

DOMINATING EVERY SPHERE OF INFLUENCE: FEDERAL LEVERAGE

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DOMINATING EVERY SPHERE OF INFLUENCE: FEDERAL LEVERAGE

I want to thank you for inviting me to share a few thoughts with you this afternoon. The topic of our discussion is, “Dominating every sphere of influence.” It’s a rather loaded topic, and very broad. It is full of assumptions though not presumptuous. I hope to do some justice to the topic and perhaps provoke you to higher ideals.

The spheres of influence we’re talking about are not just spiritual. We’re talking about business, professional, political, the liberal and performing arts, culture, the sciences and public sector. You cannot dominate these spheres of influence as a Christian unless you understand the dynamics of the order of Melchizedek. It’s the spiritual order to which you belong.

There are two mystical orders mentioned in scriptures. The first is the Levitical order, and the second is the order of Melchizedek. Both are exclusive orders. To join either, you need certain qualifications and there’s no exit. To join the Levitical order you need genetic ID. You must be a descendant of Levi. Last time I checked, no Nigerian is a biological descendant of Levi or Abraham, though some people are making that claim. I understand some have gone to court in the US, and some have appealed to the United Nations, but we know no Nigerian is a genetic descendant of Abraham.

The second mystical order, the order of Melchizedek is not based on genetic subscription. It is based on radical evolution. If any man is in Christ the Bible says, he is a new creature. That transformation qualifies you for the order of Melchizedek. It’s a very unusual order, very much unlike the Levitical order. It’s a hybridized order. The Levitical order is a pure spiritual order. You serve as priest in a temple. With the order of Melchizedek, you serve as priest OUTSIDE the temple. That’s

because it's a sacred/secular order. Melchizedek was that priest-king who received tithe from Abraham. The order is modelled on him. He was a priest and a king at the same time. He functioned in both capacities at once.

Jesus radicalised the notion of priesthood by jettisoning genetic qualification for secular qualification. He appointed entrepreneurs, public sector agents, professionals and even freedom fighters as disciples. Save perhaps one disciple named Levi, none of the other disciples belonged to the tribe of Levi. Not even Jesus. He was from the tribe of Judah. Peter was a seafood entrepreneur, Matthew, aka Levi was a colonial revenue agent, Simon the Zealot was a revolutionary, or terrorist depending on who's asking.

It is based on this antecedent that pastors are appointed from the business, public sector and professional fields today. Jesus essentially upgraded and modernised the priesthood.

Because we're all priests, today we have priest-consultants, priest-doctors, priest-fashion designers, priest-technologists, priest-bankers, priest- engineers, priest-lawyers and so on.

It has never been God's intendment for Christians to be locked up in church. Our sphere of influence is outside the church. The basis of church is talent development. In God's scheme, the church is a training institute and pastors are HR consultants. The church is not a holding pattern till we expire and go to heaven. It's a training ground. We're the salt of the earth not the salt of church. It is critical therefore for us to pay attention to the context we operate in. If there's one sphere you need to dominate it is the political context. With that single leverage you will dominate every sphere of influence. Let's therefore talk about our context, Nigeria.

From the transition to independence till now there have been three generations. There was my father's generation. They're mostly in their 70s and 80s now. Most are gone. There is my generation. We're mostly in our fifties. And then there is your generation. You're mostly in your twenties and thirties. Three generations.

The first generation in our national history was the colonial generation – my father's generation. They transited the independence of Nigeria. The next generation, my generation came of age in the military interregnum. Your generation is coming of age in the democratic era. The challenges faced by each generation are therefore unique and different.

For the colonial transition generation, their ambition was defined by the need to replace the colonial masters. It's why they relished working in the civil service in that generation. It was the definition of attainment. You got an official car, lived in an official house and got a good pension.

But theirs was also the era of raw hegemonic tendencies, one tribe seeking to dominate the other tribes, each tribe pushing back in order to forestall a second colonisation. There was tribal tension.

In my generation the country was searching for the meaning of two words – “Nigeria” and “Nigerian.” In other words, the critical challenge was the search for nationhood. To resolve the problem of tribalism, which we believe wrecked the first republic and took us to war, we sought to create a new creature called “Nigerian.” In order to bleach tribalism from our consciousness we created states and administratively eliminated the regions, though not politically. We introduced something called “Federal

Character,” instituted JAMB (Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board) and created NYSC (National Youth Service Corps).

How well did these work out? Well, accusations of unfairness and marginalisation emerged. Power was being used to further tribal agenda. We sought to solve the problem of marginalisation by creating more states. But what that means is, our overhead ballooned. More states means more civil servants.

Then we inserted an unusual clause in our constitution – what we deemed an inclusive clause. That clause has been interpreted to mean that every state must have a minister in the federal cabinet. And so generations of our federal executive council became bloated. This unthought-through solution to the question of marginalisation ensures we will arrive at absurdity at some point in history. Think of a federal cabinet with 50 ministers!

The flurry of state creation soon generated another problem. There was regional imbalance in the number of states created. Some regions had more states than others. There was local government imbalance as well.

But there was a bigger challenge. The states being created were not economically viable. Today, may be 6 out of 36 states are economically viable. The non-viable states rely on federal revenue allocation to pay civil service salaries. Welcome to the era of recurrent expenditure governance.

To the extent that an attempt was made to synthesise a new creature called “Nigerian” in my generation, we are the synthetic generation. We were forged in the crucible of experimentation on nationhood. That generation, my

generation, has never known stable supply of electricity, stable supply of water, stable supply of petroleum or stable supply of peace. We were born on the periphery of civil war. What we're familiar with is existential threat to the federation at every turn, be it from anarchists, or terrorists, or ethnic provocateurs, or economic saboteurs, or religious fanatics... There has always been one violent agitation or the other. It is a peace-challenged generation.

June 12 would prove to be a watershed in our generation but even that became an existential threat.

Nigeria has an intellectual challenge. We have not been able to sort out the concept of federation intellectually. This has affected the crafting of a vision for the country and created serious developmental challenges. If you want to sort out the nation you must take a deconstructivist approach to the federation and question prevailing wisdom. You must challenge assumptions, interrogate the old order. Nothing must be sacrosanct. To get solutions you need to think outside the box. One thing we know, whatever we have now is not working. Nigeria is not working. Look at the amount of bloodshed and violence in the land, look at the level of poverty. The essence of nationhood is collegiate peace and prosperity of the people. We have neither.

Great nations are built on powerful concepts. America was built on the concept of liberty. Thomas Jefferson wrote in the American Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are

endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness...”

The central concept of Nigeria is multiculturalism – we are many nations, diverse expressions, different cultures. It’s why we’re a federation. Our tribal differences are not our problem, they’re our identity. We need to find a workable formula for national cohesion. We’ve evolved communal solutions at the tribal level. We need to create community solutions at the national level.

Unfortunately, we’ve twisted the logic of federation and super-imposed a unitary administrative system. It is producing distortions, inefficiencies and developmental challenges.

Nigeria is an agglutination of 371 tribes. There are 3 dominant religions. The general consensus is that federation is the most appropriate form of government for such a multicultural potpourri.

We cannot rid ourselves of our identity. It is our nativity. Tribes will not disappear. If we want development therefore we must leverage our diversity to create an economy that lives up to the pluralistic potential of the nation. I am proposing what I call nativist federalism. Nativist federalism leverages not just the geography of a region and its climatic conditions, it also leverages the personality traits of the people in that region.

Let me illustrate.

The dominant tribe in eastern Nigeria are the Igbos. Igbos are known for inventiveness, entrepreneurship, dedication and hard work. These are nativist factors. It makes sense to leverage

these factors to create an economy for the East. One would therefore expect that the East becomes the manufacturing hub for Nigeria, and by extension Africa. The reasoning is simple. That is the natural bend of the people. It's like a child. If your child is science inclined you don't force him to become a lawyer. If he's arts inclined you don't force him to become an engineer. You leverage his bend. Same principle applies to federalist nation building.

