

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE FEDERAL  
REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA AT THE 13<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY OF STATE  
PARTIES TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
CRIMINAL COURT (ICC)**

**NEW YORK, 8<sup>TH</sup> - 17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2014.**

**Mr. President,**

My delegation congratulates you on your election as President of the 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the Assembly of State Parties and wishes you a successful tenure. We look forward to greater progress for this body under your leadership and assure you of our support in discharging the onerous responsibilities of your office. May we also seize this opportunity to express our gratitude to the out-going President, Ambassador Tiina Intelman for her able stewardship and for the significant achievements recorded by this Assembly during her tenure.

2. My delegation aligns itself with the Statement of the African Group at this Session which has accurately articulated our position on the core issues confronting the International Criminal Court today.

3. Nigeria wishes to reiterate the position that the ICC is increasingly becoming a critical global institution in the task of checking impunity and promoting the Rule of Law at domestic and international levels. Our collective efforts should, therefore, be geared towards making the Rome Statute a truly universal legislation through the progressive increase in the number of signatories to the Statute.

4. We reiterate our commitment to the vision and objectives of the ICC and restate our resolve to maintain and strengthen the present level of cooperation with the Court as it strives to achieve its mandate. In demonstration of this resolve, Nigeria is in the final stage of the necessary legislative process to domesticate the provisions of the Rome Statute. This process should be completed before the termination of the tenure of the present National Assembly in May, 2015.

5. The present security challenges in Nigeria's North-East Region which has been characterized by mindless and inhuman terrorist activities have necessarily deepened our engagement with the Court in order to ensure that the Court acquires a proper understanding of the nature of the conflict and in solidarity with it, to send the clear signal that perpetrators of crimes against humanity will ultimately be brought to justice.

6. In line with the complementarity principle of the Court which places primary responsibility on State Parties, we wish to assure this Assembly that Nigeria will continue to strengthen its internal investigative and prosecutorial capacities in order to more effectively undertake the on-going prosecution of suspects involved in heinous terrorist attacks against innocent civilians. In order to comply with our domestic and international obligations, including those under the Rome Statute, our Armed Forces will also continue to exhibit the highest standards of professionalism and respect for human rights in prosecuting the present war on terrorism in the country.

**Mr. President,**

7. Nigeria welcomes the decision of the Court to drop the charges hitherto preferred against President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya. We believe that this is a step in the right direction and hope that the resolution of this matter will open further channels for the resolution of associated matters still pending before the Court. We are also of the opinion that the termination of this matter will facilitate the objective discussion of other matters of particular concern to the African Group, as well as those that are intended to make the court a more efficient and equitable institution.

8. In conclusion, it is our position that sustainable global security and respect for human rights can only be guaranteed when States cooperate and collaborate in a proactive manner to curtail the capacity of terrorists and criminals to perpetrate crimes against defenceless populations, before such threats are actualized or intensified. This approach, in our view, will ultimately reduce the investigative and prosecutorial burden on the ICC and national justice sector institutions in dealing with perpetrators of such crimes after they have occurred.

**Mr President,**

9. We look forward to a fruitful Session where we can share our perspectives and experience with other delegations in the days ahead in our quest to build partnerships for a more secure and humane world. We trust that under your able leadership, the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly of State Parties will be a success.

I thank you.