

## **SIXTH NIGERIA-EU MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE BRUSSELS, 15 MARCH 2016**

### **JOINT COMMUNIQUE**

1. The Ministerial Meeting between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the European Union (EU) took place on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016 in Brussels under the co-chairs of H.E. Mr Geoffrey Onyeama, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and H.E. Ms Federica Mogherini, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission.

#### **OVERALL COOPERATION**

2. The parties expressed broad satisfaction with the level of political cooperation since the March/April 2015 elections, most noticeably through H.E. President Buhari's speech to the European Parliament and discussions with President Schulz and President Juncker. Special mention was made of the report of the EU Election Observation Mission (which had been formally presented to Vice President Yemi Osinbajo) and its recommendations which would be discussed with different stakeholders as part of a support programme to be agreed before the end of 2016. It was also agreed to maintain the level of engagement through holding a local-level political dialogue, including the participation of EU Member States, under Article 8 of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement before July 2016.
3. In addition to where there are established forums of dialogue, the parties agreed to hold Ministerial and/or high-level dialogues over the coming year in a number of new areas including agriculture, climate change/environment, energy, finance/macro-economics, research and innovation, capacity building in security, and tertiary education.

#### **REGIONAL, CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL ISSUES**

##### **The Economic Community of West African States**

4. Both parties underlined the importance of ECOWAS as the organisation promoting peace and security in the region, as well as economic integration as a means to greater prosperity. They expressed their desire to see a more efficient and result-oriented organisation emerge from the structural reform which would strengthen ECOWAS.

##### **Peace and Security in the region and in Africa**

5. Recognising Nigeria's role in the region and as member of the African Union Peace and Security Council, parties agreed to strengthen their cooperation. On the Sahel,

including Mali and Libya, both parties reiterated their concern about the regional spill-over from the Mali crisis and the continuing instability in Libya, in particular the links with ISIS/Da'ish. The parties agreed to continue their dialogue in this area in line with EU and ECOWAS Sahel Strategies/Action Plans, with a development/economic component as well as addressing security matters, such as violent extremism, border management, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, drug trafficking, human smuggling and trafficking, as well as other cross-border crimes.

6. On the Gulf of Guinea, both parties agreed that maritime security is necessary to support the growing maritime economy. Nigeria reiterated its commitment to the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, by supporting the agreed organisational architecture, the operationalisation of the Inter-regional Coordination Centre (ICC) and the appointment of a single focal point to address maritime security issues. With reference to its Gulf of Guinea Strategy/Action Plan, the EU expressed its support to putting in place the necessary domestic legislation, as well as facilitating discussions between different stakeholders, the EU and its Member States. Both parties agreed to cooperate in all other relevant fora, including in the framework of the G7 Friends of the Gulf of Guinea Group (G7+FOGG).
7. On Guinea Bissau, both Parties acknowledged the role ECOWAS has been playing since August 2015 and commended the efforts of the Special Representative, Olusegun Obasanjo. They stressed that the international support that Guinea Bissau received at the Donors Conference in March 2015, from ECOWAS, UN, EU, CPLP and the AU should not be put in jeopardy. The role that ECOMIB has played so far deserves to be commended and both parties appealed to the renewal of its mandate and welcomed the extension of the UNIOGBIS mandate to February 2017.

### **The European Union's Global Strategy and "Post-Cotonou"**

8. The EU outlined its approach to security and welcomed the opportunity to discuss the way forward for the EU-ACP relationship following the expiry of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement in February 2020. The parties proposed to jointly host a local-level Global Strategy/Post-Cotonou policy dialogue, in principle in the second half of 2016.

## **SECURITY, DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ISSUES**

### **Cooperation in the North East**

9. Nigeria and the EU condemned the horrific abuses committed by Boko Haram and welcomed the progress that has taken place in recent months in reducing the Boko Haram threat. They emphasised the importance of a comprehensive, region-wide, approach to addressing the challenges, covering political, security, economic/development, environmental and humanitarian issues.
10. Both parties expressed satisfaction with the progress that has been achieved in enhancing regional collaboration, notably through the Multi-National Joint Task Force under the aegis of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, with the support of the African Union. They expressed their commitment to support the force. Also, they welcomed the Abuja Security Summit which will take place in May 2016, as well as the work under the recovery and

peace building assessment of the North East, where funding might be provided from various instruments including the EU Emergency Trust Fund. Both parties underscored the importance of counter-terrorism efforts being carried out in respect of human rights and in accordance with the rule of law. The recently developed Nigerian Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) Doctrine was highlighted as a good example of collaboration on human rights. The EU welcomed the recent establishment of a Human Rights Desk in the Nigerian Armed Forces, while also emphasising the importance of independent and impartial investigations into allegations of serious human rights violations by security forces.