In economically progressing the nativism of Igbo land the cultural and personality traits of the people must be factored in. For example, the East has developed a successful proprietary business mentoring system that has worked for over 40 years. After a period of service the mentee gets seed funding to start his own business. This system is so successful it has minted many millionaires. We need to domesticate that system into a science. It's a complete system. It teaches the values of discipline, hard work and delayed gratification. Trade knowledge and contacts are also passed on under this mentoring system. We must leverage on this mentorship programme and scale it up to develop the East. There's Silicon Valley model, there's Aba model. Abarism, or the Eastern method of business mentoring must be developed into business science.

The educational policy must follow the logic of the East. And so one would expect the universities in the East to be focused on engineering, manufacturing, industrial design, industrial relations. Other courses can be offered but these will be the strategic courses. In pursuance of this there'll be linkages with universities with industrial design strength, like Loughbrough in the UK. The jet engine was developed at Loughbrough.

For that manufacturing hub to fructify however the East will need a port. The port is necessary infrastructure. There's a port

in Port Harcourt, therefore there must be rail link between Aba and Port Harcourt. This will carry cargo. Eastern export should be done through Port Harcourt, not Lagos.

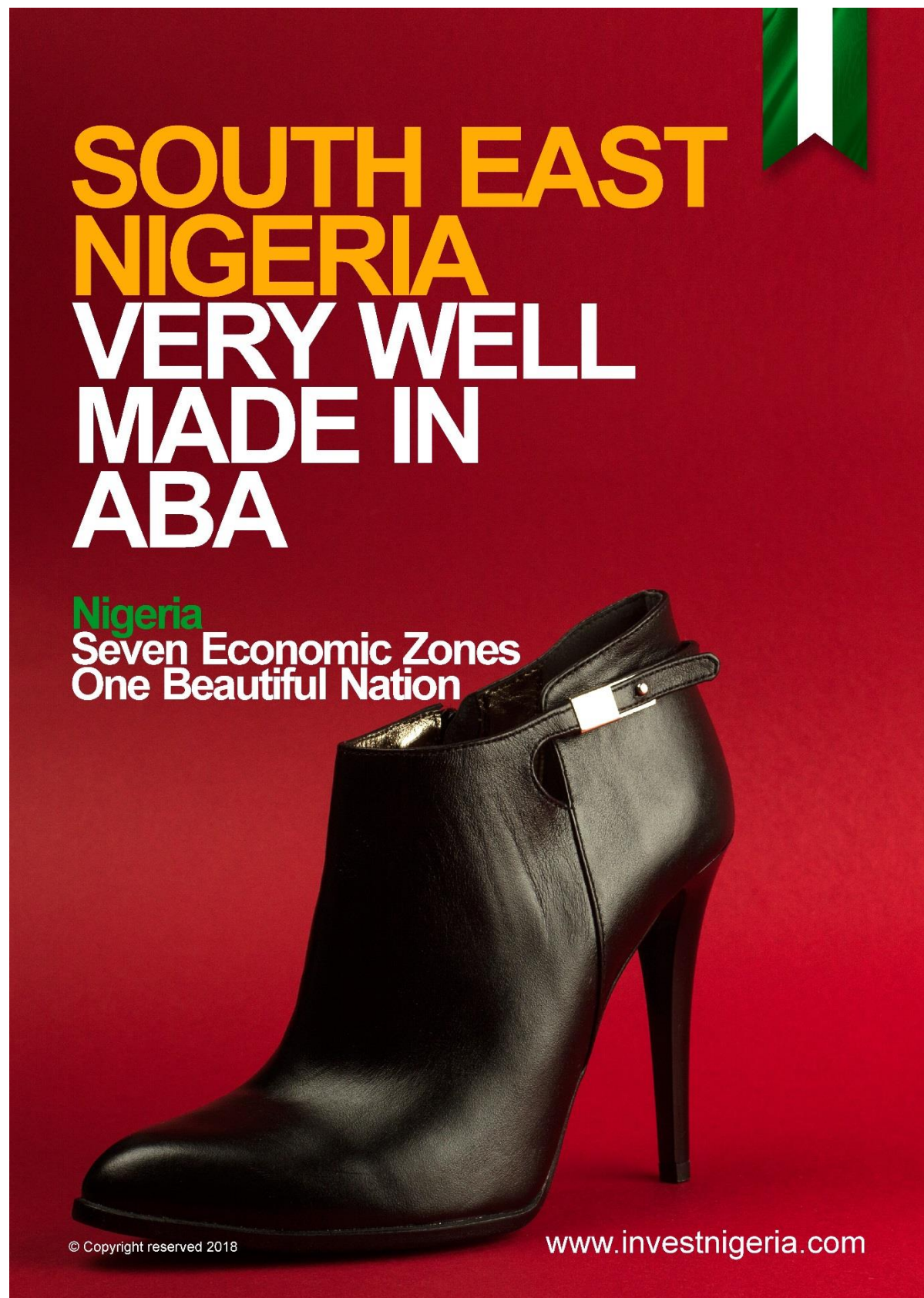
Without power there can be no manufacturing. The East has an abundance of coal. There's also River Niger. The energy system should therefore be based on clean coal and hydro power. The steel industry in Aladja must be linked to the East by rail. Aladja is a main source of raw material. Our rail systems must be strategic. We cannot afford a political rail system that genuflects at the altar of "federal character". It is a waste of resources. Our primary focus ought to be economic. Cargo ferries are needed for the East as well.

The East can and should become a heavy industry manufacturing hub servicing the whole of Africa. Supportive industries and specialisations will naturally arise when we have a policy focus. That policy focus will drive health care. For example the hospitals in the East will specialise in industrial health medicine. So will the colleges of medicine.

The East should be manufacturing armour vehicles for the Army, tractors for agriculture, excavators for the building industry, cars for Nigeria. This logic of development flows from the natural endowment of the people, as well as the geography of the East. Nativist federalism insists there must be relational integrity between human endowment and natural resource endowment. In that way we take care of human capacity development and regional development in one stroke.

Our vision will be to turn the East into Taiwan or China. Initially the world will laugh at us, just as they laughed at Taiwan, just as they laughed at China. But along the way we will introduce branding into the mix and set standards for the goods

manufactured. We will create an advertising campaign along this line:



