

Treasury Bills Auction Scheduled for 7th June 2023

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS AUCTION

Stop Rate:

91-Day	2.29%
182-Day	4.99%
364-Day	7.99%

Amount Allotted:

91-Day	NGN9.96bn
182-Day	NGN1.82bn
364-Day	NGN168.67bn

SUMMARY OF CURRENT AUCTION

Auction Date	June 7, 2023
Settlement Date	June 8, 2023

Auction Size

91-Day	NGN1.03bn
182-Day	NGN1.94bn
364-Day	NGN179.89bn

Maturing Instruments

91-Day	NGN1.03bn
182-Day	NGN1.94bn
364-Day	NGN179.89bn

Meristem Advised Stop Rates

91-Day	2.50-3.00%
182-Day	4.90%-5.00%
364-Day	7.00%-7.80%

Offer Summary

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) will hold a Treasury Bills (T-Bills) Primary Market Auction (PMA) on the 7th of June 2023. At the PMA, existing T-Bills totalling NGN182.86bn (NGN1.03bn, NGN1.94bn and NGN179.89bn across the 91-day, 182-day, and 364-day instruments, respectively), will mature and be rolled over.

Outlook on Yields

At the last PMA, the stop rates on the 91-Day, 182-Day, and 364-Day instruments declined to 2.29%, 4.99%, and 7.99% (vs 4.50%, 6.44%, and 8.99% at the previous auction), respectively. The downward trend in rates across all tenors can be hinged on the significant increase in system liquidity to NGN382.74bn from a negative balance (NGN8.09bn). Thus, this resulted in a surge in total subscription (NGN1.53trn), which was 8.45x the amount offered (vs 5.70x at the previous PMA). The overall improvement in the subscription-to-offer ratio signals increased investors' appetite.

In the forthcoming auction, we anticipate a similar subscription level (as witnessed at the last auction), especially on the longer-tenor instruments. This outlook is supported by robust system liquidity (NGN381.08bn as of 5th June 2023). Therefore, the expected increase in demand and favourable liquidity conditions will likely exert downward pressure on rates of the 182-Day and 364-Day instruments.

In the secondary market, there have been notable buying activities across the curve. Mainly, the unmet demands at the primary auction flowed into the secondary market. Consequently, the average Treasury bills yield declined by 18bps to 5.38% as of June 05, 2023 (vs 5.56% on the date of the previous auction). Overall, the sentiment has been predominantly bullish, and we expect this to persist in the near term.

Given the above, our rate guidance is informed by the need to strike a balance between maximizing investment returns and having a successful bid. Thus, the recommended stop rates for the respective instruments are as follows:

Tenor	Offer Size	Advised Rates
91-Day	NGN1.03bn	2.50-3.00%
182-Day	NGN1.94bn	4.90%-5.00%
364-Day	NGN179.89bn	7.00%-7.80%

Investing through Meristem Wealth Management Limited

Meristem Wealth Management Limited charges a transaction fee of 0.25% of the principal amount invested, and there will be three (3) days prior notification before maturity for all Treasury Bills investments. *The income from investing in T-Bills is tax-free, so interest received is not subject to withholding tax and you will receive an immediate Investment confirmation letter for the Treasury bills. Also, note that the T-Bills certificates can be used as collateral for securing loans.*

Participation Process

The T-bills Primary Auction bid holds twice in a month (i.e. every other Wednesday). The above likely stop rates are our estimates and might not necessarily hold true, as the final decision always lies with the CBN based on the auction process.

About Treasury Bills

Treasury Bills (T-bills) are marketable money market securities that serve the purpose of raising money for the Government and are also used as monetary policy tools by the Central Bank. T-bills are short-term securities that mature in 1 year or less from their issue date. They are usually issued with 3-month, 6-month, and 1-year maturities.

How is Return Determined?

T-bills are purchased for a price that is less than their par (face) value; when they mature, the Government pays the holder the full par value. Effectively, your interest is the difference between the purchase price of the security and what you get at maturity.

The advised stop rate is different from the annualized yield of instruments. For example; the annualized yield of a 91-day T-bill, with a stop rate of 15.30% is 15.90%. If you buy a 91-day T-bill with a face value and stop rate of N1, 000,000 and 15.3% accordingly, the discounted value would be N962, 274. The difference between the face value and purchase price, which is N37, 726, is the money return and it implies 15.9% yield on annual basis. However, the holding period yield for this instrument is 3.75% since it is held for a 91-day period (3 months), and not a year.

How does the Auction Process work?

Treasury bills (as well as notes and bonds) are issued through a competitive bidding process at auctions.

Primary market trading of Treasury bill instruments entails auctions by the country's monetary authority – The Central Bank of Nigeria. **T-bills are auctioned at established rates which determine the return to investors.** Purchasing these instruments in the primary market and holding it until maturity would mean that the investor gets a fixed interest payment.

Benefits of T-bills

The biggest reasons that T-Bills are so popular are that they are one of the few money-market instruments that are affordable to individual investors. Other positives are that

Ahead of Next T-Bills Auction

T-bills (and all Treasuries) are considered to be risk-free investments because they are backed by the full faith of the Federal Government. In addition, returns on T-bills are tax-free, unlike equities.

The only downside to T-bills is that investors will not get a great return (alpha) because Treasuries are considered "exceptionally safe".

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