



STATEMENT

BY

H.E. SAMSON ITEGBOJE
AMBASSADOR/CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES
PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

DURING

**THE HIGH-LEVEL INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE
ON
"ALIGNING INCLUSIVE QUALITY EDUCATION POLICIES WITH
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS"**

**TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL CHAMBER
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK**

**2020 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION
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Mr. President,

With barely ten years left to the expiration of the global community's timeline for the realization of our collective aspirations as clearly articulated in Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, this High-Level Interactive Dialogue on ***"Aligning Quality Education Policies with Sustainable Development Goals"*** could not have been more timely and more urgent. That is why, as the penholder of General Assembly resolution 73/25 that declared January 24 of every year as International Day of Education, Nigeria would like to begin by commending His Excellency, the President of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, for his visionary leadership in convening this event, as part of the priorities of his presidency and in line with the 74th Session's theme of "Galvanizing Multilateral Efforts for Poverty Eradication, Quality Education, Climate Action and Inclusion."

Mr. President,

2. Nigeria holds the view that quality education for all - women and girls, men and boys, the old and the young, persons with disabilities or otherwise - is the cornerstone of social development and contributes exponentially to poverty eradication, improvement of health outcomes, promotion of gender equality, environmental sustainability, building peaceful and resilient societies, and, indeed, the realization of the SDGs, of which quality education itself is a part. My delegation also affirms that education holds the keys to the needed transformation to uphold human dignity, promote respect for human rights, and drive social, economic

and political change. My delegation, therefore, calls on all to discover anew the inestimable value of education as a tool for social development and to work in a concerted manner to support quality education for all.

Mr. President,

3. It is true that a lot is being done to ensure access to quality inclusive education. The rate of enrolment and retention in schools has increased. However, there are still significant threats to access to quality inclusive education for many, especially those who are victims of armed conflicts and forced displacement, occasioned by both natural and human-induced factors.

4. Indeed, in recent times, education has come under attacks from different sources and for different reasons, some of which are ideological, structural, climate change-induced as well as conflict-related. We must make deliberate efforts to analyze the root causes of these attacks and also track them not simply for the purpose of collecting data but ultimately with a view to taking concrete measures to find lasting solutions.

5. In this connection, I should like to stress that, though conflicts threaten the education of children, the Government of Nigeria is determined to ensure that our children stay in schools by protecting education from attack and providing safe and conducive environment for learning. In addition to the Safe School Initiative, Nigeria endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, with its rejection of all forms of military occupation in schools, no matter the circumstances.

6. Also, as part of the expression of its belief that education must continue for its children even in emergency situations, the Federal Ministry of Education of Nigeria, through the National Educational Research Developmental Council (NERDC), has developed an Education in Emergency curriculum. This curriculum, which is a specific policy step of the Nigerian Government to align inclusive quality education policies with sustainable goals, not only aims at realizing the right of every Nigerian child to education but also aims to ensure that children studying in emergency situations can be mainstreamed into the formal school system when their condition normalizes.

Mr. President,

7. As I conclude my remarks, I should like to emphasize that very few policy steps can be as catalytic and as impactful in seeing to the realization of Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development as ensuring access to inclusive quality education. I, therefore, call on all governments to address the systemic and structural issues that hamper access to education, so that we can create a world truly fit for all, where no one is left behind.

I thank you for your attention.