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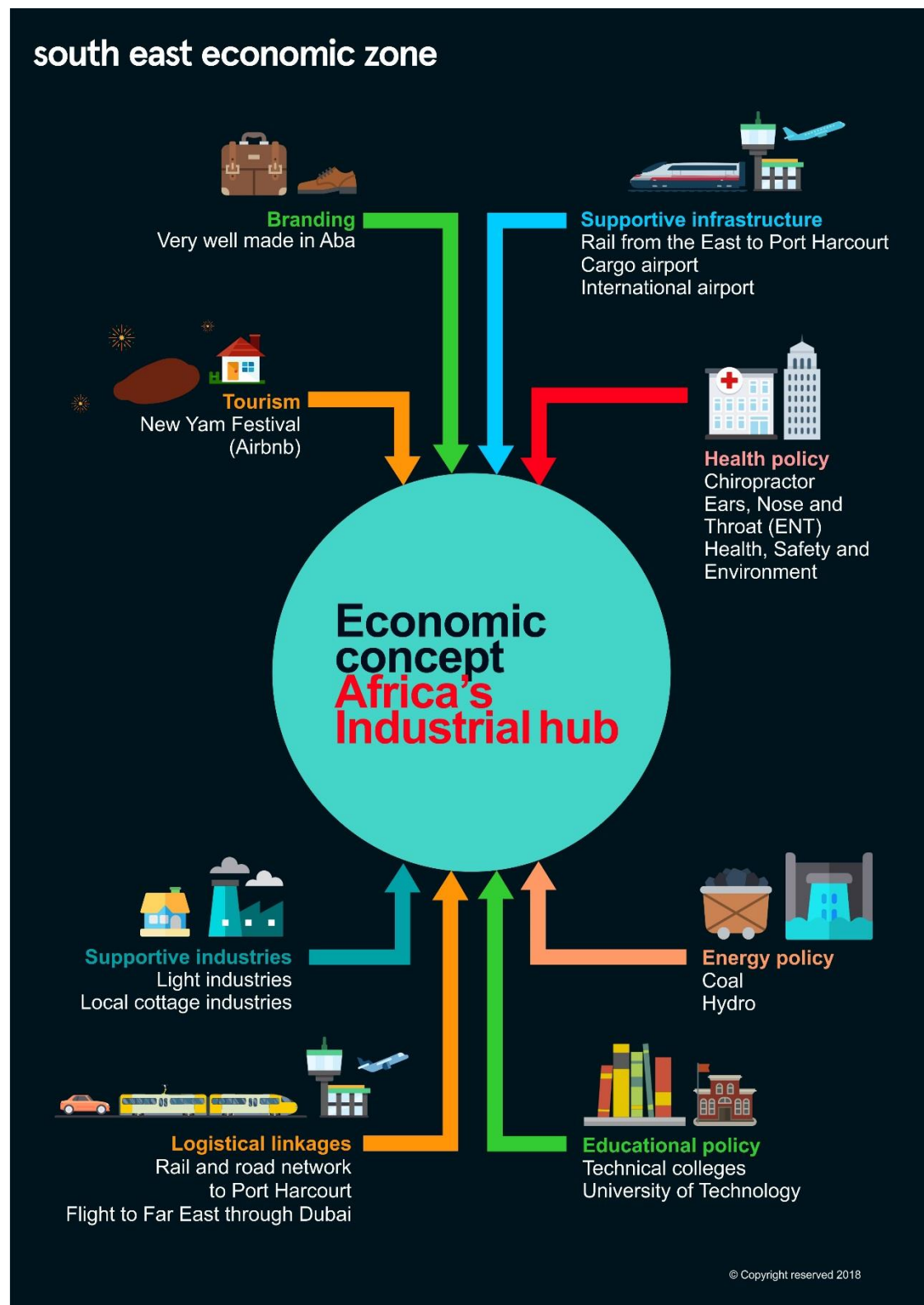
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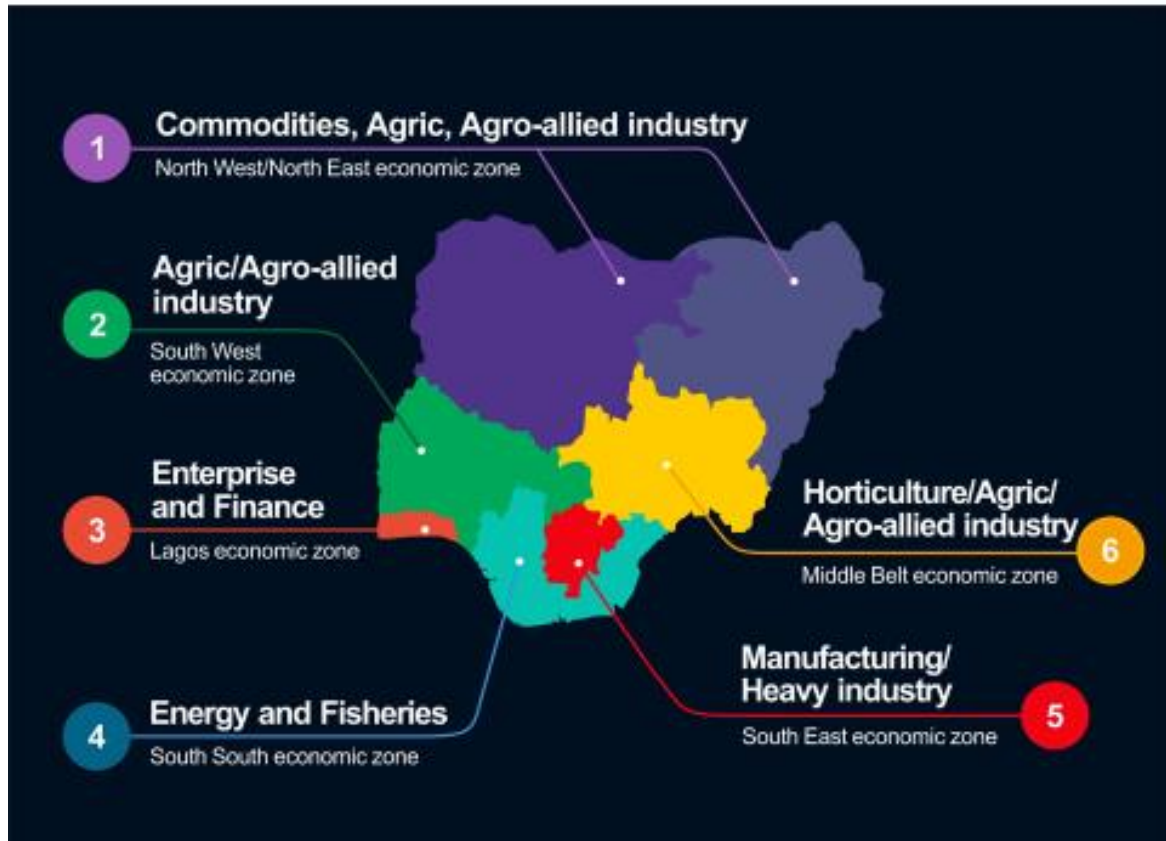
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The matrix of the East economic zone is diagrammatically represented in this chart:



If we apply this logic to our geography we can create seven economic zones for Nigeria – North West, North East, Middle Belt, East, West, South South, and Lagos.



Lagos will be the finance and enterprise hub. What London is to Europe, Lagos will be to Africa. It will rely on wind energy and hydro power from the Atlantic.

