



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

828 SECOND AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017 • TEL. (212) 953-9130 • FAX (212) 697-1970

STATEMENT BY

**H.E. DR. HASSAN MUHAMMAD LAWAL
HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR LABOUR AND PRODUCTIVITY
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

AT THE

**HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION, UNITED NATIONS
HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2006**

Madam President,

We would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the Sixty-first session and assure you of our readiness to cooperate with you to make your tenure a success. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General and his staff for the elaborate report prepared for our deliberations. Nigeria aligns itself with the statement made by South Africa on behalf of G77 and China.

International migration is an age-old phenomenon, which, over the ages, has seen people of all color and creed move around the world for various reasons. Without a doubt, migration has enormous benefits, and can be a potent force for development, but so also are its challenges. Against this background, Nigeria is convinced that a better-managed migration can bring win-win benefits to all countries.

The asymmetries in the material wealth of countries, the demand for cheap labour in industrialized countries, coupled with unemployment and poverty are some of the factors that propel international migration. While each country has the right to determine its migration policies, the exploitation, maltreatment, forceful repatriation, creation of concentration-style camps and other dehumanizing treatment meted to migrants or asylum seekers prevalent in some countries as measures to manage migration are indefensible in the 21st century. The international community must therefore resist the temptation to build thick walls of exclusion and resort to xenophobia or discrimination under the guise of measures to ensure national security.

Rather, we should work collectively to find practicable and dignifying solutions to the problems associated with migration. Nigeria is particularly concerned with the degrading treatment of migrants, in particular, the vulnerable groups and calls on States to fulfill their human rights and labour obligations to migrants, for this is the essence of development and the aspiration of all people for better standards of life in greater freedom.

In Nigeria's view, specific policy measures to consider in this dialogue should include, capacity building especially in African countries, mobilization of national populations in the Diaspora, cheaper, safer, and faster transfer of remittances, sharing of more information on remittances, as well as the integration of migration issues into national development strategies. A speedy conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda, resolution of the external debt crisis, provision of new and additional resources, global cooperation to fight against corruption and terrorism, and greater voice and participation for developing countries in decision-making in international financial and trading institutions are other measures that need to be put in place to support the achievement of national development strategies.

In Nigeria, we have adopted the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) as the framework to eradicate poverty, promote wealth creation and guarantee lasting prosperity for all Nigerians. Furthermore, Nigeria is working vigorously to achieve the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals and

NEPAD. Cognizant of the importance of migration, Government has established institutions on migration, while three Special Assistants have also been appointed to advise the President on Diaspora Matters, Human Trafficking and Child Labour, as well as Migration and Humanitarian Affairs.

Madam President,

Nigeria supports the proposal of the Secretary- General to establish a Consultative Forum to enhance a coherent and well-coordinated migration strategy at all levels. We believe that the Forum would provide an umbrella for States and other relevant stakeholders to continue the dialogue on migration in the absence of an institutional arrangement within the UN system. Nigeria looks forward to the first session of the Forum. Finally, we welcome the efforts by the International Organization for Migration and the Global Migration Group to further promote understanding of and programmes on the nexus between migration and development and in this regard, call for more international cooperation on migration management.

I thank you.