11. The parties also expressed their willingness to explore further cooperation in the area of security/counter-terrorism in line with Nigeria's National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NCTS) and the EU's Counter-Terrorism Strategy, particularly on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). It was agreed that an EU inter-service mission, including, inter-alia, the Office of the EU's Counter-Terrorism coordinator would visit Nigeria for discussions with the National Security Adviser in June/July 2016 to explore the potential for further dialogue and collaboration on security/counter-terrorism.
12. With respect to humanitarian issues, both parties acknowledged the on-going humanitarian crisis with around 2.2 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and causing severe food insecurity for millions of people. The EU expressed its continued support to providing assistance which is complementary to that of national and state emergency organisations, which have the primary responsibility for addressing the crisis. Both parties agreed that return and resettlement of IDPs affected by the Boko Haram insurgency should take place when effective security has been established and should be voluntary, well informed and sustainable.

### **Cooperation in the Delta**

13. As with other challenges, both parties recognised the importance of a comprehensive approach to ensure peace in the Niger Delta. They agreed to re-energise current cooperation interventions to promote youth employment and vocational training, together with improvements in public financial management, as well as meeting the demand for basic services, such as water, sanitation, health and education, and the promotion of human rights. With respect to security matters the parties acknowledged the need for a holistic approach which would adapt legislation, improve prosecution and strengthen Nigerian security services so that they could operate effectively.

### **FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION**

14. Nigeria and the EU agreed on the importance of addressing corruption in all its forms and expressed their willingness to cooperate in confronting corruption and supporting the return of stolen funds and assets.
15. Both Parties emphasised the importance of on-going cooperation on anti-corruption, which had helped in building the capacities of Nigerian anti-corruption agencies. They welcomed the preparation of a new programme under the 11th European Development Fund which would target specific challenges, such as corruption in public procurement, the extractive industries, illicit financial flows, seizure of public assets, and money laundering.

## **MIGRATION AND MOBILITY**

16. The parties agreed on a list of priorities for the swift implementation of the Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility signed on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015, focusing on the following topics: capacity to collect and analyse information and statistics, return and readmission, combating smuggling and trafficking of human beings, protection and assistance of internally displaced persons, cooperation with Frontex on border management, regular migration and addressing the root causes of irregular migration. They also agreed to cooperate on the implementation of the Valletta Action Plan. The parties agreed to continue cooperation in the context of the Rabat process. The EU expressed its readiness to support the implementation of these priorities through the EU Emergency Trust Fund and other relevant financial instruments. The parties discussed an EU assistance for the Nigerian Technical Aid Corps.
17. Building on the existing cooperation on return, readmission and reintegration between Nigeria and several Member States, in the context of the CAMM and in accordance with Article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement, the parties agreed to take the necessary steps to launch negotiations for an EU-Nigeria readmission agreement. In order to further improve practical cooperation on readmission, the parties agreed to take the following immediate steps: (i) establish direct exchange for the confirmation of the nationality of the returnees where there is no Nigerian Diplomatic Mission, (ii) ensure timely issuance of emergency travel documents, (iii) further explore the conditions of use of the EU Travel Document and (iv) organise joint identification missions under the auspices of Frontex.

## **THE ECONOMY, GROWTH AND PROSPERITY**

18. The EU remains Nigeria's most important trading partner for both oil and non-oil products, with a total trade of €39.7 billion as of 2014, and the largest investor in Nigeria with Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) standing at €29.6 billion in 2013. Both parties agreed on the importance of encouraging further investments through a rules-based and predictable environment, comprising an independent and reliable justice system. It was agreed to strengthen the cooperation on economic and financial issues through the establishment of an EU-Nigeria economic dialogue forum with the aim of holding the first discussions by September 2016.
19. The parties reiterated their commitment to a long-term trade and investment partnership which is mutually beneficial for both sides. They discussed the still outstanding Nigerian signature of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).
20. The parties welcomed the successful 4th EU-Nigeria Business Forum, held in Lagos on 5-6 November 2015 with its emphasis on diversification and agri-business, and therefore agreed to collaborate closely in the organisation of the 5th Forum scheduled for November 2016.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS**

21. The parties expressed satisfaction with the overall cooperation on human rights matters in international fora, within Nigeria or in the European Union and expressed their wish to intensify this cooperation.

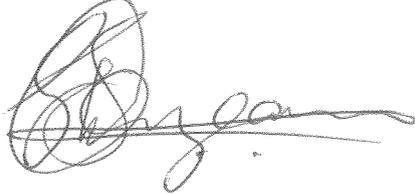
22. The parties agreed to discuss these issues further and to identify concrete areas of collaboration in a local EU-Nigeria human rights dialogue between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Union and its Member States before the end of 2016.

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

23. The parties welcomed the signature of the Paris Agreement adopted at COP21 and agreed to sustain this historic achievement. They expressed their willingness to participate in the high-level signature ceremony for the Agreement to be convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations on 22 April 2016 in New York.

**NEXT MEETING**

24. The parties agreed to hold the next Ministerial Dialogue in Abuja in the first half of 2017 at a date to be communicated through the usual diplomatic channels.

<p>For the European Union</p> <p>H.E. Ms Federica Mogherini Vice President and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy</p> 	<p>For Nigeria</p> <p>H.E. Mr Geoffrey Onyeama Minister of Foreign Affairs Federal Republic of Nigeria</p> 
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Done at Brussels, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016