LAGOS NIGERIA MONEY NEVER SLEEPS

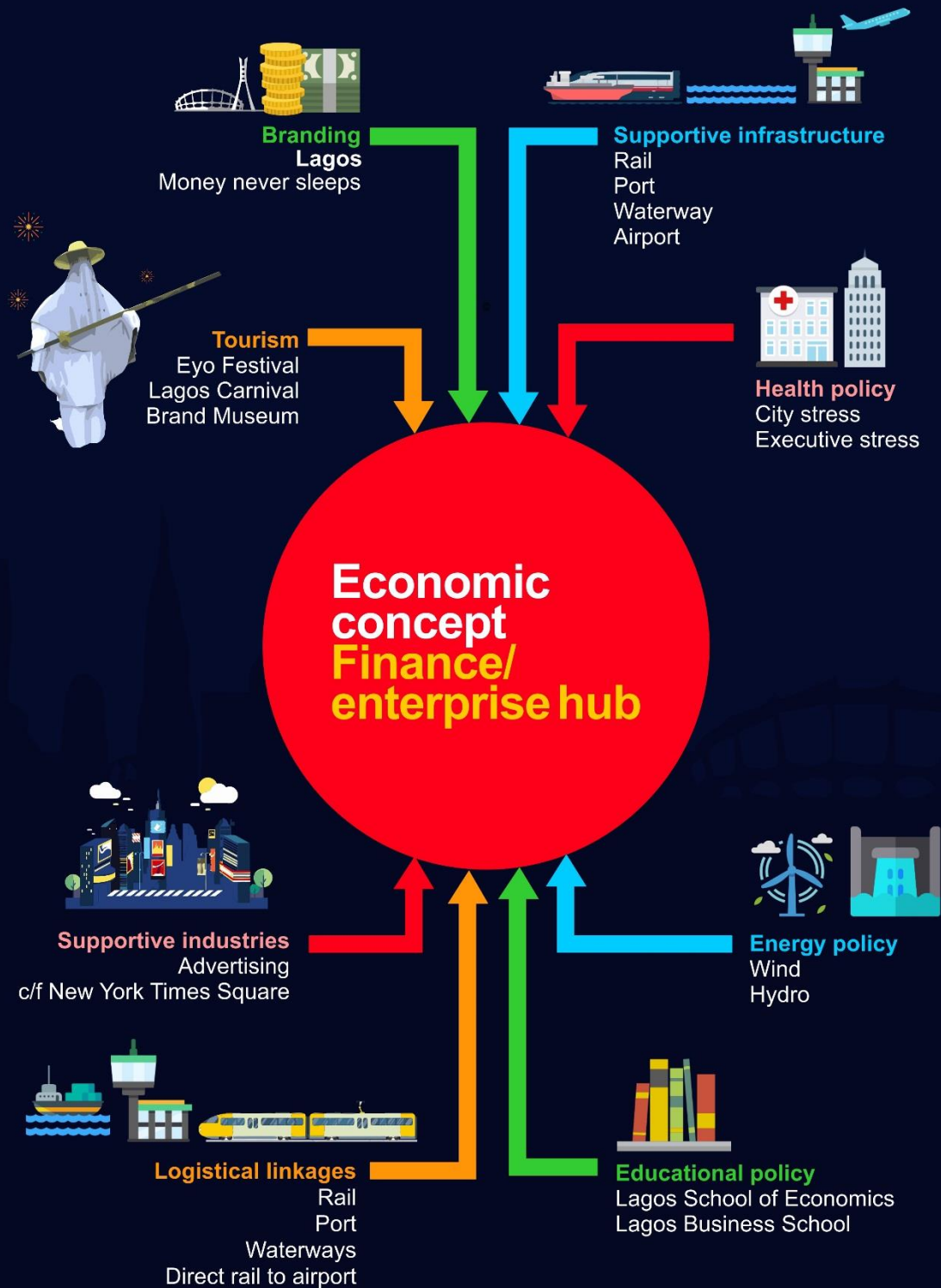
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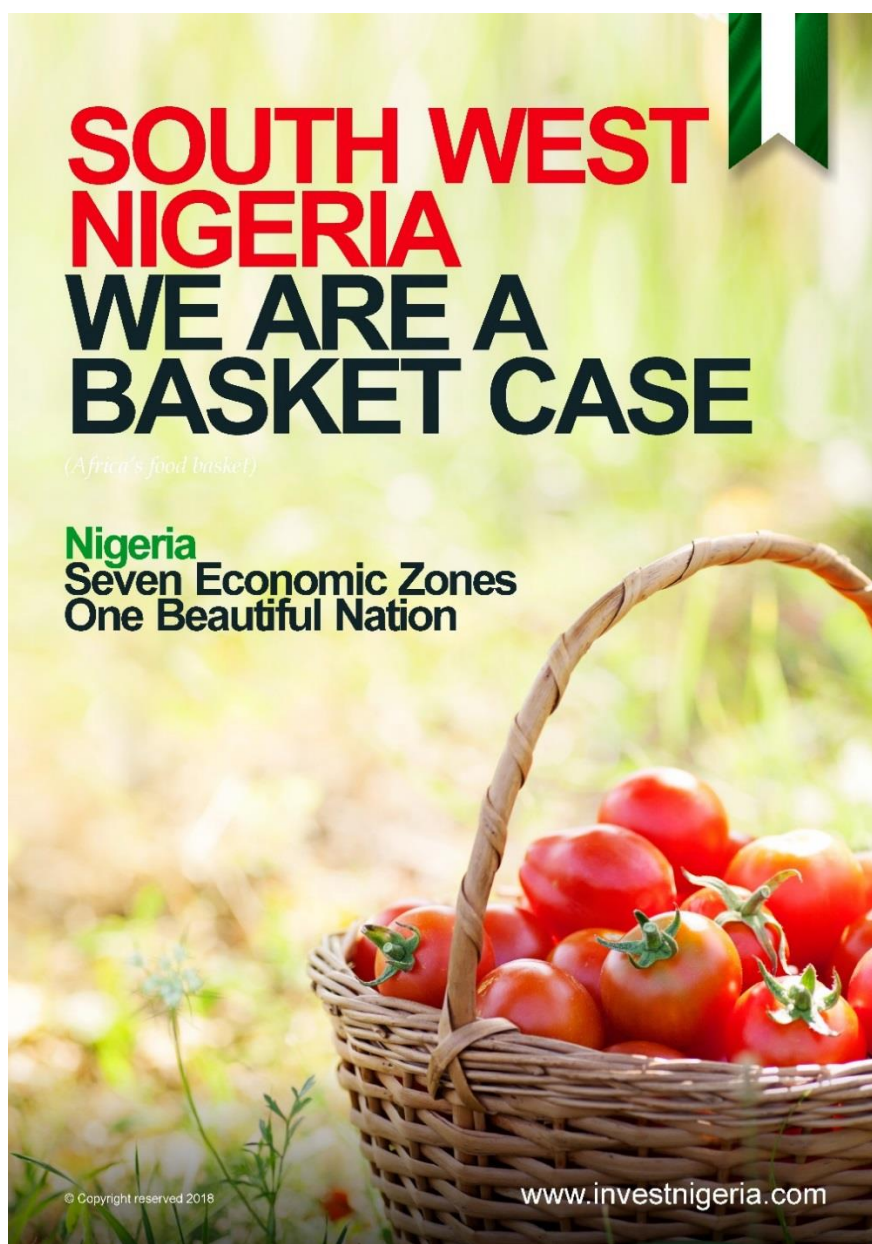
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lagos economic zone

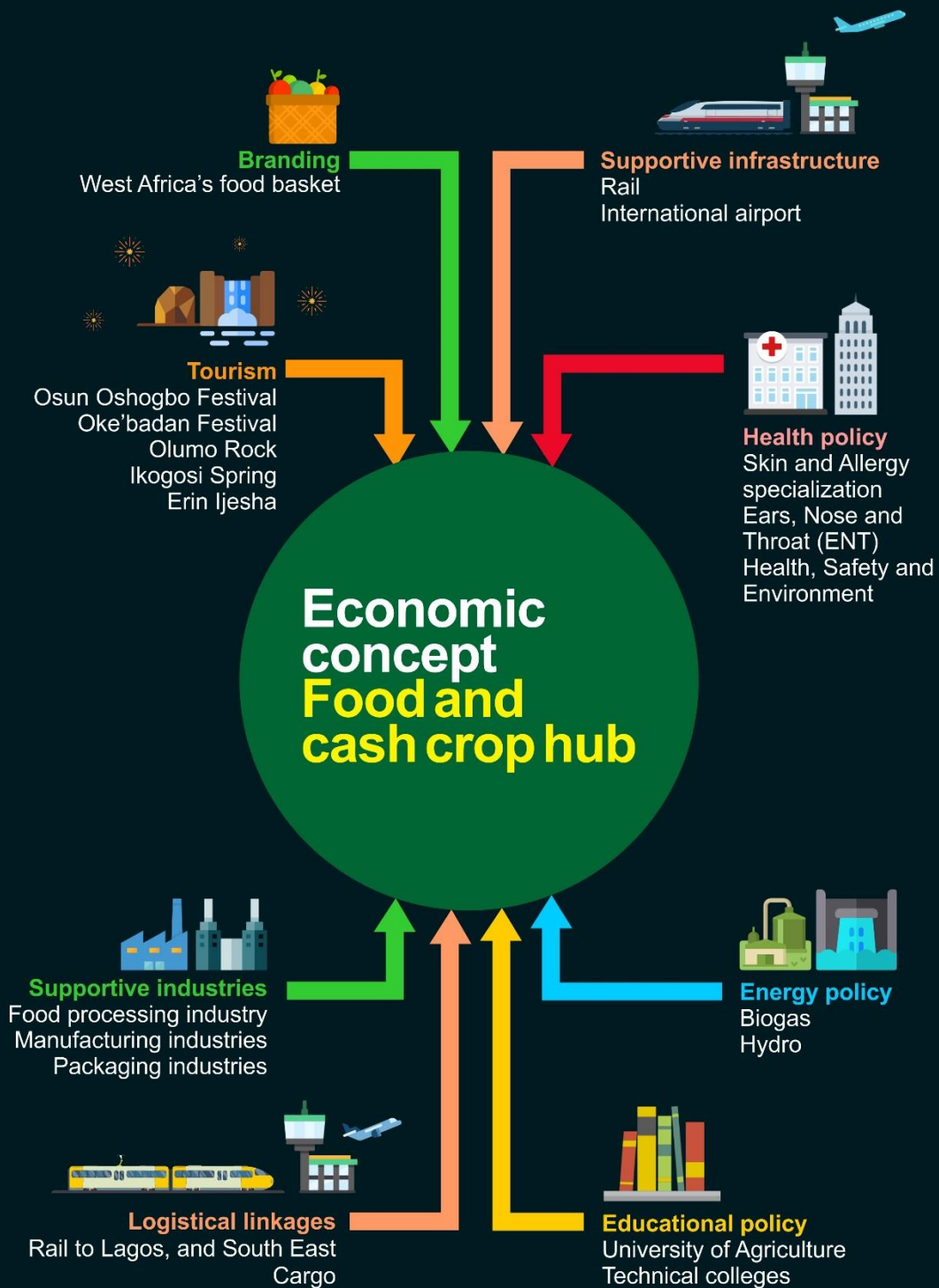


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The South West economic zone will focus on commodities, food processing and agro allied industries. That region has the climatic condition of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. Those countries export cassava, cocoa, palm produce, timber, rice, corn, cotton, rubber, beans, bananas, sweet potatoes, sugar, shea nuts, peanuts, palm oil and fish. Together they earned \$23.24b from agriculture in 2017. Just ten years ago, they earned just \$8.30b (2007). The South West economic zone has the potential to replicate this success.

