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Arrivals

CLIENT ALERT

**THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT SCRAPS
VISA-ON-ARRIVAL POLICY:
INTRODUCES LANDING
AND EXIT CARDS**



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INTRODUCTION

The Federal Government, through the Ministry of Interior, has announced plans to cancel its Visa-on-Arrival (VoA) policy and introduce a Landing and Exit Card System (LECS). The decision, which was announced by the Honorable Minister of Interior Dr Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo on Friday 21st February 2025, comes amid concerns that the existing system is defective and exploited by individuals seeking to circumvent security measures.

The VoA allowed foreign travelers to obtain a visa upon landing at designated airports in the country, eliminating the need for pre-travel visa applications. However, the new regime will introduce a system of landing and exit cards that prospective visitors will be required to fill before their arrival.

BASIS FOR LANDING AND EXIT CARDS

The LECS, which will be implemented between 1st March and 1st April, 2025, is driven by security concerns and the need for more effective migration management. The government has identified that the VoA policy was being exploited by individuals attempting to circumvent security protocols, with several reports of some persons of interest accessing Nigeria through less-secure border points from neighboring countries.

This system, integrated with security databases, aims to improve threat identification, monitor migration patterns, and bolster national security. The new system will enable real-time checks against international criminal databases, curbing illegal or undetected immigration. It will also provide accurate data on immigration flows, addressing current challenges in tracking foreign nationals.

IMPACT ON BUSINESSES

This decision has significant implications as potential short-term disruptions like travel delays and increased scrutiny of international personnel readily come to mind. However, the long-term benefits of enhanced security and a more efficient system could outweigh these initial hurdles. Businesses will need to adapt to the new requirements and communicate them effectively to their partners. The modernization of Nigeria's immigration infrastructure may also create opportunities for technology providers. Customarily, the success of this transition will depend on effective implementation and clear communication from the government.