



## **Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja**

### **Press Release**

**No: MFA/PR/2026/104**

#### **NIGERIA, UNITED NATIONS REAFFIRM PARTNERSHIP ON AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT, WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION**

The Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu, received the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Director for Africa, Ms Ahunna Eziakonwa, in audience on Monday, 29th June 2026. The Honourable Minister congratulated the Regional Director on her elevation to the position of United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, describing the appointment as a source of pride for Nigeria and the African continent. She commended her distinguished contributions to international development and reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to strengthening its longstanding partnership with the United Nations in advancing sustainable development, democratic governance and regional prosperity.

The meeting reviewed the strong and enduring collaboration between Nigeria and the United Nations. It placed particular emphasis on democratic governance, sustainable development, regional integration, and peacebuilding. Participants also discussed the implementation of Nigeria's foreign policy priorities under the 4-Ds framework: Development, Democracy, Demography, and Diaspora.

Ms Eziakonwa briefed the Honourable Minister on the recently concluded regional dialogue on AfCFTA implementation. Nigeria hosted the event in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). She commended Nigeria for its leadership in promoting regional economic integration. She also noted that the country's active participation is indispensable to the trade agreement's success. She further acknowledged Nigeria's growing role in shaping Africa's development agenda and expressed UNDP's readiness to continue supporting the Federal Government in advancing inclusive economic growth, entrepreneurship, innovation, and policies that strengthen regional value chains and intra-African trade.

Discussions also focused on initiatives aimed at promoting women's leadership and youth empowerment across Africa. The Regional Director highlighted the success of the UNDP Regional Leadership Programme, which mentors

outstanding young African women through structured leadership development, networking and intergenerational engagement with accomplished African leaders. In this regard, she invited the Honourable Minister to participate as a mentor and speaker during forthcoming engagements with the programme's fellows, noting that her leadership journey and experience in public service would serve as an inspiration to emerging women leaders across the continent. She also extended an invitation to the Honourable Minister to participate in a high-level programme scheduled for August 2026, which will bring together women leaders from across Africa to strengthen women's participation in governance and public leadership.

Responding, Ambassador Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu welcomed the initiatives and reiterated Nigeria's firm support for programmes that promote women's political participation, leadership development and youth empowerment. She stressed that investing in the next generation of African leaders remains essential to achieving sustainable peace, democratic governance and inclusive development across the continent.

The Honourable Minister reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to working closely with the United Nations and UNDP in advancing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union's Agenda 2063, and other initiatives aimed at improving the lives of Africans. Both sides also exchanged views on current regional and global developments, underscoring the importance of multilateral cooperation, resilient institutions, inclusive governance and innovative partnerships in addressing emerging development challenges confronting Africa.

**Signed:**

**Kimiebi Imomotimi Ebienfa, anipr  
Spokesperson  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja  
Tuesday 30, June 2026**