

## SHORT BIO OF MFON EKONG USORO (MRS)



Mfon Ekong Usoro holds an LL.M in Maritime Laws from University College London, an LLB (Hons) from the University of Buckingham, B.L (Hons) from the Nigerian Law School and a BSc (Hons) Sociology from the University of Calabar. She is the Managing Partner of Paul Usoro & Co., a leading law firm in Nigeria. Usoro has extensive and current experience in trade in legal services, participation in negotiations at diplomatic meetings and achieving consensus for adoption of negotiated instruments amongst member States at the regional and continental levels.

### **1. Trade in Services Experience**

Usoro is a trade law expert and for more than a decade has been actively involved in consultations on liberalization of legal services including attending meetings at the WTO as a member of the International Bar Association WTO Working Group (membership from the 90s) now renamed Bar Issues Commission, International Trade in Legal Services. In 2012 contributed to *“Adopting Regulatory Objectives for the Legal Profession”* published by Professor Laurel S. Terry, The Dickinson School of Law, Pennsylvania State University, Pennsylvania, in the *Fordham Law Review* [Vol. 80].

Mfon was in 2020 appointed as a trustee for the Nigerian Coalition of Services Industry (NCSI) set up by the Nigerian Office for Trade Negotiations. She was privileged to lead the brainstorming sessions at the services industry consultation on the Nigerian Draft Schedule of Specific Commitments organized by the Nigerian Office for Trade Negotiations in February 2020.

Invited by the Nigerian Office for Trade Negotiations, Usoro has participated as part of the Nigerian delegation in the ongoing AfCFTA negotiations on Trade in Services undertaken by the AfCFTA Committee for Trade in Services.

Usoro is a member of the National Action Committee on AfCFTA Domestic Engagement Committee. She serves on two Workstreams of the National Action Committee on AfCFTA namely: Policy, Regulations and Laws Workstream (Co-Chair), and Business Services Workstream.

She is the pioneer Chair of Nigerian Bar Association African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement Committee and served in that capacity up till June 2023. She continues to serve as a member of the newly reconstituted Nigerian Bar Association Working Group on AfCFTA. She served as the Alternate Chairperson, NBA Liberalization of Legal Services Working Group (2012-2014) and past Chairperson, NBA Section on Business Law.

Mfon Usoro is the pioneer Director-General and Chief Executive Officer of Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, (NIMASA). She is the chairperson of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Finalization of the National Transport Policy for Nigeria.

## 2. Law Reform Efforts

Mrs. Usoro has robust experience in legislative drafting and advocacy and led the Paul Usoro & Co [PUC] team in the drafting and legislative advocacy of the following Legislation, Regulations and Bills:

- Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency Act 2007.
- Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria Act 2007.
- Coastal and Inland Shipping (Cabotage) Act 2003.
- Coastal and Inland Shipping Cabotage (Bareboat Registration) Regulations 2005.
- Coastal and Inland Shipping Cabotage (Ship Detention Order) Regulations 2005.
- Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria (Annual Subscription and Other Fees) Regulations, 2010.
- Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria Act (Professional Misconduct and Discipline Regulations) 2010.
- Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria Act 2007 (Registration of Freight Forwarders) Regulations 2010.
- Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria Act (Organs and Offices of the Council Regulations) 2010.
- Draft Carriage of Goods by Land (Road and Rail) Bill 2022.
- Ports Bill 2010 (House of Reps consultancy).
- National Transport Commission Bill 2005 and the 2008 revised Draft (World Bank/BPE consultancy).
- Port and Harbour Authority Bill 2005 and the 2008 revised Draft, (World Bank/BPE consultancy).
- Draft Environment Management Bill 2000

## 3. Corporate Boards

Usoro currently serves a Non-Executive Director (Independent), on the Board of The Infrastructure Bank Plc; a Non-Executive Director (Independent), on the Board of First City Monument Bank Ltd; a Non-Executive Director, on the Board of Geometric Power Limited.

## 4. National and State Honours

Mfon Usoro was conferred with the *Officier de L'Ord de Mono*, a national honour of the Republic of Togo in 2002; and *Chevalier de l'Ordre du Merite Maritime*, a National honour of the Republic of Cote D' Ivoire in 2015. Productivity Order of Merit Award, Akwa Ibom State 2022



Mfon Ekong Usoro