

## **Finnish Strategies for Co-operation with West Africa- Nigeria case:**

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- Diplomatic representation through Finnish Embassy in Nigeria
- Honorary Consuls in Cameroon, Ghana, Liberia; network could be expanded
- previously roving ambassador for West Africa based in Helsinki, not any more

**Trade** remained at a modest level in 2005: Sub-Saharan Africa 0,5 % of Finnish imports, 1,4% of exports (Nigeria 0,1% of Finnish Exports, third in Sub-Saharan Africa, after RSA and Mauritius )

**Nigeria** a partner in West Africa, good relations, visit by President Obasanjo in 2004, Nigerian War College in May this year

- Finland recognised Nigeria in 1960 and diplomatic relations were established in 1963
- The Embassy moved from Lagos to Abuja in 2003
- Elections in April 2007; must be peaceful and orderly, confirming the permanent shift to democracy, the EU will support to the amount of 40 million euro
- Macro economical development positive (GDP growth 6%)
- Economic reforms should continue, also governance
- Economic and financial crimes commission (EFCC) a good example, EU support 40 mill. euro
- EDF support 2001-2007 approx. 270 mill EDF 10 will cover the timeframe 2008-2013 Nigeria 650 mil. Euros, West Africa Region 478 mil. euro
- EPA (economic partnership agreement) negotiations on how to further expand and promote trade and development to be concluded by 2008
- Particular emphasis on promoting democracy, institutional capacity, poverty reduction, economic development - particularly good governance and fight against corruption, regional development and strengthening crisis management capacities

### **WHAT CAN WE DO?**

- No bilateral co-operation at government level, the Finnish Embassy in Abuja will start cooperation with local organisations in certain sectors, also support for Finnish NGOs through the MFA
- Some Finnish NGOs have been active, for example Red Cross developing emergency response skills, Methodist church developing agricultural skills, health care infrastructure, maternity health care, HIV/aids information, community radio projects
- Investment protection agreement has been signed and ratified on Finnish side, ratification to be completed in Nigeria by parliament
- Trade at modest level 2005; exports 49,5 mill. euros (paper, electronics, fertilizers) imports only 133 900 euros (cork and furniture)

- Nokia has opened a regional office in Lagos, we will hear more about that some Finnish companies present through local representatives and affiliations
- Limited role of the Finnish Government, business stands on its own feet, although ready to assist companies whenever possible
- The Finn-partnership programme
- The North South Student Exchange programme (CIMO)
- The North-South Local Government Co-operation Programme supporting international inter-municipal communication - for instance with Ghana (the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities)