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HEAD OF THE NIGERIAN DELEGATION TO THE THIRD CONFERENCE
OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC),
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Mr. President, on behalf of my country, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, let me add my voice to those of other Parties who have spoken before me, to congratulate you for your election by acclamation to Chair this 'historic' session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-3) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). I also thank the Government of Japan for being a very wonderful host in the best of Japanese tradition for this very important Session, the Session we still hopefully envisage to give birth to a protocol or another legal instrument to elicit the confidence of the developing nations having test run the Convention for five years.

2. In June this year, at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on Environment and Development, "Rio + 5" in New York, we took stock of the implementation of the 1992 Rio agreements and observed that while some Annex I Parties have faithfully implemented their commitments, other Annex I Nations, whose voice cannot be ignored are far from fulfilling their own side of the agreements.

3. The First Conference of the Parties (COP-1) held in Berlin in 1995, set up the Ad hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate (AGBM) to embark on the negotiation of a protocol or another legal instrument with particular reference to Article 4.2 (a) and (b). This became inevitable in view of the fact that the Annex 1 countries that were to take the leadership in greenhouse gas emissions stabilisation, by virtue of their past and present consumption patterns on the basis of the polluter pays principle as well as provide the back-up financial and technological commitment, were yet to demonstrate such leadership. Eight sessions of that Ad Hoc Group from Berlin to Kyoto, it is yet to be proved to the international community that these major developed countries are committed to the principles set forth within the context of the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

4. Mr. President, Nigeria would like to place on record our sincere appreciation to the Chairman of the AGBM - Ambassador Raul Oyuela Estrada for steering successfully the ship - and if I may use the words of the Chairman of the Group 77 and China at the last session of AGBM, - the Ship M.V. Kyoto from Berlin to dock in Japan as 'Committee of the Whole'.

5. Mr. President, it is a matter of fact that the world today faces, in climate change, a threat potentially more catastrophic than any other threat in human history. Unfortunately, international politics of economics and trade has made developing nations particularly in Africa and the Small Island States more vulnerable to climate change and the associated phenomena.

6. For us in Nigeria ours is a bigger burden, the burden of triple vulnerabilities:

- i. Land-based vulnerability to the environmental impacts of climate change which in its extremes are aggravating the haunting desert encroachment in the northern part of the country with phenomenal southward progression; and threatening the southern low-lying Atlantic Ocean Coastline covering an area of about 153,000 sq. km providing home to nearly 23 million people; virgin mangrove with abundant biodiversity, oil, gas and solid minerals
- ii. Population based vulnerability of our over 100 million people, a large percentage of which are resource-poor rural people whose poverty burden will be further compounded by climate change and result in greater human misery and environmental refugees;
- iii. Economic vulnerability of a nation largely dependent on revenue from fossil fuel production.

7. My Government has risen stoutly to the challenges of these triple vulnerabilities with far reaching policy initiatives that are being implemented to the letter.

- The 1 percent Ecological Fund, the Special Fund for addressing critical environmental and ecological problems has been increased to 2 percent of the Federation Accounts
- Recognising the need to protect our effective carbon sinks, safeguard our biological diversity and stabilise ecology of the low lying areas of Nigeria, Government has set up a National Committee to address the issue of uncontrolled logging in southern Nigeria and come up with a Blue Print for equitable logging tax to promote restocking and afforestation.
- We have achieved 60 percent reduction of lead in our gasoline and are implementing our requirements for the Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) affecting the Ozone layer

8. We are concerned that Nigeria's flaring of associated gas during oil production accounts for 28 percent of the World's total and are committed to changing the trend. Many projects have been commissioned along with other initiatives and these include the following:

- The over 500 million Dollar Escravos Gas Gathering and Conversion Project, a joint venture between a multinational oil company, Chevron Nigeria Limited and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Nigeria Limited which was commissioned after completion by the Head of State just last month.
- Similarly the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) Project has reached an advanced stage of construction. The project is based on 60 percent utilisation of associated gas.
- There is also the Natural Gas Liquid Project (NGLP), and many others such as the Aluminium Smelting and the Trans-West African Gas Pipeline Projects which are designed to utilise a large volume of associated gas that is currently being flared.
- Government is currently carrying out an upward review of the tax on flared gas to stimulate re-injection and further investment in gas gathering and utilisation.

9. To further reduce Greenhouse gas Emissions in the longer term, both the National Policy on the Environment and the Energy Policy have been reviewed and aligned with the VISION 2010 Programme to commit Nigeria to a transition of cleaner energy development and utilisation by promoting gas utilisation in industries and homes. Two weeks ago, the Head of State launched the implementation phase of the VISION 2010 Programme Blue Print which, among others, commits Nigeria to the total elimination of gas flaring by the year 2008.

10. Mr. President, you would agree with me that the above listed initiatives and commitments are bold and commendable given our meagre resources and competing developmental and social commitments. The initiatives and commitments were taken with all sense of national responsibility in the global interest. They are the type of commitments we demand of our Annex I Parties members. To require further commitments on our part is like asking the hungry to feed the overfed. Therefore, we reaffirm our support for the Group of 77 and China in rejecting the proposed 'Evolution Concept' by the Annex I Parties whose response evaluation of many of its members has shown serious breach of faith.

11. Nigeria is committed to sustaining our current initiatives at reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions. We are also committed to alleviating poverty and improving the living standard of our people. For our initiatives in Nigeria to be sustained therefore requires that the Annex I Parties commit to serious technology cooperation and redemption of their financial commitment and pledges without any form of conditionality. In this regard, my delegation fully supports the issue of Compensation Fund as being proposed.

12. We appreciate the efforts of those Annex I Parties who by now have taken giant steps in stabilising their emissions to 1990 levels and urge the others who have breached faith to be more committed to the principle of the Convention for the sake of humanity.

13. Mr. President, it is never late. My delegation believes that in two days, a lot can still be achieved. Japan makes excellent automobiles. Kyoto has a date with history. Let Annex I Parties release the 'Key' to the 'Auto' and together we shall safely reach the promised land.

14. I thank you Mr. President.