broadband services, enterprise solutions, and secured communication in the country and in Africa.

She said the operational strategy of the company encompasses the delivery of services in both the downstream and upstream sectors, adding that in the upstream sector, the company is concerned with leasing of bandwidth, trunking services and the provision of satellite networking, operation and management services.

"In the downstream, the company's business objectives include telecommunications, broadcasting, provision of broadband internet, tele-education, tele-medicine, e-government, ecommerce, mreal time monitoring services, navigation and global positioning." the Alale stated. **(END)**