



STATEMENT DELIVERED BY

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AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE
PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA

AT THE 89TH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION
FOR MIGRATION (IOM)

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***PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish to convey our warm congratulations to you and other members of the Bureau on your election. We wish also to thank the Member States of IOM for electing our country into the Bureau. We take this opportunity to commend the outgoing Chairman, Ambassador Luis Alfonso De Alba, Permanent Representative of Mexico and members of the Bureau for their valuable work in the last one year. We warmly welcome the Republics of Cameroon, Ghana, Belarus and Togo as new members of the Organization and the Islamic Relief as an observer. We align ourselves with the statement read by Algeria on behalf of the African Group but would like to make some statements from a national perspective.

Nigeria commends the leadership of the IOM, Director-General, Mr. Brunson Mckinley and Deputy Director-General, Mrs. Ndioro Ndiaye for their outstanding work particularly, in raising awareness of the positive role that migration and migrants could play in the economic, social and cultural development of countries. We welcome the various IOM programmes on capacity building and migration management some of which have been beneficial to our country. In this regard, we note that the recent workshop on migration management for ECOWAS countries held in Abuja on 14 November 2005 was a very useful experience for our delegation. We would like to express our appreciation to the IOM and the Swiss Government for the sponsorship of the workshop particularly, the opportunity created for better understanding of the migration phenomenon as well as the essentials of a structured and comprehensive approach to migration management.

Mr. Chairman,

Nigeria subscribes to the concept of orderly and humane migration. It is our belief that a well structured, open and simple system will attract shared benefits for migrants, countries of origin and destination as well as minimize the negative consequences of international migration. It is also our view that efforts should be

made first, at the national and then at regional and global levels to promote policies for a coherent and humane migration management. We note that inappropriate migration management only produces different and contradictory policies which undermine efforts either to promote a safe and dignified life for migrants in host countries, shared benefits for all stakeholders or achieve coherence in migration management. However, we wish to strongly reiterate that efforts at migration management will achieve only minimal results without concrete efforts to build capacity of States on the collection and analysis of migration data as well as a strong commitment by the international community to address the causes of such movements. Without addressing issues such as fairer terms of trade, debt burden and inequity in the international economic system, we will continue to suffer the negative consequences of international migration.

Mr. Chairman,

The Federal Government of Nigeria is committed to promoting coherence in the activities of the various Ministries/Agencies with responsibility on migration issues. A national workshop on Migration management is being planned early next year to sensitize the various stakeholders in the country on the need for a collaborative approach to migration management in the country. We intend to utilize the results of this workshop as well as the IOM workshop held few weeks ago to articulate policy options for better migration management in the country. We hope that we can count on the continued cooperation of the IOM and other relevant international institutions in this process.

At the bilateral level, Nigeria is collaborating with friendly countries to enhance the benefits as well as address the challenges of international migration. On the issue of trafficking in persons, in June 2005, Nigeria signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the fight against trafficking in women and children with the Republic of Benin. The agreement seeks to prevent, fight, suppress and punish trafficking in women and children by setting up joint security surveillance patrols and joint sensitization campaigns along the border areas of the two countries. In addition, Nigeria and the

Governments of Italy, United Kingdom and Spain have understandings on joint initiatives on modalities for the prevention of child trafficking and slavery. Nigeria is also exploring the possibility of signing more agreements in the near future with other countries particularly those sharing borders with the country. There are also proposals to negotiate arrangements with friendly countries to facilitate cheaper and safer transfer of migrant funds.

In consonance with the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and the provisions of the African Union's Constitutive Act on African diaspora, the Government of Nigeria is making efforts to enhance the participation of its diaspora in national development. It is facilitating the establishment of diaspora organizations and I am pleased to inform of growth of a number of active Nigerians in Diaspora Organizations (NIDO) resulting in the emergence of focused and development oriented Nigerian communities in various parts of the world. However, in the process of promoting migration management in the country, some challenges have been observed which include, lack of proper documentation of the existing pool of expertise and capital of Nigerians in the diasporas as well as the building of capacity to formulate and implement effective migration policies.

Nigeria is of the view that international cooperation and exchanges is an essential key in addressing the opportunities and challenges of international migration and in this regard, would once again, commend the worthy contributions of the IOM, the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), the African Union (AU) and other processes particularly, in promoting the potential of international migration and migrants through dialogue on the nexus between migration and development. We urge for IOM's continued involvement in the process. We also call for proper coordination of the activities of the various stakeholders on international migration matters with a view to avoid overlap and duplication of work.

In concluding, Nigeria welcomes the recent initiatives by the IOM to ensure better service delivery such as the proposal for the creation of an office in Panama in its delocalization process, the establishment of

a Fund for migrants in need as well as the establishment of a Provident Fund for staff of the IOM. We welcome the continued support by IOM members to the 1035 facility which we consider as a very useful tool for addressing the capacity needs of countries. Nigeria is convinced that capacity building is the vital key in opening the opportunities that are available in international migration and would urge for increased allocation to the Facility. Nigeria is particularly concerned over the marginal presence of Africans in the IOM secretariat. We would therefore reiterate our call last year, for the leadership of the IOM to ensure that more Africans are employed in the organization. Finally, we commend Ambassador Alba of Mexico for his efforts in raising some thoughtful issues in his paper on the IOM strategy which we consider a good basis for further discussions.

I thank you.