

STATEMENT

DELIVERED BY

**H.E. GEOFFREY ONYEMA
HONORABLE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

AT THE

**COMMEMORATION OF THE SIGNING OF THE
CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

FRIDAY, 26TH JUNE, 2020

**NIGERIAN MISSION TO THE UN, 828 2ND AVENUE,
NEW YORK
9.00AM – 12.00PM**

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**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY NIGERIA AT THE COMMEMORATION
OF THE SIGNING OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS,
FRIDAY, 26 JUNE, 2020 IN UN HQ, NEW YORK**

**The President of the General Assembly,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset, allow me to express Nigeria's deepest gratitude to the organizers of this special event to commemorate the signing of the Charter of the United Nations. In 1945, fifty nations signed the UN Charter in San Francisco "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war." Seventy-Five years after, "We the Peoples" are striving to deliver that mandate, to eliminate extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice, tackle climate change and counter terrorism; and deliver on the SDGs.

2. The vision of the Charter is even more relevant today with multiple threats in the world and a global pandemic that has crippled economies. COVID-19 pandemic poses one of the most significant challenges the UN has faced since its inception. We are also witnessing the rise of nationalist populism and extremist ideologies, as the world becomes more multipolar and more polarized. Long-established international laws and multilateral practices are being devalued by increasing unilateralism, threatening the existence of smaller states that make up the majority of the UN's membership.

3. This year's commemoration is therefore, a year of strengthening multilateralism in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The value of international cooperation has never been more important as nations must work together to save succeeding generations from global threats. At a time when the world is gauging the

relevance of the UN, this commemoration serves as an opportunity to reassert the Organization's value.

4. Nigeria was admitted as the 99th member of the Organization on 7th October, 1960. As we reminisce on the time we have spent as a responsible member of the United Nations, we recognize the many successes and lessons learned collectively. We have kept the peace in many countries in Africa and provided assistance for elections in several places. We have brought humanitarian aid to refugees, displaced persons and helped countries in tackling diseases such as Ebola. We have also given millions in technical aid to countries.

5. Nonetheless, Nigeria is of the view that after seventy-five years, now is the time for us to recalibrate the work of the UN; to refine and adjust its working methods in order to reinforce the vision of the Charter and the significance of multilateralism.

6. Therefore, as we commemorate the 75th year of the United Nations Charter, Nigeria urges all Member States to continue to make the most effective use of existing procedures and methods enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations in prevention and settlement of disputes, maintenance of international peace and security, and developing friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples.

7. Before I conclude, I wish to state that it is very concerning that after 75 years of the existence of the UN, Africa is still not represented in the permanent category of the UN Security Council. There is a need to correct this historical injustice. It is in this light that we remain unequivocal in respect of Africa's demand for a reform that will ensure Africa's legitimate right to fair and equitable representation in the Security Council: taking into account the principles, objectives and ideals of the

United Nations Charter for a fairer world, based on universalism, equity and regional balance within the United Nations system.

8. Nigeria reaffirms her commitment to uphold the principles upon which the UN is founded. My delegation pledges to continue to fulfill international obligations through our foreign policy anchored on the promotion of global peace and security as enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Our hope is that the vision of the founding fathers will continue to serve as a source of strength in times of adversity.

I thank you all.