



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

By

**H.E. PRESIDENT UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA, GCFR
PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

**AT THE
GENERAL DEBATE**

OF THE

**62ND SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

NEW YORK , 26 SEPTEMBER 2007

Mr. President,

I stand before this Assembly for the first time as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and wish to reaffirm Nigeria's complete dedication to the ideals of the United Nations. We declare our total support for the organization's efforts at facing up to the multiple humanitarian, social, peace and security, and development challenges confronting our world today.

Mr. President,

At the onset, may I, on behalf of the Government and People of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, congratulate you and your country, the Republic of Macedonia, on your election as President of the Sixty-Second Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Nigerian delegation as you lead the deliberations of the Session.

I also wish to extend my profound appreciation to your predecessor, Her Excellency Haya Al-Khalifa for the

commitment and dedication with which she presided over the affairs of the sixty first Session.

Mr. President,

I wish to formally extend my sincere congratulations to His Excellency, Mr. Ban Ki-moon on his assumption of office as Secretary-General of the United Nations. I commend him for his resolute leadership and determination to carry through the requisite reform of the United Nations system and assure him of the full support of my Government.

May I also pay tribute to the immediate past Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for the commitment, diligence and courage with which he piloted the affairs of the United Nations in the last 10 years. We are proud of the enormous contributions made to our Organization by this illustrious son of Africa.

Mr. President,

Since coming into Office, my Administration has anchored its pursuit of a re-energized, stable and prosperous Nigeria on

the fundamental principles of democracy, good governance, free enterprise, and the rule of law. These are worthy principles which Nigeria shares with the United Nations family.

Mr. President,

The theme of this Session's General Debate, *"Responding to Climate Change"* is most apposite. The African continent is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

In our collective determination to face up to this challenge, African leaders at the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union in Addis Ababa last January, decided to integrate climate change issues into all sustainable development initiatives at national and regional levels.

Nigeria reiterates its commitment to the United Nations *Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UN FCCC). While applauding the successful outcome of the High Level Event on Climate Change which was held here two days back, we

affirm that much more needs to be done.

Mr. President,

It has been seven years since world leaders at the Millennium Assembly met in this hall and committed themselves to ridding Africa of its most pressing socio-economic and political challenges, in order to allow the continent move with the rest of the world. While tangible progress has been made in a few areas, the continent is still bedeviled by great challenges.

The continued festering of the Darfur crisis remains a blight on the collective conscience of the international community, one which this august assembly needs to address with utmost urgency.

The *Abuja Peace Agreement*, which Nigeria helped to facilitate, remains the reference point for a comprehensive settlement of the crises. However, the lack of full implementation of the *Agreement* raises serious cause for concern and we call on all parties to respect their

commitments and help drive the peace process forward. We continue to support the process and reaffirm our support for the AU-UN Hybrid Force in the Sudan

Mr. President,

It is imperative that the concerted fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria, tuberculosis and related diseases must not lose momentum. At the national level, we have consistently taken concrete measures to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and to increase funding for the *National Action Committee on Aids (NACA)*.

Nigeria appreciates the financial and material assistance from our development partners in this regard but our continent cries out for even more intensified collective efforts at ridding Africa of this and other pandemics.

Mr. President,

Two years ago, we appraised our performance against the set targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and realized that unless concrete and more determined actions

were taken, the over-arching aim of meeting the 2015 targets of poverty eradication would remain a mirage.

We recognize that the primary responsibility for social and economic development rests with individual States. Within the ambit of the African Union's (AU's) *New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD), the nations of Africa are practically facing up to the continent's economic and socio-political development challenges through the adoption and engendering of a new political culture that will be conducive to long-term development.

Taken along with the AU's *African Peer Review Mechanism* (APRM), our programme of self-monitoring and self-assessment; as well as the institutionalisation of the ideals of democracy and good governance, Africa has clearly defined an assured course to economic regeneration and political stability.

Mr. President,

What Africa seeks from the international community is genuine partnership for economic development. This should be manifested in a global economic system predicated on fairness, justice and equity; one that ensures fair trade terms and recognizes the centrality of mutuality in prosperity. More specifically, Africa requires massive, focused foreign investment in the infrastructural development across the continent.

Mr. President,

Nigeria is wholly committed to the *Global Counter Terrorism Strategy* in the fight against international terrorism. As a follow-up to that commitment, Nigeria has established four counter-terrorism centres in the country in addition to the *Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit* which, together with the Central Bank of Nigeria, monitors banking transactions as part of the mechanism to locate and terminate the illegal transfer of funds for terrorist and other criminal acts

including money laundering. Nigeria reiterates its condemnation of all acts of terrorism and calls upon the international community to muster the necessary political will to confront and check this menace.

Mr. President,

Nigeria reaffirms its abiding faith in the ideals and objectives of the United Nations Organization. We believe that a strengthened and restructured United Nations would be best placed to address the complex challenges facing our world.

In this regard, my delegation will continue to collaborate with Member States to press for a comprehensive reform of the United Nations system, including the much-desired expansion of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories in order to reflect the realities of today's world. The situation whereby Africa is itself totally excluded from the permanent membership of the Council is unfair and untenable and must be rectified.

In conclusion, Mr. President, the challenges which confront our world today call for renewed purpose, renewed resolve, renewed courage and renewed respect for human dignity.

Posterity beckons us to a real test of our sense of duty.

We cannot afford to fail this test. I assure you that Nigeria will continue to support the United Nations in our collective aspiration for a safer, fairer and more prosperous world.

I thank you.