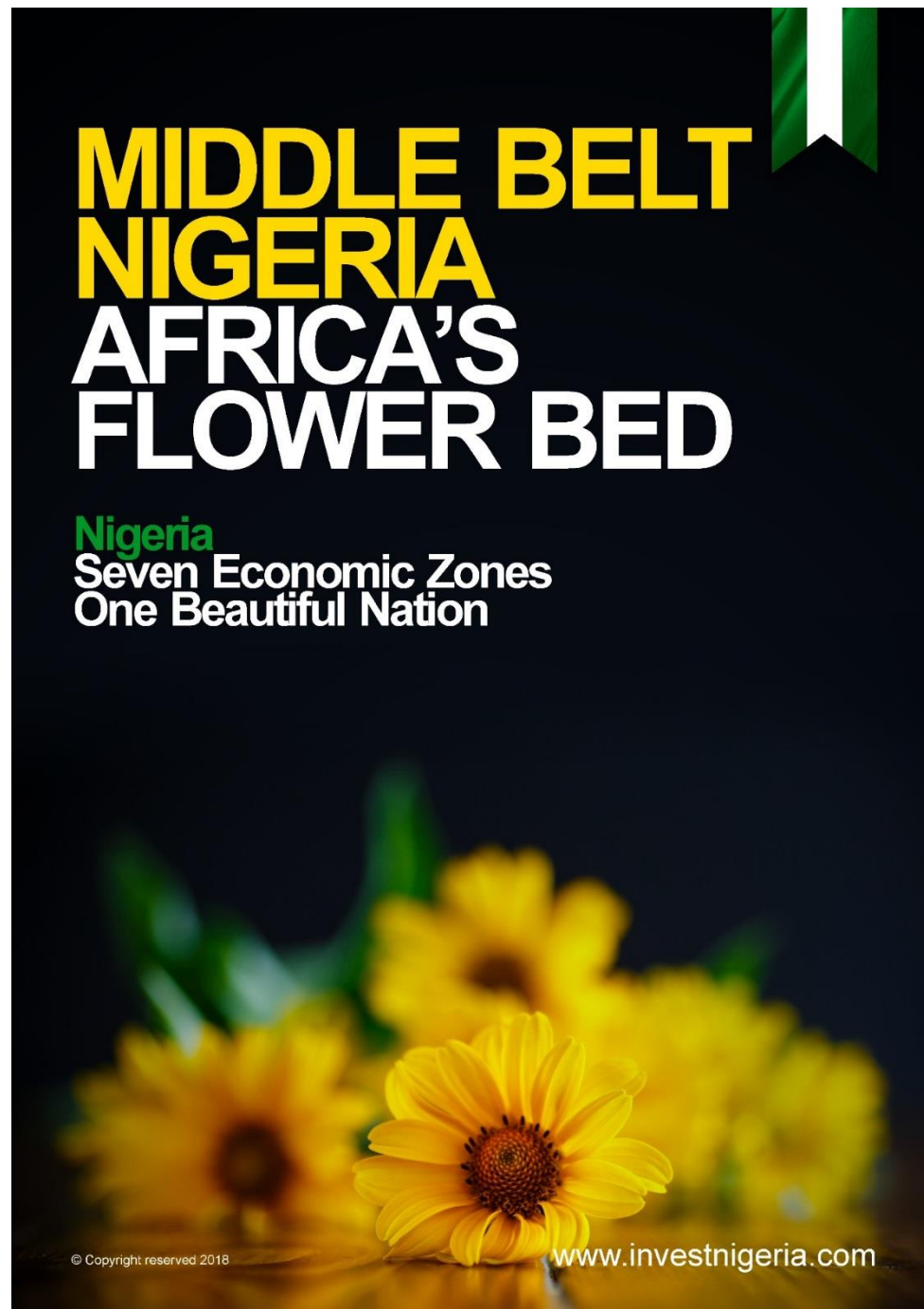


south west economic zone

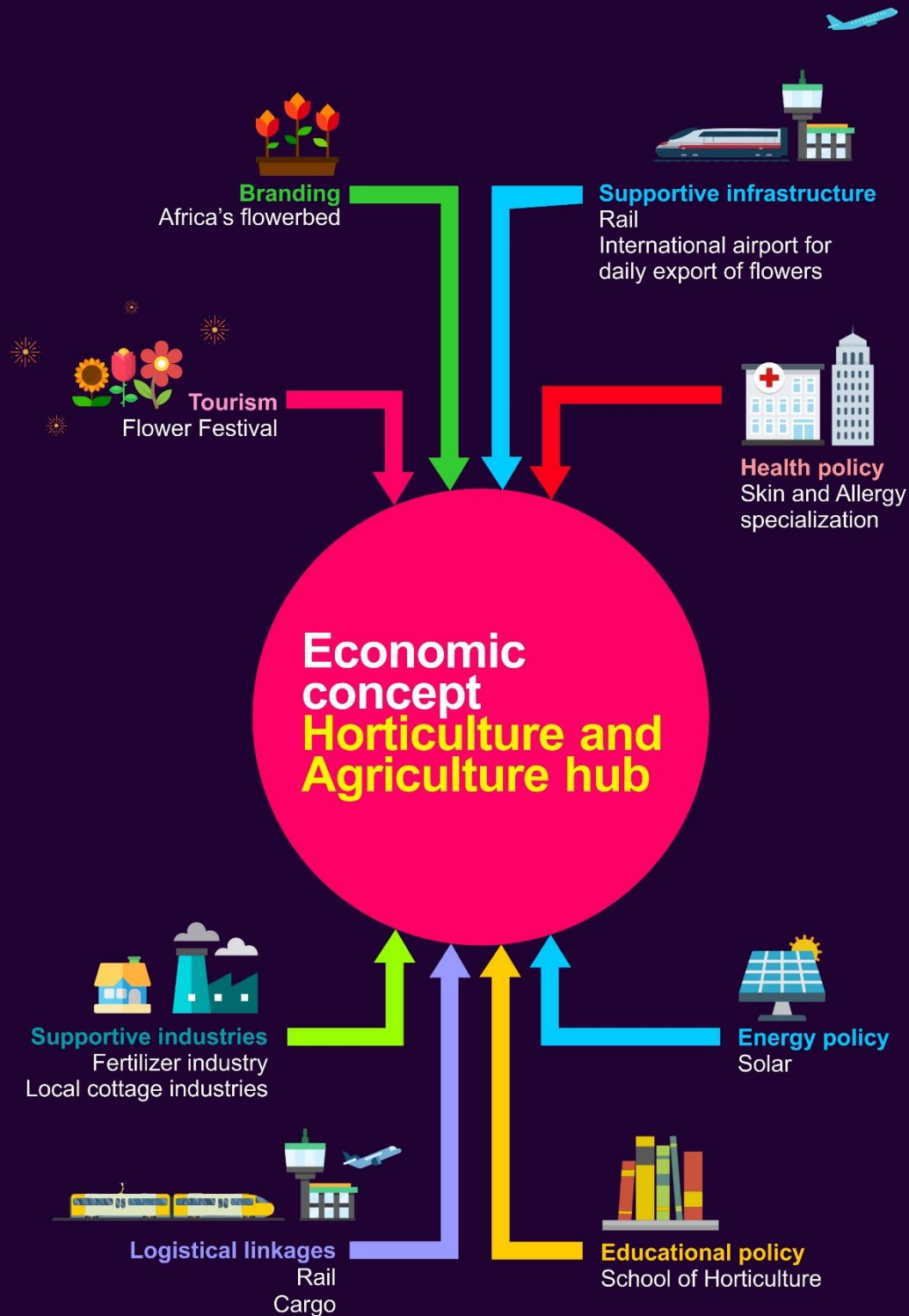


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Brand wise, the Middle Belt economic zone will become a horticultural haven exporting flowers like the Netherlands. There are miles and miles of sunflowers in Jos. Flowers love the Middle Belt. But the zone will also focus on agriculture in general. Like the West, it should be an agro allied industry zone.

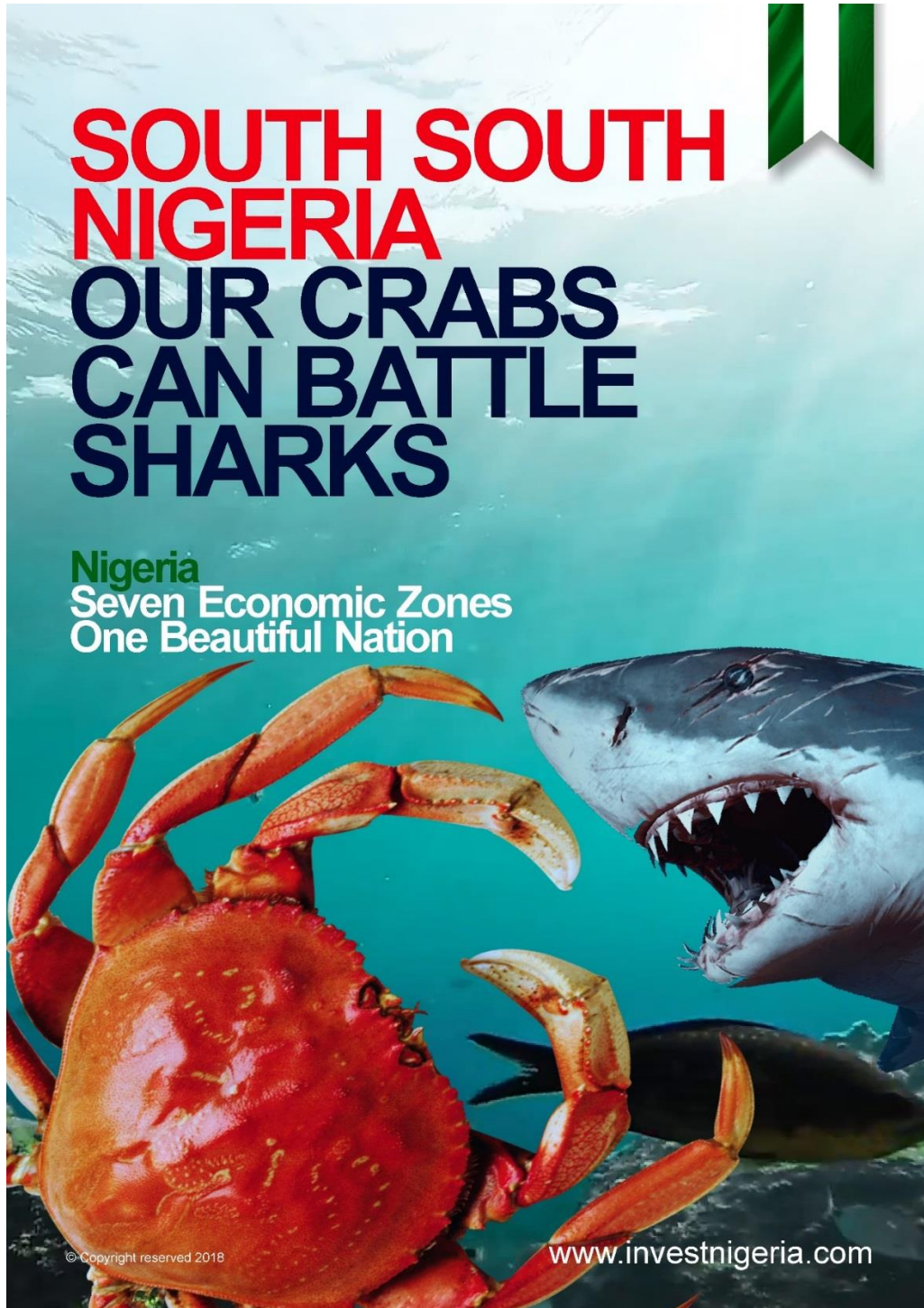


middle belt economic zone



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The South South's strength is energy and fisheries. The energy system ought to be natural gas, hydro, and for now fossil fuel.

An underwater-themed investment poster for South South Nigeria. The background is a deep blue-green ocean. In the foreground, a large, vibrant red crab is positioned on the left, facing right. On the right, a shark's head is shown in profile, facing left with its mouth wide open, revealing sharp teeth. The text 'SOUTH SOUTH NIGERIA' is written in large, bold, red capital letters at the top left. Below it, 'OUR CRABS CAN BATTLE SHARKS' is written in large, bold, dark blue capital letters. To the right of the text, there is a small graphic of the Nigerian flag (green and white vertical stripes) with a white chevron at the bottom. Below the main title, the text 'Nigeria' is in green, and 'Seven Economic Zones One Beautiful Nation' is in white. At the bottom left, there is a small copyright notice: '© Copyright reserved 2018'. At the bottom right, the website 'www.investnigeria.com' is written in white.

