

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

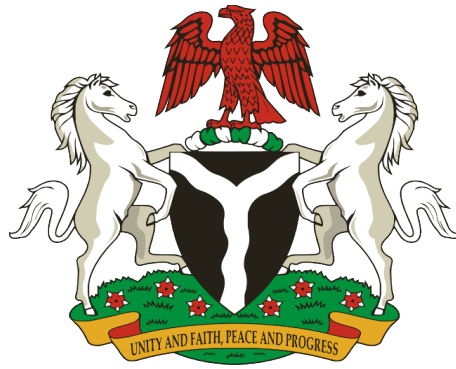
BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC
OF NIGERIA,**

H.E. MUHAMMADU BUHARI *GCFR*.

**AT THE OCCASION OF THE
GLOBAL AFRICAN DIASPORA SYMPOSIUM
(GADS) ABUJA, 2023.**

27TH - 28TH APRIL, 2023.

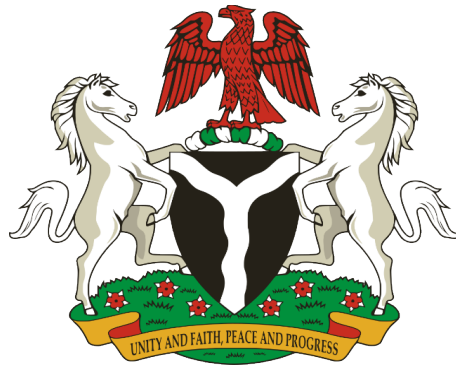


1.0 PROTOCOLS

2.0 It is with utmost delight, that I welcome you all to the **Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) 2023**, holding in Abuja, Nigeria. Today represents yet another very important milestone in the history of our nation, in hosting the rest of Africa and its Diaspora. The choice of Nigeria as the host country is timely and historic in the face of our political transition to a new government, presently.

3.0 This symposium being the second in the series, takes on some very key objectives such as to create an interface for networking among Africa and other Diaspora around the world, to promote the implementation and institutionalizing of Pan-Africanism at the United Nations through the celebration of the International Decade for People of African Descent, hoping that it becomes a platform for the promotion of the Global Diaspora as key resource for positively projecting and developing Africa.

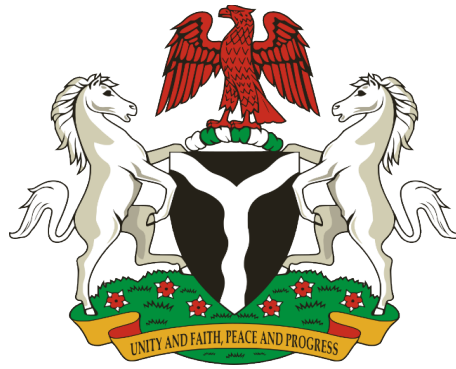
This is why the theme of the Symposium - "***Building Stronger Connections between Africa and the Global Diaspora***" is apt under the present world order, and being in tune with current realities, on the global scene.



It is imperative for Africans at home and in the Diaspora, to connect and forge a common front and also lay down strategic frameworks to address the challenges arising in the new world emerging order. The best approach to connect the Diaspora for sustainable development is to harness its vast human and material resources wherever they may be, whether it be within the continent or in the Diaspora .

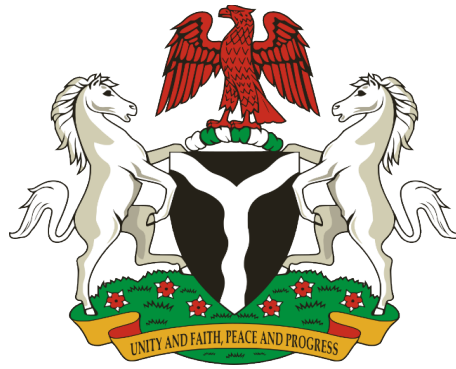
4.0 It is expected that the objectives of this symposium lead to outcomes that portray to the entire African Diaspora, a palpable sense of belonging and homecoming, with an ease of entry and movement for the Diaspora into and within Africa. Most especially, it will indeed be beneficial for an improved collaboration on Diaspora engagement between multilateral organizations such as the African Union, the European Union, the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARRICOM), the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Social Protection Floor (SPF).

The majority of our Diaspora are blazing trails and effecting exploits wherever they are all over the world in governance, business, science and technology, academia etc. It is in this regard that the Diaspora is now being looked upon as a partner in the development of the continent. Globally,



the Diaspora have become a force to be reckoned with, with regards to sustainable development of their varied home lands by regional bodies and national governments, through remittances, medical missions, FDI, educational visits, tourism, investments/enterprises, etc.

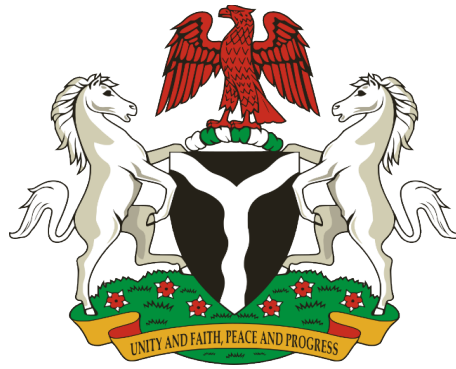
5.0 On this note there have been foreign and National initiatives to harness the potential of the African Diaspora in the development of the African continent. The African Union (AU) and African Governments have been making efforts towards mobilizing the African Diaspora for the social and economic development of African communities worldwide. There have been statements by high-level officials of several countries calling for "turning the brain drain into brain gain." The AU have designated the Diaspora as the sixth region, and some African governments have established cabinet positions within their governments to mobilize the Diaspora. These are all laudable initiatives geared towards the economic growth of Africa, by connecting with the African Diaspora. It is therefore imperative that these initiatives are interrogated and refocused for maximum benefits, hence a symposium of this magnitude.



6.0 In Nigeria, we have risen to the challenge of harnessing our Diaspora, for National development. We are engaging with our Diaspora, to create an enabling environment for them to contribute and play active roles in the socio-political and economic development of our nation. We have implemented several strategies such as the Establishment of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), and the State Diaspora Focal Point Offices across States of the Federation. We have also developed a National Diaspora Policy, and a Strategic Action Plan on Diaspora engagement. We are currently finalizing the Diaspora Investment Trust, the Diaspora Mortgage Programme and other initiatives to attract our Diaspora for positive engagement with Nigeria.

7.0 May I therefore remind the organizers and the participants, that the task set for this second meeting, having had the first in Nairobi, Kenya, is laudable and essential to the future prosperity and stability of Africa and its Diaspora. Its success will require robust efforts and resolute commitment by all, in order to lay a solid base for the collaborative efforts that are required to build the socio-economic fortunes of our people.

8.0 May I also advise that the sectoral themes on Human Capacity Development, Private Sector Development, Women Empowerment, Brain



Gain & Circulation, Information Technology, and so on, be mainstreamed into our Diaspora agenda, as I charge the African Diaspora Alliance to remain steadfast as a model platform of connection, among the African Diaspora and Africa's Institutions and governments.

9.0 As this is coming at the twilight of our administration, may I suggest that this forum be institutionalised as a biannual event, and used as a forum for monitoring and evaluating the progress of Africa's engagement with its Diaspora.

10.0 It is therefore my honour and singular privilege to declare the 2nd Global African Diaspora Symposium (GADS) Abuja, 2023 open, and wish you very successful deliberations.

11.0 Thank you for your attention and God bless you all.

Muhammadu Buhari GCFR,
President,
Federal Republic of Nigeria,
27th April, 2023.