

## **Nigeria's Tempestuous Voyage to DB2023 via the Multimodal Route: Adjusting the Sails to Contemporary Trade Winds and Policies**

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**Abstract :** This paper interrogates the chances of Nigeria achieving its target of making the list of the first 70 countries in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) rankings by the year 2023. That is, in light of existing conflicts in policies relating to the door-to-door carriage of goods and multimodal transport operations (MTOs) in the country. Drawing on the famed Legal Origins theory plus data from World Bank; and using Singapore as a touchstone, the paper unveils how amongst the top-ranked Commonwealth jurisdictions, positive correlations have been recorded over the past years between certainty in their policies on MTOs on the one hand; and their Enforcing Contracts (EC) and Doing Business (DB) indices on the other. The paper postulates that to increase Nigeria's chances of achieving her DB2023 objective, legislative and curial policies on MTOs and door-to-door carriage of goods have to be realigned in line with prevailing policies in highly-ranked Commonwealth jurisdictions of the Global North. Her appellate courts, in particular, will need some unshackling from English pedigrees which still delimit admiralty jurisdiction to port-to-port shipping, to the exclusion of door-to-door carriage of goods beyond navigable waters. The paper identifies continental and domestic instruments, plus judicial precedents, which provide bases for expanding admiralty jurisdiction to adjudication of claims derived from door-to-door or multimodal transport contracts and other allied maritime-plus contracts. It prescribes synergy between legislative and curial policies on MTOs and door-to-door carriage of goods as species of admiralty - an emerging trend in top-ranked Commonwealth jurisdictions of the Global North.

**Keywords :** admiralty jurisdiction, legal origins, world bank, ease of doing business, enforcing contracts, multimodal transport operation, door-to-door, carriage of goods by sea, combined transport shipping

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