MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ABUJA

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NIGERIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO UN TOURISM PRESENTS LETTERS OF COMMISSION TO SECRETARY-GENERAL, SHAIKHA AL NOWAIS

The Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the Kingdom of Spain, His Excellency Dr. Okezie Victor Ikpeazu, has presented his Letters of Commission to Her Excellency Shaikha Al Nowais, Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UN Tourism), formally accrediting him as the Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the specialised UN agency.

The presentation ceremony, held at the UN Tourism headquarters in Madrid, on Friday, 13 November 2026, marked the formal assumption of Dr. Ikpeazu's diplomatic duties as Nigeria's chief envoy to the global tourism body. It reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to deepening its engagement with the international tourism community, and advancing its strategic interests within the UN system. Ambassador Ikpeazu was accompanied to the ceremony by Mr. Kimiebi Imomotimi Ebienfa, Senior Counsellor at the Embassy of Nigeria in Madrid.

During a brief meeting held shortly after the presentation, Secretary-General Al Nowais lauded Nigeria's active participation in the activities of the organisation and expressed her readiness to work closely with Ambassador Ikpeazu in further strengthening the partnership between Nigeria and UN Tourism.

In his remarks, Ambassador Ikpeazu conveyed the warm wishes of His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, to the Secretary-General and used the occasion to highlight Nigeria's enormous tourism potential. He noted that the country's tourism space spanned its diverse cultures, vibrant music, the globally acclaimed Nollywood film industry, colourful festivals, and signature seasonal events such as the "Detty December", which continue to attract visitors from across the world.

As Permanent Representative, Dr. Ikpeazu will be responsible for articulating Nigeria's tourism priorities, fostering partnerships with Member States, and promoting inward investment as well as technical cooperation opportunities within the UN Tourism framework. His mandate aligns with Nigeria's broader economic diversification agenda, which recognises tourism and creative sectors as key drivers of economic growth and employment generation.

The presentation of credentials to Secretary-General Al Nowais, the first woman to lead UN Tourism in its 50-year history, signals a renewed phase of constructive engagement between Nigeria and the organisation.

Nigeria has demonstrated active participation in UN Tourism initiatives, including the recent admission of the Eko Tourism Foundation as an Affiliate Member during the 126th Session of the Executive Council in Toledo, Spain.

The concurrent accreditation of Ambassador Ikpeazu as Permanent Representative to UN Tourism positions him to leverage Madrid's status as the organisation's headquarters to advance Nigeria's cultural diplomacy.

Signed:
Oluwafemi Adeniyi
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