

Nigeria

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STATEMENT BY

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**AT THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT OF THE
FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE
FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

BERLIN, APRIL 6, 1995.

1Madam President,

On behalf of my delegation, I join other speakers in congratulating your Excellency on your well deserved election to the chair of this Historic Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Climate Change. We also congratulate the Federal Republic of Germany for her unanimous election as the seat of the Permanent Secretariat to the Convention on Climate Change. We remain optimistic that Berlin '95, under your able guidance will be a success and that the Permanent Secretariat of the Convention will continue to benefit from the exemplary hosting of this Conference .

2. Madam President, Three years of work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee (INC) produced what we all agree was a Framework Convention. Another three years have almost passed since the Framework Convention on Climate Change was opened for signature in Rio in 1992. However, in spite of the large number of countries that have ratified the Convention to date spread beyond economic and regional groupings, we are still a good distance away from implementation.

3. My delegation came to this Conference in the belief that the candle of hope which we lit in Rio and oiled from Geneva to New York will brighten to illuminate our minds to a clearer understanding of ourselves and light our path to a greater commitment to save humanity. Like any delegation here present, our commitment and participation in this negotiation process is driven by a load of fears, anxieties and burdens most of which are not within our national control. But we believe, very firmly too, in international cooperation to turn our fears to hope and to relieve our burdens and replace them with prosperity as we move into the 21st century.

4. Madam President, Nigeria shares and lives with fears of our colleagues in the Group of Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). The low lying coastal area of my country covers an area of 150,000 square kilometres inhabited by about 22 million people. As a country with a total population of about 100 million and characterised by large scale poverty, we share the anxieties of developing countries with respect to the socio-economic implications of climate Change policy issues. Nigeria, also being largely dependent on revenue from fossil fuel exploitation, shares the concerns of most oil producing countries in a world economy run by unfair

commodity prices. This triple vulnerability is further compounded by our debt burden.

5. Despite these fears, anxieties and burdens, we are proud that our national initiatives on policy directions and implementation, over the past 25 years, have demonstrated an excellent foresight for an environmentally sound and sustainable strategy for development. Madam President, we have phased out coal thermal plants in electricity generation and switched to gas turbine and hydro-electricity. At present, gas and hydro electric power jointly account for over 99% of our electricity generation capacity. Through an Act of Government, we have made Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) an indispensable requirement for major development projects and are implementing the EIA Guidelines in line with our National Policy on Environment. Our National Energy Policy promotes rational use of our energy resources.

6. We have conducted national studies on greenhouse gas emissions, sources and sinks. Although our per capital emission is low, we are increasingly concerned that we continue to lose valuable energy resource

through gas flaring. We are concerned that 53% of Nigeria's total carbon dioxide emission is not the result of industrial activities but a product of wasteful flaring of associated gas in our oil fields. We are therefore committed to a policy of recovery and re-injection of our associated gas. We are committed to a process of total elimination of unnecessary and unproductive emission from wasteful combustion of this vital energy source. To this end we have embarked on three major gas gathering and utilisation projects that, on completion, will virtually eliminate the flaring of associated gas. Thus we are committed to promoting gas utilisation for domestic and industrial uses. We are therefore committed to sustainable use of our forest resources and the control of desertification. We have strengthened our National Park Boards and introduced tighter controls in the management of our Forest Reserves. We are equally committed to the eradication of poverty and firmly uphold our right to development.

7. Madam President, these loads of commitments are voluntarily and nationally driven. They also have grassroot local support. With greater public enlightenment, my country will achieve greater energy efficiency, stabilise our forest resources, improve our carbon dioxide sinks and

effectively manage our national survival carbon dioxide emissions. However, Madam President, we are therefore not in a position to bear any additional burden.

8. Madam President, my delegation welcomes those Annex II countries that have accepted that their current commitments are inadequate. Having all accepted the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, we must all respect and support the right for the economy of developing countries to grow to meet their development needs.

9. We note the review of adequacy of commitment in the context of sincere cooperation by the developed country Parties through technology cooperation and the provision of financial assistance for the implementation of the various projects and activities that will enable us meet our country's development objectives in line with the provisions of this Convention.

10. Madam President, that brings me to the issue of the operating entity of the financial mechanism. Some progress has been made in the restructuring of GEF. However, if GEF is to aspire to permanency as it is

being proposed by some Parties, GEF must win the confidence of all Parties, to be able to entice all contributions towards ameliorating climate change and also be able to fulfil the yearnings of the developing countries through a fair and equitable funding of projects that will mitigate climate change. With respect to the programmes CC:INFO, CC:TRAIN and CC:COPE, we support the suggestion that these programmes be managed by the United Nations Agencies which already have the capabilities and experience to operate them, in close collaboration with the Convention Secretariat and regular reporting to the Conference of Parties. However, the respective UN Agencies such as UNEP and UNITAR, must be adequately funded for this increased mandate by the financial mechanism of the Convention.

11. On the issue of the Rules of Procedure, my delegation acknowledges the genuine efforts being made by Madam President in finding an amicable solution to this delicate issue. We remain confident that your efforts will bear fruits at the end of the day in the spirit of Berlin '95.

12. Finally Madam President, my delegation urges the Conference of Parties to recognise the inseparable link between this Convention and that of Drought and Desertification especially in Africa. We must recognise that the control of drought and desertification in Africa is in the interest of, and symbiotic to, the success of Climate Change Convention especially as it relates to the enhancement of Carbon sinks. Madam President, the Spirit of Rio calls on all of us today to renew our commitment to genuine partnership in the interest of humanity. We cannot afford to fail the silent generation to whom we hold the earth in trust.

12. I thank you Madam President.