



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE

65TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

THIRD COMMITTEE
DEBATE ON ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

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Mr. Chairperson,

The Nigerian delegation wishes to congratulate you and the Bureau on your election. We are confident that with your wealth of experience and leadership, the work of the Committee will come to a successful conclusion. Our delegation therefore assures you of its deep consideration.

My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary General for his comprehensive reports contained in documents A/65/204, A/65/216, A/65/218, A/65/219, A/65/268 and A/65/334 on this agenda item. Similarly, I will like to congratulate Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under Secretary General, UN Women for her appointment and comprehensive introductory statement. My delegation is proud of Nigeria's support and cooperation, as she takes on the challenges of her new assignment.

Mr. Chairperson,

Nigeria aligns herself with the statements made on behalf of the African Group and the Group of 77 and China.

We are pleased to report that over the year, 2019, Nigeria, like many members, continues to make substantial progress on the issue of advancement of women, by putting women at the heart of her development agenda. This has been made possible by a combination of factors, namely, Government's clear commitment, political will, sustained initiative and advocacy by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, UN Women, Society and development partners. Consequently, the issues of women empowerment, gender equality and training have gained prominence in sectoral programmes of government and public and private decision-making processes at all levels of governance.

Nigeria attaches utmost importance to the issues of women advancement and is committed to the full and effective implementation of the various international instruments on gender equality and women advancement and particularly, the CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly that ushered in the new international norms for the advancement of women.

Nigeria today, there is an active and enhanced participation of women's civil societies in the formulation and evaluation of National and International initiatives including the implementation of several reforms as they affect women. Nigeria is focused on the implementation of its adopted National Gender Policy and its Strategic Implementation Framework and Plan.

Mr. Chairperson,

This year's celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security represents a commendable effort to advance global, regional and national agenda for the empowerment and security of women, including protection and survival for children among others. The implementation of these lofty goals has led to Nigeria's efforts at combating maternal and child morbidity and mortality, HIV/AIDS, poverty, improved access and retention of women and girls in schools and increased women participation in governance. I will mention but a few. For instance, the rate of girls' enrolment in primary schools rose to 79.9% as against 73.4% in 2000. In the same year, the number of women in national parliament increased to 13% in 2003 and 27% in 2007.

The Maternal Mortality Rate has also dropped from 1,500 per 100,000 live births in 2000 to 704 in 2003 and 635 in 2005. This has been achieved through efforts of stakeholders supported by Debt Relief Campaign, Maternal Services Scheme has in the last one year trained and deployed 2,610 village health workers to 162 new primary health centres across the country. The scheme was also complimented with the launch of a independent health service delivery intervention programme in 2009 to provide essential medical supplies and ambulances to the Primary Health Care facilities in the rural areas. The above provisions in the 2010 Health Budget for rural areas in Nigeria, crucial among which are Obstetric Fistula/VVF and provision for income-generating equipment for the economic empowerment of the rural populations.

Nigeria's quest for gender equality and accountability has led to the Government's approval in March 2009 of the establishment of Gender Units in all Ministries, Departments and Agencies. This is a new institutional mechanism

geared towards repositioning women and gender development as a priority in the country which, it is hoped, will enable us achieve better results.

Mr. Chairperson,

While acknowledging the gains that Nigeria has made in the area of women's rights, we are still faced with a number of challenges in the full implementation of some of the international conventions and instruments for the advancement of women. In this regard, the double ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) among others is one of such challenges facing the country.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, I wish to express the Nigerian delegation's belief that with the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the 1979 Resolution 1325, the time has come for women not only to be heard, but to evaluate various commitments for tangible impacts. With the establishment and take-up of the UN Women by 1st January 2011, it is hoped that necessary technical and financial support to complement national efforts will be in place. We therefore call for improved technical support from international development partners, the UN Women and allied agencies and Civil Society Organizations to facilitate realization of the women agenda.

I thank you for your kind attention.