

**FOURTH NIGERIA-EUROPEAN UNION MINISTERIAL MEETING
BRUSSELS, 16 MAY 2013**

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

The Ministerial meeting between the European Union (EU) and Nigeria was held in Brussels on 16 May 2013 under the Co-Chairs of H.E. Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Ambassador Olugbenga Ashiru, and H.E. Minister of State for Trade and Development of Ireland, Mr Joe Costello, TD, representing Ms Catherine Ashton, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission.

The Parties reaffirmed their joint commitment to the intensified political dialogue and cooperation agreed in the Nigeria-EU Joint Way Forward. Both Parties reconfirmed their commitment to their shared values and repeated their belief in peace and security, respect for human rights, democracy and good governance, equality and tolerance as ways of developing prosperous and strong societies.

The Parties expressed their satisfaction with the continued cooperation and dialogue including the local dialogues on human rights; migration and development; and peace, stability and security held in March. They acknowledged that the first local dialogue on peace, stability and security launched at the last ministerial meeting in 2012 has added a new dimension to the partnership. Both Parties expressed the wish to continue and deepen this dialogue.

Both Nigeria and the EU condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks by groups, including Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria, and expressed their grave concern at the impact of escalated violence on the population. Strong efforts to bring terrorists to justice are necessary, while avoiding excessive violence. The Parties recognised that the security situation in the North cannot be resolved only by military means but also requires dialogue and development to address the root causes. They noted the importance of maintaining the democratic institutions in the three States and the Committee on Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution of Security Challenges in the North,

In accordance with the Nigeria-EU Joint Way Forward, the Parties agreed on the following Issues:

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

While exchanging views on the state of their respective economies and on current challenges to the world economy, they hailed the substantial progress made by the Euro area in implementing its comprehensive crisis response strategy and the measures announced by the European Union deepening economic integration in the region. Further, they stressed the need to make additional efforts towards promoting strong, sustainable and balanced economic growth.

REGIONAL ISSUES

The Parties reaffirmed their support to the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, which remains the political framework of reference to structure the relations between the two continents. The Parties acknowledged that the Joint Strategy had delivered positive results but agreed that the next EU-Africa Summit (Brussels, 2-3 April 2014) should be an opportunity to review its immediate priorities and its implementation modalities to make it more efficient.

The Parties commended the strong leadership The Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) is playing in promoting peace, security and stability in West Africa and pledged their commitment to support further ECOWAS efforts in addressing security and developmental challenges in the region. The Parties welcomed the outcome of the ECOWAS ministerial held in Brussels immediately before their meeting and underlined in particular the useful, concrete conclusions reached on peace, security and stability, good governance, rule of law and consolidation of democratic structures, and regional integration and development, as well as on specific country situations in West Africa. In that context, the Parties called upon all ECOWAS Member States to further enhance their engagement and commitment towards their Organisation, which should result in increased development of its capacities and a sound public finance and administrative management.

The EU further commended Nigeria's leading role in the adoption of UNSC resolutions 2018 and 2039 and in particular the development of a trans-regional maritime security strategy and Code of Conduct for ECOWAS, The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) in response to growing maritime instability in the Gulf of Guinea. The EU is looking forward to the adoption of the Code of Conduct and other key documents at the upcoming Yaoundé trans-regional summit. Maritime security should be strengthened to preserve the economic potential and human security in the area as well as the stability in the sub-region. The EU encouraged Nigeria to continue to play a pivotal role in the implementation of these initiatives. In turn Nigeria welcomed the EU's on-going work towards the formulation of an EU comprehensive approach to the Gulf of Guinea, in support of, and complementary to, the efforts being made by the region itself. Both sides agreed to coordinate closely in the development of their respective strategies in order to maximise coherence, consistence and synergies. The EU also welcomed the adoption of the ECOWAS Counter Terrorism strategy last February and encouraged efforts towards full implementation.