**SOUTH SOUTH
NIGERIA**

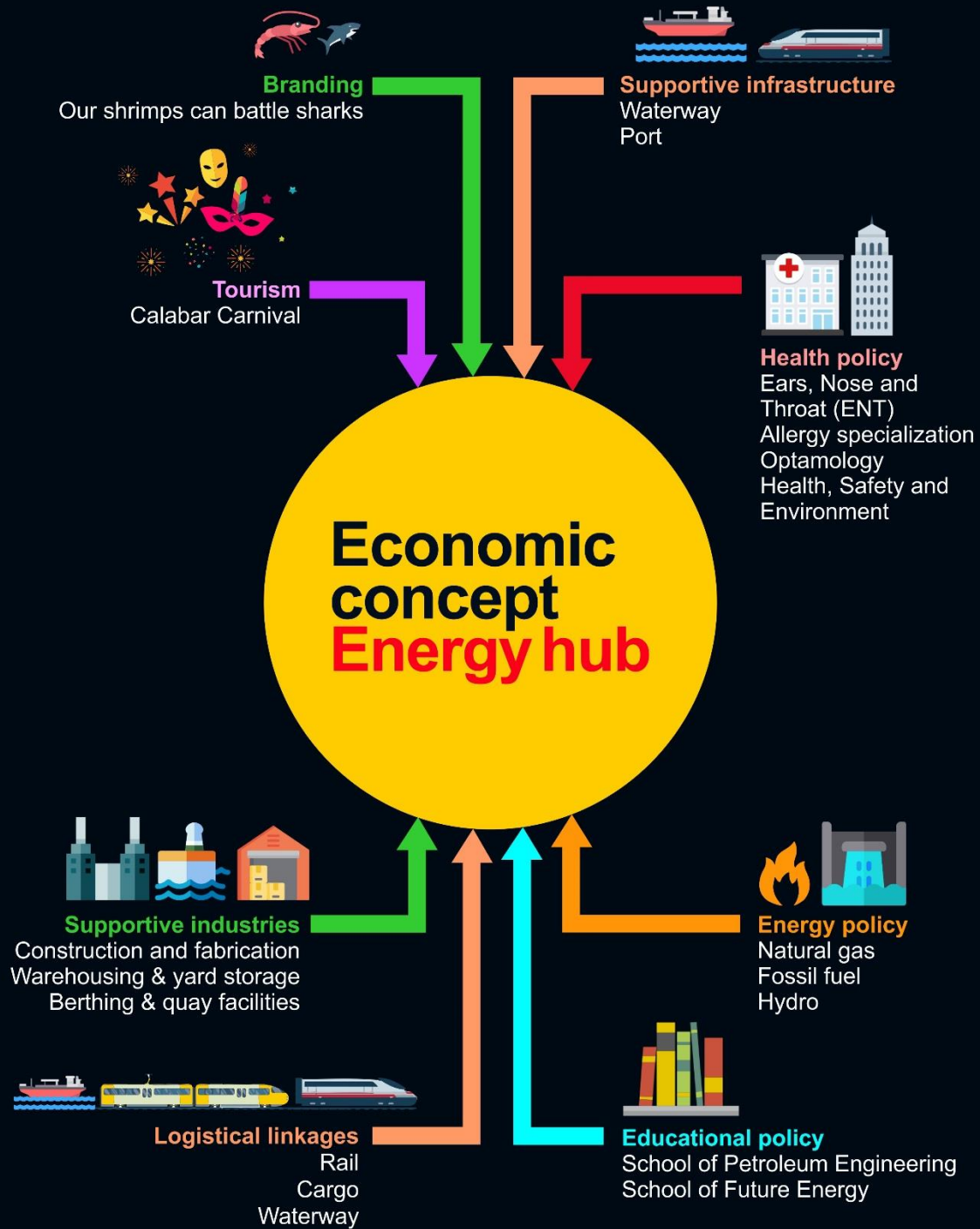
**OUR CRABS
CAN BATTLE
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south south economic zone



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The two economic zones in the North will focus on tannery and commodities for export. The North will host a trade show every year for manufacturers of fashion accessories. Buyers from Louis Vuitton, Hugo Boss, Calvin Klein, Versace, Burberry, etc., will be invited. They already buy our leather. Our leather is high grade leather. Our cows are tough!

NORTHERN NIGERIA OUR COWS ARE TOUGH!

(They produce fantastic leather)

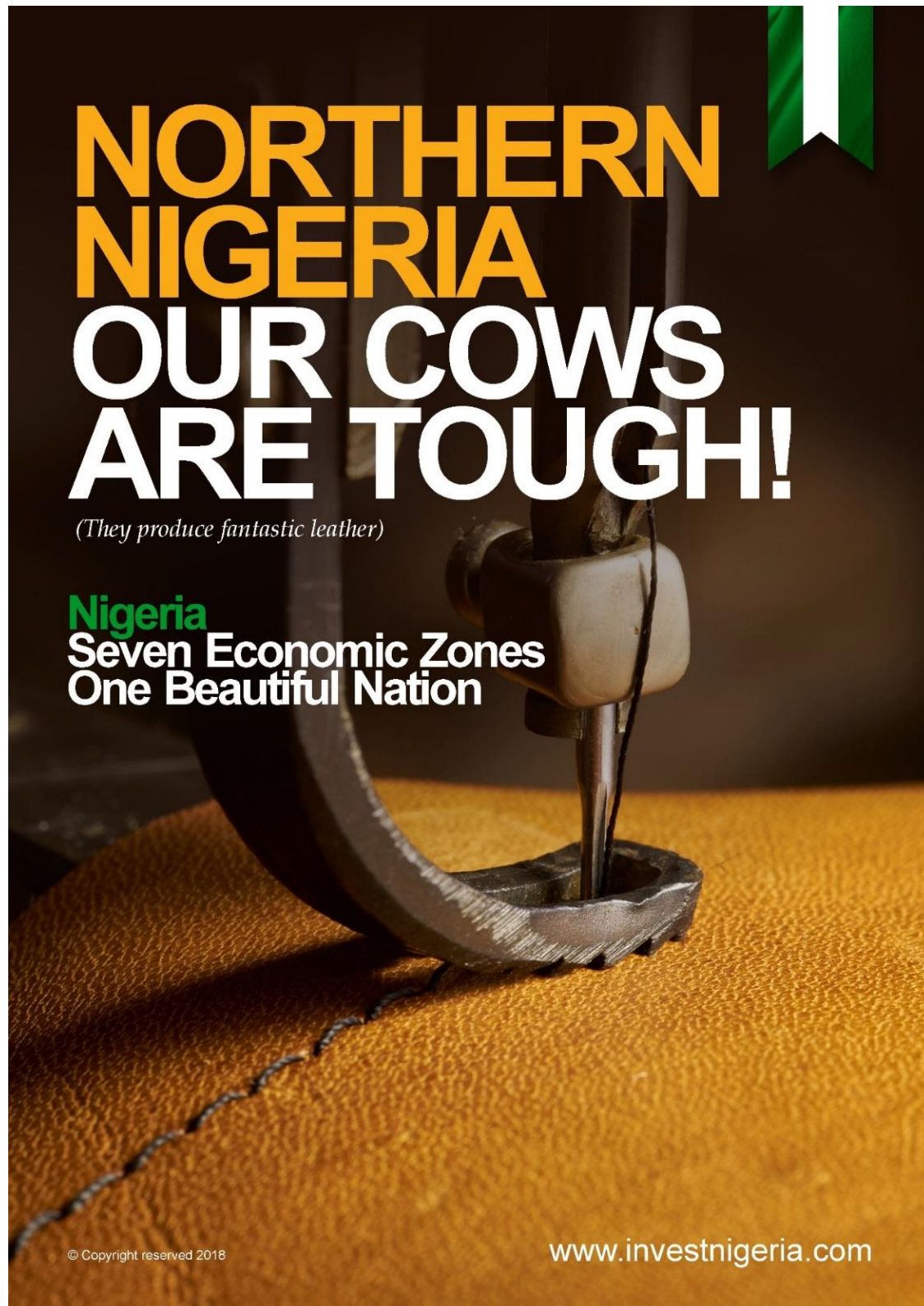
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The energy system will be solar. It ought to be solar.



