



Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja

Press Release

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NIGERIA REAFFIRMS SUPPORT FOR HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY AS FOREIGN MINISTER RECEIVES ICRC REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

The Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu, received Letters of Commission from the Head of Delegation of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Dr. Ghulam Muhammed Awan, on Wednesday, 1 July 2026. The visit provided an opportunity to reaffirm the longstanding partnership between Nigeria and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in advancing humanitarian assistance, disaster response, community resilience, and the protection of vulnerable populations.

The Honourable Minister congratulated Dr. Ghulam on his appointment and expressed confidence that his tenure would further strengthen the Federation's engagement with Nigeria and the wider West African region. She assured him of the Ministry's continued support in facilitating the important humanitarian mandate of the IFRC. The Minister acknowledged the invaluable contributions of the Nigerian Red Cross Society and the global Red Cross Movement in providing humanitarian assistance to victims of disasters, conflicts, disease outbreaks, and other emergencies, and observed that the Red Cross has, over generations, earned global respect through its commitment to humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and voluntary service.

Reflecting on her personal experiences, Ambassador Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu recalled the longstanding presence of the Red Cross in Nigerian communities, particularly through humanitarian and charitable initiatives that inspired young people to support vulnerable members of society. She noted that the enduring legacy of the organisation continues to foster compassion, volunteerism, and community service across generations. The Minister commended the courage and dedication of Red Cross volunteers who continue to provide life-saving assistance under difficult circumstances, often serving communities affected by humanitarian emergencies without discrimination. She opined that the neutrality of the Red Cross remains one of its greatest strengths, enabling it to assist solely based on need, irrespective of political, ethnic or

religious considerations. She further expressed satisfaction that humanitarian workers and volunteers in Nigeria generally continue to enjoy the confidence and cooperation of local communities, thereby facilitating the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance across the country.

In his remarks, Dr. Ghulam Muhammed Awan thanked the Honourable Minister for the warm reception and reaffirmed the IFRC's commitment to supporting Nigeria's humanitarian response architecture. He explained that the Federation continues to strengthen community-based approaches to disaster preparedness and emergency response through its extensive network of volunteers operating at national, state and community levels. The Regional Representative noted that the Federation's effectiveness is built upon its internationally recognised humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, which enable volunteers to assist all persons in need without discrimination.

Dr. Awan also highlighted the strong partnership between the IFRC and the Nigerian Red Cross Society, describing Nigeria as a strategic country within the Federation's West and Central Africa operations. He expressed optimism that collaboration with the Federal Government would continue to expand in areas of disaster risk reduction, climate resilience, public health, emergency preparedness and humanitarian capacity development.

Both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to strengthening cooperation in promoting humanitarian action, protecting vulnerable communities, supporting disaster preparedness, and advancing sustainable community resilience across Nigeria and the West African region.

Signed:

**Kimiebi Imomotimi Ebienfa, anipr
Spokesperson
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja
Thursday, 2 July 2026**