



Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja

Press Release

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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SEEKS STRONGER PARTNERSHIP WITH FOREIGN RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS TO ADVANCE DIPLOMATIC REFORMS

The Honourable Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sola Enikanolaiye, has reaffirmed the Federal Government's commitment to repositioning Nigeria's foreign service through institutional reforms, enhanced stakeholder collaboration and a foreign policy that directly advances the welfare and prosperity of Nigerians.

The Minister made this known when he received a delegation of the Association of Foreign Relations Professionals of Nigeria (AFRPN), led by its 1st Vice President, Ambassador Sani Saulawa Bala, on Monday, 7 July 2026. Welcoming the delegation, Ambassador Enikanolaiye described the Ministry as the professional home of both serving and retired diplomats and commended the Association for its continued contribution to the development of Nigeria's foreign policy. He emphasised that the wealth of experience within AFRPN remained a valuable national asset that should be harnessed to strengthen the country's diplomatic institutions.

The Honourable Minister stated that the Ministry's foreign policy framework had been refocused to place the interests and welfare of Nigerians at the centre of the country's international engagements. According to him, Nigeria's diplomacy must deliver tangible benefits through economic growth, investment promotion, job creation, poverty reduction, national security and the protection of Nigerians abroad. He also highlighted ongoing reforms aimed at restoring professionalism, transparency and efficiency within the Ministry. These include the revitalisation of policy planning structures, institutional committees, training programmes, inspection mechanisms and merit-based administrative processes to strengthen the effectiveness of the Foreign Service.

Ambassador Enikanolaiye further underscored the importance of enhancing public understanding of the role of diplomacy in national development, noting that greater awareness would contribute to stronger institutional support and improved funding for Nigeria's foreign service. He disclosed that the Ministry was exploring innovative funding mechanisms while engaging relevant government institutions to improve resource mobilization for effective service delivery.

The Minister identified policy research, strategic advisory services, diplomatic training, mentorship, capacity building, public advocacy and strategic communication as key areas for collaboration between the Ministry and AFRPN. He encouraged the Association to continue providing evidence-based policy recommendations that would support informed decision-making on Nigeria's foreign relations.

Speaking on behalf of the delegation, the 1st Vice-President of AFRPN, Ambassador Sani Bala, congratulated the Honourable Minister on his appointment and expressed the Association's confidence in his leadership. He reaffirmed AFRPN's commitment to partnering with the Ministry through policy engagement, specialized diplomatic training, mentorship programmes, research and public advocacy.

Ambassador Bala noted that the Association had consistently supported the Ministry through professional conferences, policy dialogues and capacity-building initiatives, while mobilizing independent resources to complement government efforts. He assured the Minister of the Association's readiness to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing reform agenda.

Members of the delegation also advocated stronger institutional mentorship involving retired diplomats, enhanced professional training, improved recruitment processes, the establishment of a Foreign Service Commission and increased visibility for the activities of Nigeria's diplomatic missions abroad.

In his closing remarks, Ambassador Enikanolaiye thanked the delegation for its valuable contributions and assured members that their recommendations would receive due consideration. He reiterated the Ministry's resolve to strengthen professionalism, accountability and operational efficiency across the Foreign Service through sustained collaboration with stakeholders.

The meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Association of Foreign Relations Professionals of Nigeria to building a modern, professional and results-oriented diplomatic service capable of effectively promoting and protecting Nigeria's national interest.

Signed:

**Kimiebi Imomotimi Ebiefa, anipr
Spokesperson
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja
Tuesday 7, July 2026**