The Parties stressed their continued support for democracy, peace and the territorial integrity of Mali and reiterated their common commitment to support the implementation of the transition Road Map including free, fair, inclusive and credible elections, dialogue and reconciliation. It is essential that the upcoming elections take place as foreseen in a fully democratic, inclusive and peaceful way, so that they become a turning point in the return to democracy. They also commended Malian and West African determination to put an end to the crisis and reiterated their unwavering support for the fight against terrorism, which must be combined with strict respect for

the rule of law and human rights as well as openness to the legitimate viewpoints of local communities. This should provide the basis for a democratic country, where communities and citizens are reconciled and development can take off in a context of peace, stability and good governance. The EU commended the Nigerian Government for their considerable contribution of 1,200 troops to the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), and US\$ 50 million including relief material to the Malian authorities.

The Parties welcomed the outcome of the High Level Donors' Conference for the development of Mali organised jointly by President Barroso, President Hollande and interim President Traoré on 15 May in Brussels. The implementation of the Transition Road Map and the Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali 2013-2014 should be mutually supportive and help achieve durable development and lasting peace in Mali.

The Parties expressed their concern regarding the regional dimension of the crisis in the Sahel region as well as the fallout from the crisis in Mali. They reiterated their resolve to cooperate closely at both regional and international levels, including in the framework of the Support and Follow-Up Group co-chaired by the AU, ECOWAS and the UN, in order to find durable solutions to the crisis. They noted that the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel provides an appropriate framework for a comprehensive approach to the crisis. Implementation of this Strategy should therefore be further enhanced and accelerated, in line with relevant decisions by the Council of the European Union.

Regarding the situation in Guinea Bissau, the parties reiterated their strong concern by the situation created by the Coup d'Etat and urged the de facto authorities to accelerate the transition towards democracy. The Parties urged the Guinea Bissau military and security forces to stop any further interference in civilian affairs. They stressed the paramount importance of elections as soon as possible and in any case before the end of 2013 and transition to full democracy. It is also essential to ensure rapid renewal of the top military leadership, comprehensive security sector reform and a fundamental effort to combat illegal drugs and organised crime, which are a most worrying scourge penetrating all the structures of the state. Cooperation among the P5 (AU, ECOWAS, Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa (CPLP), UN, EU) is of paramount importance. The Parties committed themselves to fully support such cooperation, including elections on the basis of an appropriate roadmap.

BILATERAL ISSUES

PEACE AND SECURITY

The Parties concurred that the terrorist threat is more worrying today than a year ago. It has evolved and diversified not only in Nigeria, but across the West African region and beyond. They both strongly condemned the violence by extremist Islamic groups including Boko Haram, and the loss of many innocent lives and damage to infrastructure and private property as a result of attacks by terrorist groups, including most lately in Bama. Both Parties share common security challenges – not just terrorist – for which working in partnership is

critical to reaping the most effect and impact. The EU stands ready to share expertise including training and education to enhance Nigeria's resilience to both the terrorist threat and other security challenges.

The EU commended Nigeria's own development of a National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) which alongside the amendments to the Counter Terrorism Act, confirms the coordinating role of the National Security Advisor and the Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA) on all Counter Terrorism matters. This will enable the EU to best channel dedicated support for counter terrorism through the ONSA. The EU confirms its readiness to assist with the implementation and coordination of Nigeria's Counter Terrorism strategy and crisis management structures, with training to bolster effective investigation and prosecution of terrorist suspects under the criminal justice system, and with technical expertise on counter-radicalisation. Both Parties agreed to maintain close and regular dialogue following on from the Peace and Security and Stability dialogue held in March.

