



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF
NIGERIA**

BY

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**AT THE TWENTY-SECOND (22ND) SESSION OF THE
ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ROME
STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL
COURT**

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Madam President,

I am delighted to participate in the Twenty-Second Session (22nd) of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). On behalf of His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, I wish to appreciate and commend the concerted efforts of the ICC and the Assembly for working round-the-clock to ensure that this year's meeting is a memorable and successful one.

2. Over the years, Nigeria has steadfastly upheld its commitment to the noble cause of the International Criminal Court (ICC) by striving to contribute to a safer and more just world. Nigeria aligns itself with the remaining 122 States Parties sharing the common goal to hold accountable those accused of war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity, and crimes of aggression. In commemorating the significant milestone of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Nigeria joins fellow States Parties of the Rome Statute in celebrating the Court's remarkable accomplishments over the past 25 years.

Madam President,

3. I would like to take this opportunity to inform the Assembly that during the first quarter of this year, Nigeria successfully conducted its General Elections. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu emerged as the winner at the polls. He took the oath of office as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on May 29, 2023.

4. The Federal Government of Nigeria, reaffirms its commitment to collaborate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) to achieve its core mandate. This collaborative effort is centered on upholding Nigeria's obligations within the jurisdiction of international law, with the understanding that the cooperation will be conducted in a manner that respects and preserves Nigeria's sovereignty. It would be recalled that currently Nigeria has ten (10) cases at the preliminary stage of investigation. Since the initiation of the Preliminary Examination in 2010, there has been substantial progress. This is evident in the high-level engagement between Nigeria and the ICC.

5. In adherence to ICC's Principle of Complementarity, Nigeria has demonstrated that its legal system is able to investigate and prosecute anybody that commits a serious crime against humanity within its borders. In this regard all arms of Government are collaboratively working together to strengthen internal mechanisms and processes within the Judiciary and relevant agencies. The ultimate objective is to impartially dispense justice to deserving victims. I wish to inform that in anticipation of inquiries on these cases, a focal office has already been established in the Federal Ministry of Justice to provide updates and address queries in real time. In addition, my delegation takes this opportunity to reassure that Nigeria has the political will and judicial capacity to bring these cases to a close.

Madam President

6. My delegation strongly condemns the recent cyberattacks on the digital space of the ICC in September

2023. These attacks were a blatant attempt to undermine the Court's mandate and we hope that the perpetrators will be held accountable for their actions. We commend the Court's efforts to fully digitize its processes. We hereby urge the ICC to collaborate with relevant stakeholders that have dealt with risks arising from rapid advancements in technology, especially the use of artificial intelligence, in order to effectively prevent future cyberattacks.

7. Nigeria would like to urge States Parties to fully support the Court's four Strategic Plans for the period of 2023-2025, launched in June 2023. These plans are aimed at ensuring that all the organs of the institution are harmoniously working together as one entity to achieve the core mandate of the ICC in an efficient and effective manner. In light of the ICC's budgetary constraints, Nigeria would like to encourage the Court to adopt cost-effective measures in implementing its strategic plans. The inclusion of key performance indicators in the ICC Strategic Plan will further enable the Court to assess the performance and progress made by each organ.

Madam President

8. On the publication by Reuters News Agency titled, "***Nightmare in Nigeria, A Conflict waged on the Lives of Women and Children***", I wish to restate that the National Human Rights Commission, which is an independent and impartial Commission established in line with the Paris Principles, is currently investigating the allegations. However, there are concerns about the refusal of Reuters to support ongoing investigations into the

issues. The Government awaits the conclusion of investigations by the Human Rights Commission.

9. Nigeria is also unrelenting in her efforts to partner with neighbouring Countries and other members of the international community in the fight against terrorism. I would therefore like to use this opportunity to reassure that Nigeria has the political will and capacity to bring these cases to a close.

Madam President

10. Also, I wish to inform that Nigeria on 28 February 2023 ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions which came into effect on 1 August 2023. The Convention not only prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions but also the assistance or encouragement of anyone to engage in prohibited activities. The continued use of cluster munitions globally causes widespread human suffering, and negatively impacts national and international peace-building and humanitarian assistance efforts, in addition to other severe consequences that can persist for many years after use. Nigeria believes in the promotion of its universalisation and its full implementation and calls on States Parties to ratify this important Convention, which can reduce war crimes.

11. My delegation congratulates the six newly elected Judges from the fourteen nominees representing the regional groups of the world. Given their pedigrees, we have every reason to expect that they will ensure fair, equitable, just, and speedy dispensation of justice in all global mechanisms set up for combating serious crimes. In same vein, we congratulate the outgoing six Judges for

completing their nine-year term successfully while commending them for their significant contributions to the reformation of the Court. We wish them the very best in their future endeavours.

12. In conclusion, Nigeria stands firmly with fellow States Parties to the Rome Statute in the collective endeavour to end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes affecting the international community and supports fully the work of the court. Nigeria also calls on States Parties that have not yet acceded to the Statute to do so.

Madam President and Esteemed Delegates,

13. I thank you all for your kind attention.