

No 1 TGI Close
Ilupeju-Industrial Estate
Apapa-Oworonshoki Expressway
Lagos, Nigeria

t +234 (0)1 700 3000
info@clicktgi.net
www.clicktgi.net

SPECIAL RELEASE

Lagos, December 24, 2023.

Union Bank Acquisition

Our attention has been drawn to media reports emanating from purported documents allegedly submitted to the President by the Special Investigator probing the activities of the Central Bank of Nigeria, where he linked our ownership of Titan Trust and Union Banks to former CBN Governor, Godwin Emefiele. We want to categorically state that some of the assumptions made in the purported document were incorrect, thereby resulting in a conclusion that may not necessarily reflect the actual reality. The true facts of the case are as follows:

Tropical General Investment Group (TGI) is the majority owner of Titan Trust and Union Banks. We have been doing business in Nigeria for close to 45 years and have evolved into one of the largest companies in West Africa.

Today, TGI employs over 20,000 people spread through the length and breadth of Nigeria. We have over ₦3.75trillion in assets and as of 2022, our annual revenues stood at over ₦1.74 trillion. Our companies and entities are exemplary corporate citizens of Nigeria and pay over N50 billion annually in taxes to the government. The acquisition of Union Bank by Titan Trust Bank followed all the laid down rules and regulations. The approximately USD500 million capital used to pay for the transaction was transparent and unimpeachable. The entire transaction was managed by highly reputed global financial institutions including Rothschild and Citibank. And like most major acquisitions, the process took years to complete.

A USD 300 million loan was sourced from African Export-Import Bank (Afrexim) and the rest of the capital was sourced from the proceeds of TGI's sales of its Chi Ltd business to Coca-Cola, all to finance the acquisition of Union Bank.

The purported investigation report recommended that the federal government should take over the banks. Such declarations based on incorrect assumptions portray Nigeria negatively, especially when the President is tirelessly seeking and courting foreign investments into the country.

TGI operates in 13 countries, including Nigeria, India, Morocco, Germany and the United Arab Emirates in agribusiness, industrial chemicals, real estate development and financial services. The opening of our USD75 million dairy factory in Dubai in November 2023, is a further testimony to our international status and a proof of our presence in the country, contrary to the alleged claim by the purported report.

TGI's commitment to Nigeria's economic development and President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope agenda is evident in our activities across the country. We are a partner with Lagos state government on the 32 metric-tonne Imota Rice Mill in Ikorodu, and was also the sole supplier of paddy rice to the Lagos-Kebbi Lake Rice project. TGI also partners with Edo State Government to run their fertilizer blending plant, where we are the only producers of the chemical blend of NPK fertiliser that millions of Nigerian farmers use every season.

Additionally, we have state of the art rice Mills and Sesame factories in Kebbi and Jigawa states; foods and agrochemical production lines in Ogun and Lagos, and recently, signed a N50 billion financing agreement to support agricultural initiatives in Niger state which is projected to provide tens of thousands of jobs to the locals and improve food security in the country.

Only last month, TGI was part of Mr. President's private sector delegation during his visit to Germany (November 2023) and where Union Bank signed a USD500 million contract for the development of renewable energy projects with German DWS entities. This clearly illustrates our credentials as a leading private sector partner to the Nigerian government.

The investigator's claim that Union Bank did not respond to his request for information was misleading as all the information requested was submitted on the 1st September, 2023. It's a well-known fact that Mr Vink, who has been in Nigeria since 1978, is an elderly person and has recently been medically advised to limit his movements. This was duly communicated to the investigator with supporting documents.

TGI's capital, ownership and selling of Chi to a multinational such as Coca cola is proof that Mr Vink is not a proxy. The Group's ability to engage and work with reputable international financial advisors and bankers attests to the Group's global credibility. Union Bank was not owned by government and no government money (CBN or AMCON) was used to buy it. The process was diligently followed as captured in the report of the investigator.

As responsible corporate citizens, we are always willing, ready, and able to support stakeholders including regulators to learn and understand our Group and its operations.

Thank you.

Signed:

Ms. Rafiat Gawat
Head of Corporate Communications,
Tropical General Investments (TGI) Group
Lagos