



WELCOME/OPENING REMARKS

DELIVERED BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR SOLA ENIKANOLAIYE
HONOURABLE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**AT THE SECOND SEMINAR ON ANTICIPATORY, CYBER, AND
DIGITAL DIPLOMACY (ACDO 2.0)**

WITH THE THEME:

**“FROM AWARENESS TO ACTIVATION: OPERATIONALISING AI,
CYBER AND DIGITAL STATECRAFT FOR NIGERIA'S FOREIGN
POLICY”**

HOSTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

DATE: 4TH – 5TH AUGUST 2026

It is my distinct honour and privilege to welcome our distinguished guests and participants to the second edition of the Seminar on Anticipatory, Cyber and Digital Diplomacy (ACDD 2.0).

2. Your presence reflects a shared recognition that the future of statecraft will increasingly be shaped not only by traditional instruments of power, but by the knowledge of information communication technology and the capacity to adequately adapt to evolving dynamics.

3. This seminal event under the theme: **"From Awareness to Activation: Operationalising AI, Cyber and Digital Statecraft for Nigeria's Foreign Policy"**, builds on the success of its maiden edition in 2025, which initiated an important conversation on the interface of diplomacy, emerging technologies and global governance. A significant outcome of the inaugural seminar was the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence and Cyber Diplomacy Unit, domiciles in the International Organizations Department of the Ministry. When fully operationalized, the Unit will serve as a focal point for the coordination of Nigeria's engagement on emerging technological issues, strengthening of our participation in global digital governance processes and ensuring that our diplomatic engagements adequately reflect the strategic implications of emerging technologies.

Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. In a rapidly evolving global landscape, where technology continuously reshapes the parameters of diplomacy, it is important to highlight that the contemporary international system is undergoing a profound transformation, such that the boundaries between diplomacy, economics, security, science and technology are becoming fluid. Advances in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and digital technology are reshaping the manner in which states engage, communicate, negotiate and pursue their national interests.

5. This seminar, therefore, presents a critical platform for exploring and enhancing Nigeria's capacity to engage effectively on the world stage. Similarly, the evolving diplomatic landscape presents both opportunities and challenges that require a forward-looking and adaptive foreign policy approach. In this connection, we have gathered here today to advance that conversation, exchange ideas, identify innovative approaches and deepen our collaboration, with a view to strengthening Nigeria's diplomatic capacity, in an era of cutting-edge technological transformation.

Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. Events such as this remind us of the significance and inevitability of harnessing anticipatory, cyber, and digital diplomacy. Indeed, this imperative no longer dwells in the domain of the future but in the present, demanding our attention and action. Our discussions will enlighten and transform our understanding of the intersection between diplomacy, global governance and emerging technologies, by drawing from the perspectives of the various stakeholders, including policy makers, technology experts, and international affairs practitioners.

7. Together, we will explore strategies to effectively integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI), cyber, and digital tools into our foreign policy framework, ensuring that Nigeria remains at the forefront of innovation and influence, for a more effective navigation of the dynamic international landscape. Yet, the question must be asked as to the state of preparedness of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Missions abroad. Therefore, our task is to provide answers to this question, with a view to enhancing our capacity and capability in this sphere that is so critical to the work we do, if Nigeria is to remain competitive regionally and in the global arena.

Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Anticipatory diplomacy requires a shift from reactive approaches to proactive engagement. It calls for stronger institutional readiness, enhanced digital capabilities within our diplomatic service and deeper cooperation among government institutions, academia, technology experts and international partners. By embracing AI, cyber capabilities and digital statecraft, Nigeria can strengthen its diplomatic reach, enhance strategic communication and better advance its national interest.

9. As we commence this seminar, I encourage all participants to engage actively by sharing expertise and experiences, building new partnerships and making practical recommendations that will facilitate the shaping of the future of Nigeria's diplomatic intercourse in the digital age. I have no doubt that the discussions over the next two days will culminate in valuable outcomes that will enhance our foreign policy instruments and institutions, resulting in the reinforcement of Nigeria's regional, continental and global leadership.

10. Undoubtedly, this initiative is testament to the proactive approach of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on emerging phenomena, under the able leadership of Ambassador Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu. Furthermore, I express the Ministry's sincere appreciation to the British High Commission

in Abuja, for its continued partnership and support in making this seminar possible. Your commitment to promoting innovation, capacity-building and cooperation in international diplomacy is greatly appreciated. Rest assured that the Ministry remains committed to strengthening that capacity of our Foreign Service through specialised training, improved institutional frameworks and development of digitally competent diplomats, capable of contributing meaningfully to future global conversations and engagements on technology and diplomacy.

Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. It is against this backdrop that I encourage all participants to approach this seminar with a focus on practical outcomes. I am confident that the insights and recommendations arising from the deliberations during this event will contribute to strengthening Nigeria's foreign policy outlook and positioning of our country at the forefront of diplomatic innovation in Africa and beyond.

12. Having said that, it is now my distinct honour and privilege to formally declare the Second Seminar on Anticipatory, Cyber and Digital Diplomacy open. May this seminar inspire thought, action, and collaboration towards operationalizing digital statecraft, and driving Nigeria's foreign policy objectives with foresight and precision.

13. I wish you all a successful and rewarding seminar.

14. Thank you.

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