



Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja

Press Release

No: MFA/PR/2026/210

NIGERIA, UAE REAFFIRM COMMITMENT TO DEEPENING BILATERAL RELATIONS

The Honourable Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sola Enikanolaiye, received in audience His Excellency, Salem Saeed Alshamsi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Nigeria at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja, on Wednesday 19 August 2026, for discussions on strengthening the longstanding and mutually beneficial relations between Nigeria and the UAE.

The meeting reviewed developments in bilateral trade and investment, economic cooperation, connectivity, emerging technologies and people-to-people relations. The UAE Ambassador congratulated the Honourable Minister of State on his appointment and reaffirmed the Embassy's readiness to work closely with the Ministry in advancing shared interests. He highlighted the significant growth in bilateral trade, which increased from approximately US\$3 billion to US\$4.3 billion in 2024 and about US\$5 billion in 2025, and expressed optimism that stronger political relations would continue to support increased trade and investment.

Discussions also focused on the UAE-Nigeria Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). The Ambassador noted that the agreement had been ratified by the UAE and expressed hope that its completion on the Nigerian side would further expand bilateral trade and investment. He also highlighted the proposed commencement of Emirates Airline operations in Abuja and ongoing consultations with relevant Nigerian authorities towards strengthening aviation connectivity between both countries.

The Honourable Minister of State expressed appreciation for the UAE's continued commitment to Nigeria and welcomed the growth in non-oil trade and investment. He noted that stronger economic relations were consistent with Nigeria's economic diplomacy priorities, particularly the diversification of export markets and the promotion of manufacturing, services, technology and fintech.

He reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to concluding the necessary processes for CEPA implementation and called for the early convening of the Nigeria-UAE Joint Commission to address outstanding issues and identify new areas of cooperation.

Both sides also recognised the growing potential for cooperation in artificial intelligence, digital technology and other emerging technologies. The Nigerian side expressed interest in knowledge transfer, skills development and capacity building, particularly for young Nigerians, while welcoming increased UAE investment in Nigeria's priority sectors, including infrastructure, technology, energy and financial services.

The meeting further underscored the importance of people-to-people relations and welcomed progress in resolving previous visa-related challenges, which would facilitate increased movement between both countries for business, investment, tourism and other purposes.

The Honourable Minister of State reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to working closely with the UAE to consolidate bilateral relations, while both sides expressed confidence that sustained political engagement, stronger economic cooperation and closer institutional collaboration would translate the cordial Nigeria-UAE relationship into greater benefits for the peoples of both countries.

Signed:

**Kimiebi Imomotimi Ebienfa, anipr
Spokesperson,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja
Thursday 20th August 2026**