

**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF STATE FEDERAL
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY NIGERIA, MS
JOSEPHINE YINOE TAPGUN AT THE 38TH SESSION OF UNIDO
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING, VIENNA,
AUSTRIA, NOVEMBER 24 - 26, 2010.**

Mr. President,

Distinguished Members,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, it gives me great pleasure to address you on this occasion of the 38th session of UNIDO Industrial Development Board holding in this beautiful city of Vienna. This Board meeting provides a unique opportunity for me to acknowledge the enormous contributions of UNIDO to the sustainable industrial development of African Countries. Nigeria acknowledges UNIDO as a Strategic partner in the development of her Industrial Sector.

Mr. President,

2. I wish to congratulate you and other members of the Board on the successful organization of the High Level Conference on the Development of Agribusiness and Agro-industries in Africa (HLCD-3A) held in Abuja between 8-10th March, this year. We also wish to thank the Director General, Dr. Kandeh Yumkella for his commitment to the industrial development of the world and in particular the developing countries. We are proud to be associated with your result oriented effort.

Mr. President.

3. We associate ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group and the Group of 77 and China.

Mr President,

4. As you are aware, Nigeria is not insulated from the global economic and financial crisis as our economy is heavily dependent on the production and exportation of crude oil. This scenario calls for very drastic measures to diversify to the non-oil sector in order to stimulate industrial growth and promote regional integration.

Mr. President.

5. Nigeria's economic blueprint is contained in our the Vision 20:2020, which is in consonance with the attainment of the MDG goals, focuses on key sectors of our national economy, of wealth creation and youth employment, food security, land reforms, energy, security, mass transportation and functional education. Therefore, the economic policy of the present administration is geared towards poverty reduction and sustained economic growth.

Mr. President.

6. Nigeria recognize the pivotal role of industrialization as the bedrock of economic development by any nation. In view of this, the present administration pursues a policy of diversification through industrialization particularly, in the areas of agribusiness and agro - allied industries where we enjoy comparative advantage as a result of favourable climatic conditions, Fertile land mass, skilled and cheap labour etc. It is our believe that the development of agribusiness and agro-allied industries in Africa is key to the

rapid socio-economic development of most African countries. Nigeria is therefore, committed to Industrializing agriculture to ensure the diversification of the national economy beyond oil and gas.

Mr. President,

7. It is against this background (in this regard,) that Nigeria hosted the High Level Conference on the development of Agribusiness and Agro-allied Industries (HLCD – 3A) in March 8-10, 2010. It is envisaged that the (HLCD-3A) would lead to rapid and sustainable development of small and medium scale industries in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular as was the case in India.

Mr. President.

8. Let me inform you that immediately after the High Level Conference my Ministry forwarded a memorandum to the National Council of Commerce and Industry being the highest policy organ of the Industrial sector in Nigeria on the strategies for the implementation of the Abuja Declaration. We therefore, call on UNIDO and its partners to conclude work on the financial mechanism that would support agribusiness and agro – allied industries in Africa and to quickly develop broad strategies for the effective implementation of the recommendations and conclusions reached at the conference.

Mr. President.

9. It is pertinent to note that UNIDO's challenge in Africa is enormous given the level of poverty, youth unemployment and the threat of climate change. Therefore, the need for closer cooperation and synergy in the relationship with the various Governments cannot be over-emphasized.

Mr. President.

10. Distinguished Participants, permit me to say that UNIDO has contributed immensely and performed creditably in the implementation of technical assistance programmes in Nigeria such as Common Facility Centres, creation of awareness on small hydro power projects, community agro - based projects, capacity building etc, this efforts is worth commending. However, we would like UNIDO to further collaborate with Nigeria in the following areas:

- i) development of a world class Industrial estate that would attract both local and foreign investors; and
- ii) provision of technical assistance and finance in the area of processing, storage and packaging of seasonal fruits like tomatoes, pepper, onion guava, vegetables and mangos to ensure its availability throughout the year for local consumption, export and to mitigate post harvest losses; and
- iii) provision of technical assistance in capacity building for industrial cluster promotion.

To this end, we are prepared to provide the necessary support and meet with our own obligations.

Mr. President.

11. Let me apprise the distinguished participants that since the inception of the present Administration in Nigeria, a lot of funds have been invested in the areas of critical infrastructures such as Power generation, transportation and Seaport development. In addition, the Central Bank of Nigeria has provided N500 Billion as bail out funds to the manufacturing sector of the country. We are in the process

of producing a industrial sector specific strategy for the implementation of the Industrial Policy as identified in the Vision 20:2020 in line with best practices to create a more conducive environment towards making Nigeria an irresistible destination for investment in Africa.

Mr. President.

12. Thus, our reform efforts have been refocused to achieve three basic objectives as follows:

- I) Increasing industrial productivity;
- II) decrease imports especially of consumer goods;
and
- III) enhancing non-oil export.

Mr. President.

13. The campaign to patronize Made-In-Nigeria Goods was therefore designed to boost industrial production with its attendant benefits. These include among others resuscitation of ailing industries, creation of mass employment for our teeming youths and conserving our foreign exchange earnings.

Mr. President.

14. Let me assure you that the Industrial sector in Nigeria is currently been repositioned as a key sector that will contribute effectively towards achieving the objective of the economic policy of Government and the vision of making Nigeria one of the 20 largest economies in the world by the year 2020; UNIDO has been a partner and is invited to improve this partnership to achieve this target.

15. Thank you.

MS JOSEPHINE YINOE TAPGUN,

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ABUJA, NIGERIA.

NOVEMBER, 2010.