The EU encourages Nigeria to maintain a comprehensive approach to the security challenges in the country, especially in the North, based on good governance and development to address radicalisation. The Parties agreed that the core values shared by Nigeria and the EU are key to overcoming terrorism. These values include an open society, adherence to the rule of law and respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights. In this context, both sides emphasized the paramount importance of avoiding disproportionate responses in the fight against terrorism. It is important to set a model and a standard not only to uphold our fundamental values, but also to ensure the success of anti-terrorism initiatives, avoiding any chance for government led actions to play into the hands of the terrorist narrative. The EU welcomed President Jonathan's engagement on the Boko Haram issue, including his decision to retain the Committee on Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution of Security Challenges in the North, and his desire to resolve the alarming levels of violence in the North.

The EU welcomed the setting up of a Commission of enquiry and congratulated President Jonathan for his stated determination to clearly establish the truth on recent events in Baga. Thorough investigation, followed by punishment of any person who may be found guilty of misbehaviour, will be the best demonstration of Nigeria's commitment to the rule of law, and tackling impunity.

The Parties also stressed the importance of preparing for the period after the amnesty programme in the Niger Delta has come to an end in 2015. They agreed on the need to increase efforts to tackle the poverty and environmental degradation the region currently faces, with due regard to the corporate social responsibility of the operating companies. Addressing and stopping oil theft, illegal bunkering and gas flaring was recognised by both Parties as an important challenge that must be met. Nigeria called on the EU for support, especially in the area of investigation and prosecution.

On violence in the Middle Belt, the two sides shared the view that the origin of the problem was related to poverty and competition between community groups and not religion. In this regard, the Parties welcomed the recently approved Instrument for Stability measures with support for peace-building and conflict prevention in Plateau

State.

Both Parties agreed that economic and social prosperity is a key driver for peace and stability in the North, in the Niger Delta region and the Middle Belt communities.

DEMOCRACY, GOOD GOVERNANCE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Both Parties underlined Nigeria's commitment to good governance, democracy and human rights. They underlined the importance of ensuring that all electoral processes are held in a democratic and transparent manner, that the outcome of elections is respected and agreed, and that the next two years are key to mitigate the risks and build on the opportunities to ensure that 2015 consolidates and deepens Nigerian democracy. They discussed steps taken by Nigeria to further improve the quality of the democratic processes and the EU commended the Independent National Electoral Commission's (INEC) leadership and encouraged it to implement the strategic plan ahead of 2015 elections. In this regard, Nigeria welcomed the EU's intention to send an election follow-up mission this year to further encourage electoral reform and follow up on the recommendations of the 2011 EU Electoral Observation Mission.

The Parties expressed their satisfaction with the conduct of the local human rights dialogue which held its most recent session on 21 March 2013. They welcomed the agreement to exchange experiences on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) ahead of the second examination of Nigeria by the Human Rights Council taking place in October this year. The EU committed itself to continue to support Nigeria's efforts to implement international human rights standards and invited Nigeria to extend an open invitation to all UN Special Mechanisms. The Parties stressed the importance of ensuring the enjoyment of all human rights by everyone, including persons belonging to minorities. The views of the two Parties fully converged as to the need to ensure respect for freedom of religion or belief. The Parties agreed on the importance of upholding freedom of expression. The two Parties reaffirmed their commitment to promote gender equality in Nigeria. However, major challenges remain, including in particular on children rights, the fight against torture and ill treatment, extra-judicial killings and forced disappearances. Nigeria reaffirmed its engagement to implement international human rights standards and to fight torture and ill-treatment as well as the other challenges identified. The EU encouraged Nigeria to intensify its efforts in fighting corruption and tackle impunity. Both Parties agreed on the importance of maintaining efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the justice sector with the aim of consolidating rule of law and good governance.

MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

The Parties underlined their satisfaction with the conduct of their local dialogue on migration and development and noted the successful outcome of its 6th dialogue meeting, which took place on 20 March 2013, in the presence of representatives of the European Commission and FRONTEX. At this occasion, the Parties also discussed the EU Global Approach to Migration and Mobility and the various frameworks for bilateral cooperation that are available in this context, including the Common Agenda on

Migration and Mobility.

