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THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

**STATEMENT TO THE FOURTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
(UNFCCC),**

READ BY

**HEAD OF DELEGATION
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Your Excellency Madam President

Honourable Ministers

The Executive Secretary

Ladies and Gentlemen

- 1. Madam President, on behalf of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, my delegation joins other Parties in congratulating you on your election, by acclamation, to chair this Fourth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Also we wish to express our special appreciation to the government and people of Argentina for the excellent facilities that have been put in place for the Conference, as well as the warm reception and hospitality accorded my delegation since our arrival in this city of 'Good Air'. Our sincere appreciation also goes to the Climate Change Convention Secretariat for coordinating all activities geared towards successful holding of this COP-4.**
- 2. Madam President, Nigeria has actively participated in the UNFCCC process because of the importance we attached to the issue of climate change. Indeed, the threat of global warming to human existence on our more vulnerable continent of Africa is**

real. This is as a result of low resilience of its environment to impacts of frequent weather and climate related natural disasters such as drought and desertification, flood and heat waves among others. These weather phenomena pose significant threats to sustainable development in Nigeria in particular and the whole continent in general.

3. Once again, we wish to reiterate that as a nation, we are confronted with impacts of climate change and we will be faced with impacts of response measures to mitigate the effects of climate change. We are therefore vulnerable in three ways :

- * Vulnerability to the environmental impacts of climate change where a larger percentage of the total landmass of Nigeria is directly involved. For instance, there is the haunting desert encroachment in the northern part of the country with phenomenal southward progression, while a small rise in sea level will result in inundation of about 800 kilometres stretch of land along the Atlantic coast, covering an area of about 153,000 sq km and occupied by almost 23 million people with the consequent loss of lives and biodiversities;

- * Vulnerability to the socio-economic implications of climate change which may present itself in form of a backlash of environmental refugees, compound our poverty problem and consequently result in greater human misery; and**
- * Vulnerability of our economy which is largely dependent on revenue from fossil fuel production.**

4. It is in light of the foregoing that Nigeria welcomes, and is committed to the Convention process as a practical step towards reversing the trend of global warming. Madam President, Nigeria has embarked on significant policies aimed at the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The allocation of the federal budget for combating environmental problems, including climate change has been increased from one per cent to two per cent. A Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project has also been commissioned to undertake refining, piping and bottling of natural gas, currently being flared, for both domestic use and export. Efforts are also being made to stimulate the economic use of about two billion standard cubic feet (basf) of natural gas currently being flared daily in furtherance of the greenhouse gas emission reduction towards total elimination of gas flaring by

2008. The policy further seeks to increase local and foreign investments in especially export-oriented gas projects and downstream gas-based ventures such as production of fertilisers and petro-chemicals.

- 5. Nigeria has also taken step to ensure that petroleum refineries reduce the production of leaded gasoline by as much as sixty per cent (60%) for the purpose of reducing atmospheric pollution arising from such fuel combustion. We have put in place policy to address the issue of uncontrolled logging in Nigeria in order to enhance sink of greenhouse gases. Furthermore, the Nigerian Meteorological Services is engaged in tropospheric and stratospheric ozone measurements and monitoring of other greenhouse gases and Nigeria has commenced the preparation of its national communication to the UNFCCC. All these efforts not only represent a firm demonstration of the desire of Nigeria to implement its obligations under the UNFCCC but also to protect the sink for carbon dioxide and safeguard our biological diversity.**
- 6. Madam President, Nigeria wants to do more. Hence our position**

and intention to participate in the clean development mechanism under the Protocol. We will like to express our profound appreciations to the UNFCCC, international - both public and private - organisations who have organised regional workshops, conferences and seminars where the implementation mechanisms, most importantly, the CDM have been elaborated upon. As a country, we were able to participate in some of the workshops trying to develop common understanding of the CDM as it applies to African countries; identify critical, institutional and methodological issues relating to CDM; and develop an African perspective on the key issues regarding the implementation of the CDM.

- 7. However, we are concerned that there are still several unresolved issues regarding the clean development mechanism. For instance issues relating to baseline definition, additionality, verification, evaluation, rules and guidelines among others are not yet clear. We are equally worried about the likelihood of the composition of the executive board of CDM and implementation modalities. We therefore urge the Conference of the Parties to ensure that the relevant principles, modalities, rules and**

guidelines for verification, accountability and reporting of the mechanism are structured in a way that the desire of developing country parties to achieve sustainable development are not compromised, and at the same time, assist the Annex I Parties to meet their set targets of the Protocol. We will like to stress Madam President, that our participation in this process should be facilitated by provision of adequate capacity building which will make this a meaningful and worthwhile exercise. We request to learn by doing. The rules and modalities governing these mechanisms should be devoid of those conditionalities that have always placed Africa at a disadvantage.

- 8. Nigeria wishes to reiterate the fact that no matter the approach that is adopted to the issue of climate change, the phenomenon is bound to affect the global economy in general. The leaders of the nations, especially the Annex I Parties, must not only pursue the interest of their industries but should hold a global perspective regarding greenhouse gas reduction thus giving hope to the future of the Earth. In this regard, we call on all Parties to put in place measures to meet their commitments under the Convention and the Protocol for the sake of future of humanity.**

However, in doing that, Nigeria does not support the present clamour for further commitments, voluntary or binding, on the part of developing country Parties.

9. In conclusion Madam President, the Nigerian delegation wishes to extend its heartfelt sympathies to our brother countries of Central America who have unfortunately experienced what look like the impact of climate change, an extreme weather pattern in the form of Hurricane Mitch which claimed thousands of lives, damaged properties worth millions of dollars and turning millions of people into environmental refugees. We consider this as a bad omen and a strong signal calling on all Parties to act now!!!. The time for rhetoric is long past. Nigeria therefore hopes that COP-4 will produce concrete decisions that will move the process forward.
10. Thank you for your attention.