



REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ,
AMBASSADOR BIANCA ODUMEGWU-OJUKWU

On

“JOINT RESPONSES TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES: KOREA-AFRICA SOLIDARITY”
KOREA-AFRICA FOREIGN MINISTERS’ MEETING SEOUL, REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Your Excellency, Mr. Cho Tae-yul, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea,
Distinguished Foreign Ministers and Heads of Delegation,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon. I bring you warm greetings from the Government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and special felicitations from His Excellency President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR. Allow me to begin by expressing Nigeria’s deep appreciation to the Government and people of the Republic of Korea for the warm hospitality and impeccable arrangements for this important meeting.

2. Excellencies, we meet today against the backdrop of a world in flux. The challenges before us are complex, interconnected, and transnational. No single nation, however powerful, can address them alone. Climate change does not respect borders. Pandemics do not require visas. Food insecurity in the Sahel impacts grain prices in Seoul. Conflict in one region disrupts supply chains in another. This is the age of shared vulnerabilities, and therefore, it must also be the age of shared responsibility.

3. The theme of this session, “**Joint Responses to Global Challenges: Korea-Africa Solidarity**”, is therefore both timely and urgent. It compels us to ask: **what does solidarity mean in practice?** For Nigeria, solidarity is not a slogan. It is burden-sharing. It is co-investment in solutions. It is standing together not only when it is convenient, but especially when it is difficult.

4. Let me address three global challenges where Korea-Africa solidarity can deliver measurable impact:
- i. **Climate Change and Energy Transition:** Africa contributes less than 4% of global emissions but suffers disproportionately from climate shocks. The Lake Chad Basin has shrunk by 90% in 60 years. The Sahel faces desertification. Coastal cities from Lagos to Dakar face rising seas. Yet Africa also holds 60% of the world's best solar resources and significant reserves of minerals critical to the green transition. Korea's leadership in green technology, from hydrogen to battery storage, is globally recognized. We propose a Korea-Africa Green Energy Alliance that combines Korean technology with African resources and markets. Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan targets net-zero by 2060 and requires \$410 billion in investment. This is not a plea for aid. This is an invitation to co-create the industries of the future. Let us jointly develop solar farms in the Sahel, battery value chains from DRC to Lagos, and green hydrogen plants from Mauritania to Namibia.
 - ii. **Peace and Security:** The security challenges confronting Africa from terrorism in the Sahel, to piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, to unconstitutional changes of government are not merely African problems. They are global problems. Instability breeds migration pressures, enables illicit arms flows, and creates safe havens for extremism that threatens all of us. Nigeria commends Korea's contributions to UN peacekeeping and its role in the Peacebuilding Commission. We seek deeper Korea-Africa cooperation on capacity building, intelligence sharing, and maritime security. The Korean model of post-conflict reconstruction offers valuable lessons. As Africa implements Silencing the Guns by 2030, we invite Korea to be a strategic partner in training, equipment, and technology for African-led peace operations. Solidarity means standing together for a rules-based international order – from the Korean Peninsula to the Gulf of Guinea.
 - iii. **Global Health and Pandemic Preparedness:** COVID-19 taught us that a threat to one is a threat to all. Africa Center for Disease (CDC) and Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA) have much to share. But we must go further, Africa imports 99% of its vaccines and 95% of its medicines. This is unacceptable and unsustainable. Nigeria therefore welcomes Korea's K-Bio initiative and proposes a Korea-Africa Health Security Compact. Together, we can build regional vaccine manufacturing hubs in Africa with Korean technology

transfer. Together, we can strengthen early warning systems. Together, we must ensure that, in the face of the next pandemic — which is a matter of when, not if — Africa and Korea respond not as donor and recipient, but as joint shareholders in the collective enterprise of global health security.

5. Excellencies, Solidarity also demands reform of the global governance architecture. The international financial system designed in 1945 cannot solve the problems of 2026. Africa's voice must be heard in the UN Security Council, in the IMF, and in the World Bank. We thank Korea for its consistent support for Africa's representation in global institutions. In addition, we ask that this support be translated into concrete action during upcoming reform negotiations. A more representative system is a more legitimate system – and a more effective one.

6. Let me be clear: Nigeria does not come to this table seeking charity. We come seeking partnership. Korea's transformation from a war-torn nation to the world's 10th largest economy in one generation is an inspiration to Africa. It proves that with vision, discipline, and the right partnerships, transformation is possible. Africa today is where Korea was 60 years ago – young, determined, and ready to leap.

7. Finally, let this meeting be remembered as the moment where Korea and Africa chose to confront global challenges not in isolation, but in solidarity. Not in hierarchy, but in partnership. Not for headlines, but for humanity.

8. Nigeria stands ready to walk this road with you. Let us go far, together.

I thank you for your kind attention.