The Parties highlighted that their cooperation in this area will continue to aim at preventing and fighting irregular migration and trafficking in human beings, better organising legal migration and mobility, maximising the development impact of migration and mobility and promoting asylum and international protection. Recalling their current satisfactory cooperation and in the light of the security challenges in the Sahel region, both Parties stressed the importance of further strengthening their relations, especially in the field of irregular migration and trafficking of human beings. In this context the possibilities of reinforcing the current framework of cooperation will be explored.

TRADE, INVESTMENT AND EPA

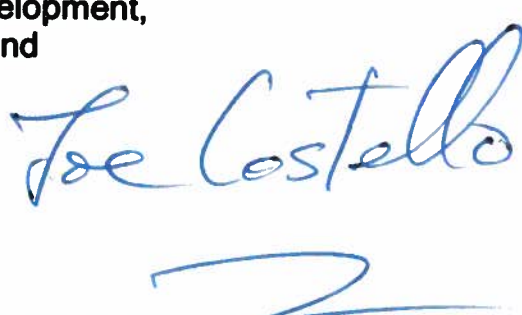

The importance of the economic relationship between Nigeria and the EU and the growth opportunities for trade and investment exchanges between them call for a more structured relationship for tackling potential obstacles their respective operators could face. In this respect, the Parties reaffirmed the added value of an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) as a long-term partnership offering opportunities beyond trade. Nigeria underlined the importance for the EPA to take into account the developmental dimension. The Parties agreed that economic diversification, including the diversification of exports and the further development of the agricultural sector, as foreseen in the Transformation Agenda, is an important component in ensuring sustained growth of the Nigerian economy. They underlined the importance to increase and diversify investments, including foreign direct investments. The EU encouraged Nigeria to play a constructive role in the regional EPA negotiations which has great potential for West African economic and trade integration. Nigeria reaffirmed its commitment to continuing EPA negotiations in the framework of ECOWAS.

ENERGY

Recognizing the importance of balanced reforms in the energy sector, Nigeria reaffirmed its commitment to reform the oil and gas sector. The EU recognized the progress made in the reform of the power sector, particularly the recent milestone in the privatization process of the generating and distribution companies. The parties agreed in particular on the importance of good governance of the oil sector in order to ensure sustainable growth and prosperity, development, and access of citizens and communities to the oil benefits. The Parties agreed that legal certainty and an appropriate framework are needed to encourage private investment, to contribute to energy security and to unleash the country's economic potential. The EU confirmed its encouragement to Nigeria's reform of energy subsidies, while recognising the sensitivity of this issue in the country. Both Parties expressed their commitment to working together to reduce gas flaring, improve offshore safety, access to electricity and transparency in the energy sector. Enhanced participation of civil society will also contribute to ensure that the benefits from energy resources reach local communities and citizens. Both Parties agreed on the need to further develop the use and exploitation of other natural resources, including mining resources.

MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The parties reaffirmed their commitment to implement the Millennium Development Goals. They recognised the value of their development cooperation in this regard. Nigeria underlined the progress made in some areas, especially in enhancing maternal health and primary care and in reducing infant mortality. Both Parties agreed however that more efforts were needed towards achieving the MDGs. They shared the view that enhanced efforts were necessary in the North and more particularly the North East. Both Parties expressed concern about the challenges ahead of Nigeria in achieving its objectives in the fields of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, education, and the health goals especially child mortality. They reiterated their continued commitment to step up work in these and other major areas. The EU welcomed the positive role Nigeria is playing at the global level on the Post 2015 Framework discussions. The Parties committed themselves to work closely in the run up to the autumn UN meetings that will focus on this subject.

<p>For the EU H.E. Mr Joe Costello, TD Minister of State for Trade and Development, Ireland</p> 	<p>For Nigeria H.E. Ambassador Olugbenga Ashiru, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria</p> 
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Brussels, 16 May, 2013