

# AIR VICE MARSHAL LANRE IBRAHIM OLUWATOYIN

## A Square peg in a square hole takes over at Nigeria's Defence Space Agency

On September 9, 2024, Air Vice Marshal Lanre Ibrahim Oluwatoyin embarked on another significant journey of his professional career when he assumed office as the Chief of Defence Space Administration (CDSA). He succeeded AVM Ahmed Abdullahi Shinkafi. The ceremony, which took place at the General Irabor Hall, was attended by the staff of the DSA. The change of baton marks an important era in Nigeria's defence space industry as the new helmsman is certain to deploy his wealth of experience. In a sterling move to demonstrate his readiness and competence, AVM Oluwatoyin immediately embarked on engagement with relevant stakeholders to forge a mutual alliance through inter-agency collaboration. Specifically, the decorated Air Officer paid a courtesy visit to the National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA) to explore potential areas of collaboration. AVM Oluwatoyin thanked NASRDA for its support over the years and sought to consolidate the partnership for the effective overall performances of the agencies.

The institutions share a common goal of advancing Nigeria's interests in space utilization and their alliance will strengthen space development capabilities and further solidify the country's position in the global community. Considering his brilliance, it is apt to say that the performance of the new Chief of DSA will surpass expectations due to his resounding academic background, administrative skills and experiences.

AVM Oluwatoyin, from Ilorin in Kwara State, holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Management from the Bayero University Kano (BUK). A 39 Regular Course Cadet, he studied Satellite Orbit Engineering at the China Academy Space Tech; bagged a Master of Science in Space Management at the International Space University France, and obtained a



Master of Philosophy (MPhil) from Bangladesh University of Professionals. He participated in different courses at national, regional and international levels, including Basic Officers Engineering Course at AFIT, Kaduna; Type-rating Course on Alpha Jet Avionics; Orientation Course in Educational Theory and Practice, Institute of Education, University of Jos; Ab-initio Flying Training Course at 301 Flying Training School (301 FTS); Junior Staff Course at Armed Forces Command and Staff College (AFCSC), Kaduna; and Computer Appreciation Course in 301 FTS. Others were Workshop on Conflict Management & Resolution at Centre for



*Courtesy visit by the Chief of Defence Space Administration to Naval Headquarters*

*Subsequently, the decorated officer held the role of acting Director of Earth Observation at the Defence Space Administration; Commander of 151 Base Services Group Makurdi, and Commander of 153 Base Services Group Yola before he was redeployed to the Nigerian Air Force Headquarters in Abuja as Director of Information Technology. Until his new appointment, AVM Oluwatoyin was the Director of Tech Svs at the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA). He is a member of professional organizations including National Space Institution, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Chartered Institute of Computer Forensics, among others. Considering how his career has been embedded with major tasks due to visionary and strategic leadership capabilities, citizens and stakeholders can be assured that the nation's space security will witness more development and continue to compete with others globally.*

Management Development, Lagos; Antenna Control & Maintenance Course at North-West China Institute of Electronic Engineering (NWIEE); Civil-Military Operation Course; Technology Incubation Course at NACETEM, OAU Ile-Ife; Senior Staff Course at Armed Forces Command and Staff College (AFCSC); National Defence Course at NDC Bangladesh, and Multinational Information Sharing Initiative (MISI) Collaboration System Course. AVM Oluwatoyin began his administrative role in the military as a Material/Maintenance Control Officer at 407 Air Combat Training Group Kainji and later became the Squadron Commander/Academic Instructor at Air Force Military School in Jos, Plateau State. He also served as Principal Engineer at the NASRDA and acting Head of Department of Strategic Application Dept NigComSat Ltd, from where he moved to NAF Headquarters as Director of Space Technology.

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Initially christened as the Defence Space Agency, the Defence Space Administration was established on October 9, 2014 under the DSA Act 2016 enacted and signed into law on February 3, 2017. Its primary objective is to harness space products and services to aid the Nigerian military and other security agencies in tackling the security challenges. The agency spearheads the implementation of the Defence and Security aspects of the National Space Policy and Programme. Nigeria, being a responsible member of the international community, intends to pursue its legitimate ambition in space for security, national development and peaceful purposes for the advancement of humanity. This is in line with the provisions of the United Nations Committee for the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) which allows for developing and operating military Space Technologies.

The Chief of DSA, according to its Establishment Act, must be knowledgeable in Space Science, and have demonstrated experience in Engineering and Information Technology. AVM Oluwatoyin has fulfilled these conditions and possesses valuable attributes that are essential in discharging administrative functions. He is expected to invest his skills to achieve the mandate of the institution for national interests while leveraging effective media engagement.