

STATEMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

DELIVERED BY



H.E. DR ENIOLA AJAYI

**AMBASSADOR OF THE FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

**TO THE KINGDOM OF THE
NETHERLANDS**

**AT THE 20TH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ROME
STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL
CRIMINAL COURT, THE HAGUE, THE
NETHERLANDS**

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Madam President,

On the account of the fact that my delegation is taking the floor for the first time after the election of the Presidency of the Assembly and the Presidency of the Court, let me on behalf of His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, the Government and the good people of Nigeria congratulate you and other members of the Bureau for your election and the mandate to direct the affair of this year's Session. Similarly, we congratulate the new Prosecutor, Mr Karim Khan, on his election and wish him great success in his assignment. We recognise the contribution of the past president of the Court Judge Chile Eboh Osuji and former Prosecutor, Mrs Fatou Besouda. You can be rest assured of Nigeria's unwavering support for the Court.

2. We commend the leadership of the Assembly for its resilience in piloting the affairs of the Court, especially this 20th Session despite the challenges posed by Covid -19 pandemic. The current situation only shows us how adaptive we should be to new realities. We recognise the fact that the pandemic has slowed down the progress recorded in reaching out to those aspiring for justice due to restrictive health and travel protocols.

Madam President,

3. Nigeria is still under the scourge of terrorism with its devastating effects on the civilian population, livelihoods and our economy. Officers and men of our Security Forces have paid and are still paying

supreme sacrifice in this fight due to its difficult nature. States Parties that have experienced or are still experiencing attacks from the terrorist groups will agree with me that Nigeria is indeed engaged in a difficult battle. It is for this reason that my delegation is calling on relevant stakeholders to support States Parties that are committed to protecting the rights of law abiding citizens against attacks by faceless terrorists.

4. Regarding the 2020 Report of the Prosecutor as it affects the ten (10) potentials cases against Nigeria, the country experienced reporting setback due to the challenges posed by Covid-19 Pandemic, serious security challenges that are even threatening the corporate existence of the country. The serious security threats are posed by Boko Haram terrorists, the secessionist agitators, such as Oodua Republic, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), herdsmen and bandits, amongst others. Notwithstanding these challenges, Nigeria is still working to address the Report of the Prosecutor as they affect the country.

Madam President,

5. Within this period, the Complex Case Work Group (CCG) was created within the Federal Ministry of Justice in response to the ten potentials cases against Nigeria. Nigeria is working assiduously to create an electronic case file and evidence data base to serve as repository for terrorism file and corresponding judgement thereof. The electronic case file data base is helping Nigerian prosecutors to build better cases against alleged Boko Haram suspects and to better address the potential ICC criminality.

6. This year, the Nigerian Military appointed 21 Investigators and Prosecutors from the three security services to be part of the proposed Serious Crimes Response Team (SCRT) to address alleged serious human rights violations and other crimes committed by the Nigerian Armed Forces. Their training is still ongoing. Presently, we have obtained certified true copies of records of proceedings, charge sheets and judgements in notable Boko Haram cases and they are ready to be delivered to the ICC. Moreover, plan is underway to resuscitate and reinvigorate the Kainji trials as soon as possible. Thus, Nigeria will continue to cooperate and engage with the ICC to finalize those cases. Finally, on this point, the Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice has taken it upon himself to work directly with the members of the National Assembly to ensure domestication of the Rome Statute Crimes.

7. We wish to reiterate the need to create a very conducive environment that will allow the Court to deliver on its mandate, as expectations of States Parties are very high, especially on the Office of the Prosecutor. Nigeria believes that creating a conducive environment involves provision of adequate funds to enable the Court carry out its obligation in an effective and efficient manner. Against this background, the budgetary request of the Court must be viewed objectively as a major tool for the Court to function effectively.

8. As this Assembly prepares to elect Deputy Prosecutors, my delegation reiterates the need to conduct an election that is transparent

and all inclusive, in a manner that only the best candidates will be elected to support the Prosecutor in implementing his vision for the Court.

9. In closing, we would like to assure this Assembly that Nigeria has consistently demonstrated strong political will to fulfil its international obligations through the domestication of relevant international instruments. Therefore, we would like to reaffirm our unalloyed commitment and cooperation to the International Criminal Court.

10. I thank you all for your kind attention.