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**OUR COWS
ARE TOUGH!**

(They produce fantastic leather)

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north economic zone

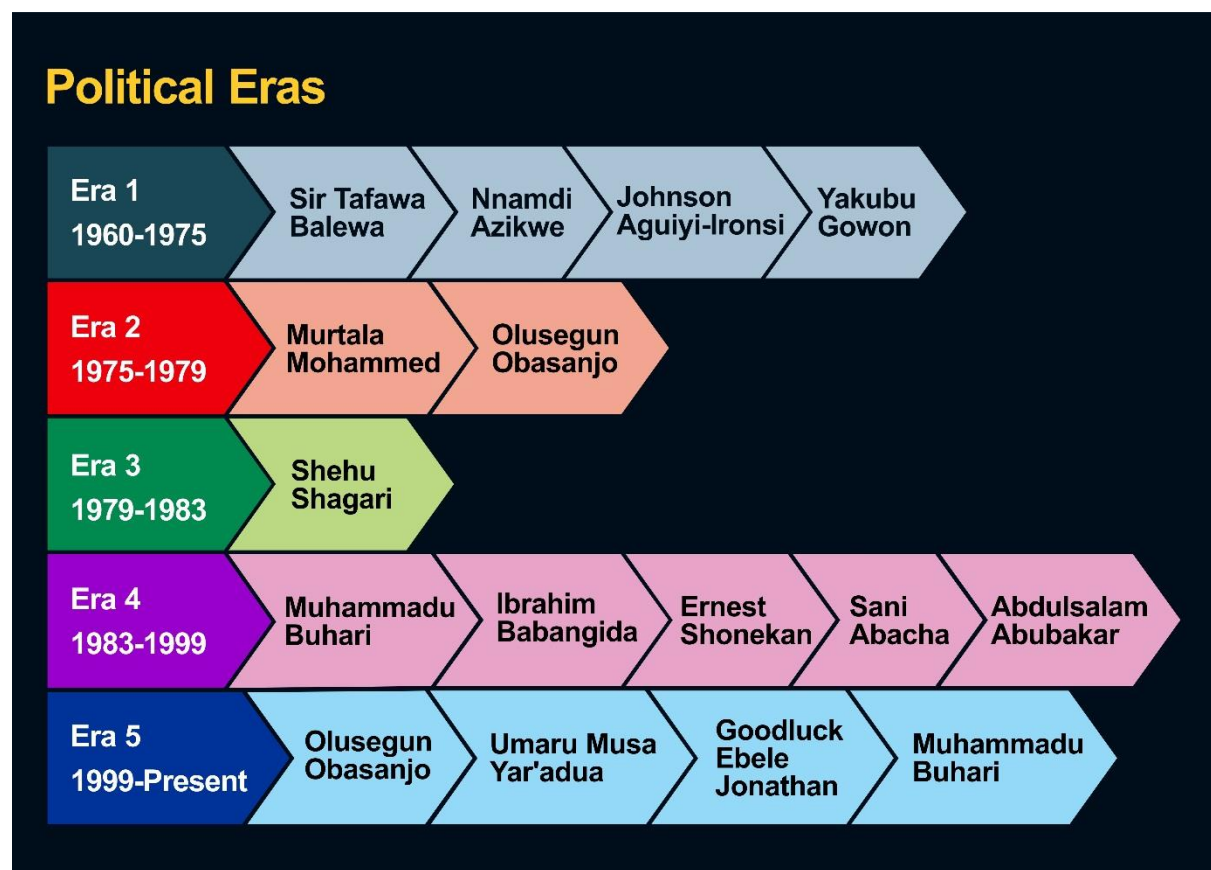


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We must develop the endowment of each region for the benefit of the region. In this way we have regional specialisations and seven economies. It is a function of vision.

And talking about vision, the truth is, for the most we haven't had vision as a nation. A lot of what we defined as vision were not really vision but mere programmes. And most of these programmes are responsorial initiatives to the challenge of nationhood.

There have been 16 heads of state in Nigeria. Those 16 heads of state can be banded into five political eras.



The 1st modern political era consists of Sir Tafawa Balewa, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi and Yakubu Gowon. The focus in this period was commencement and survival of the federation. There was an internecine conflict called the Nigeria Civil War during this era. It consumed 150,000 soldiers and 2million civilian lives. Gowon did focus on infrastructure development. He built Eko Bridge for example.

Then came the 2nd modern political era – the era of Murtala Mohammed and the first incarnation of Olusegun Obasanjo. The purport of that regime was to terminate the unending Gowon regime, lead us to democracy and rid the nation of mushrooming corruption and the scourge of bribery. There were mass sackings as a result. The civil service was gutted.

After the assassination of General Murtala Mohammed, Olusegun Obasanjo took over as military head of state. His main focus was industrialisation. With Soviet assistance he developed Ajaokuta Steel Complex. He would introduce an austerity program called Operation Low Profile. That was supposed to stem depletion of our foreign reserves. We were encouraged to buy made in Nigeria goods. The only cars permissible were Peugeot and Volkswagen vehicles. That created a duopoly. We set up factories for the assembling of completely knocked down parts (CKD) at Amuwo Odofin. This was considered a first step towards car manufacturing. Needless to say the window winders of Peugeot 504 salon cars kept breaking, door panels kept falling off necessitating constant replacement. And when Peugeot added a spoiler to a 504 salon car it acquired an alphabetical addendum and cost a few more Naira.

Obasanjo also introduced Operation Feed the Nation (OFN). Only an army brass will call an agricultural policy “operation.”

The agricultural sector could not satisfy the food needs of the country hence the “operation.”

After that came the 3rd modern political era - our first democratic experiment after the civil war – the Shehu Shagari Era. The signature program of that era was “Green Revolution” – essentially a continuation of Obasanjo’s Operation Feed the Nation. We were all encouraged to embrace agriculture.

Shagari developed the low cost housing scheme, launched road networks, and completed the Kaduna refinery and Delta Steel Complex. He also created the Aluminium Smelter Company at Ikot Abasi. In essence the Shagari period was a continuation of the Obasanjo vision.

The 4th political era was the era of the first incarnation of Muhammadu Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida, Earnest Shonekan, Sanni Abacha, Abdulsalami Abubakar. The critical achievement of that era was deregulation of the economy by Babangida. The liberalisation opened up economic opportunities for young people like Fola Adeola and Tayo Aderinokun. With about 35 other young people, all in their 30s they set up Guaranty Trust Bank. Babangida created eleven states in total.

That era also saw the emergence of Mike Adenuga as an oil sector player. The other heads of state in that era save Buhari, were wholly devoted to sorting out the fallout from the annulment of June 12 election by Babangida. (Mohammadu Buhari was overthrown by Babangida.)

Then came the 5th modern political era - the era of the 4th Republic. That’s the era we’re now in. It is made up of the

second incarnation of Olusegun Obasanjo, Umaru Musa Yaradua, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan and Mohammadu Buhari. The focus on industrialisation returned under Obasanjo; but how do you industrialise a country without power! In this era the amount saved in foreign reserve became known as achievement. And now we have the politics of foreign reserve.

The definition of Nigeria is simple. It is a multicultural potpourri of peoples, tribes and aspirations. If we follow the logic of our federation our vision statement becomes clear: “A diversified economy serving the whole of Africa, the Middle East and beyond.” An economic vision is what we need now. And only your generation can make it happen. My generation is running out of runway.

There are two reasons you need to get involved in sorting out Nigeria. For one, 90% of your prayer points are based on policy failures. If you sort out the policy you eliminate most of your prayer points. If there's constant electricity for example you won't need to pray for money to buy generator.

The second reason you must sort Nigeria out is because your religious rights are tied to it. It's the state that determines exercise of religious rights.

Nigeria needs the impatience of your generation. Nigeria needs the creative capacities of your generation. Nigeria needs the passion of your generation. I hope I've been able to challenge you through this lecture to see possibilities in the horizon.

I want to thank you for listening. May God bless your generation, and may God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.