



## ONWARD, HIGHER AND SAFELY TOGETHER – 2020 NEW YEAR MESSAGE

By

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Distinguished Executive Board and Members, it is indeed a great pleasure and honour to wish you all the best for this Yuletide and holiday season. Our association had a bumper year in 2019 with activities and member participation. In the year 2019 we had three Project Based Mentoring (PBM) programs, two Foundation Biorisk Management Workshops led by NiBSA and two Trainer Development Program (TDP) workshops. Another TDP cohort program would have been held but for a last minute necessity to defer it to the new year (perhaps January). Apart from the foregoing we had the NiBSA Second Conference on Biological Safety with a robust Pre-conference Package which included Shipping of Biological Materials and Professional Certification by the International Federation for Biosafety Associations (IFBA) that had huge impact and extended the frontiers of capacity development for our members and various facilities. With the involvement of all the participants drawn mainly from NiBSA membership and those who used the programs as gateway to become members of our association, there's no doubt we are progressing vertically and horizontally. The tremendous success recorded for the second NiBSA conference would rub in this point very well.

Additionally, the overall gain of this success is more impacting on our various facilities and institutions where Valuable Biological Materials (VBMs) including pathogens and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and other products of modern biotechnology are handled. Applying lessons and skills acquired from these trainings and conference, we will handle these agents and VBMs more **safely, securely and responsibly** henceforth. Going forward, we are launching into the year 2020 with programs already outlined. Apart from the TDP cohort earlier mentioned, we would be having another PBM event in February and a Foundation BRM in March and so on following terms and conditions laid down by our sponsors and partners.

As you know, NiBSA was formed in November 2010. November 2020 therefore marks the 10<sup>th</sup> year since NiBSA started and accordingly, it would be appropriate to hold the next conference in that month and include activities for the anniversary. The foregoing opens the vistas for all hands to be on the deck for yet another successful year. Let me remind all our members that annual membership subscription terminates today. It therefore becomes incumbent on every one of us to pay our annual membership renewal fee of N5000 as from tomorrow, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020.

I thank all our members who have been steadfast and worked arduously for good grounding of this association and all the successes recorded thus far. Our incumbent Executive Board and the 2019 Conference Organizing Committee have been extremely wonderful in their commitment and in providing cutting edge ideas that have led to progress and success of NiBSA. We will re-enact these virtues and count our gains by this time next year. Let us continue to progress onward, higher and safely in the discharge of our responsibilities in 2020 and beyond.

Happy New Year 2020.