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NIGERIA, SWITZERLAND PLEDGE STRONGER BILATERAL COOPERATION AT 11TH ROUND OF POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS

Nigeria and Switzerland have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and expanding cooperation across various sectors of mutual interest at the 11th Round of Nigeria-Switzerland Bilateral Consultations held in Bern, Switzerland, from 5 to 6 November 2026.

The consultations provided an opportunity for both countries to review the state of bilateral relations, assess progress in the implementation of previous agreements, address outstanding issues and explore new areas of mutually beneficial cooperation. The Nigerian delegation to the meeting was led by Ambassador Dr. Dunoma Umar Ahmed, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who, in his opening remarks, reaffirmed Nigeria's unwavering commitment to consolidating its longstanding cordial and mutually beneficial relations with Switzerland.

Reflecting on over six decades of diplomatic relations between the two countries, Ambassador Ahmed noted that the partnership had continued to thrive on the foundations of mutual respect, friendship and constructive engagement. He highlighted the considerable potential for enhanced cooperation in political dialogue, trade and investment, migration, legal cooperation, peace and security, humanitarian assistance, education, scientific research and cultural exchange.

Recalling the 10th Round of Political Consultations held in Abuja in June 2025, the Permanent Secretary emphasised the importance of sustained political dialogue and effective institutional engagement in advancing the Nigeria-Switzerland partnership. In this regard, he highlighted significant high-level engagements held in 2026, including the participation of Vice President Kashim Shettima, GCON, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, as well as visits to Nigeria by the Swiss Vice President in March and the Federal Councillor for Home Affairs, Ms. Élisabeth Baume-Schneider, in June 2026. He noted that these exchanges had further strengthened bilateral ties and opened new avenues for economic, cultural and institutional cooperation.

Ambassador Ahmed acknowledged Switzerland's comparative advantages in innovation, technology, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, financial services, and technical and vocational education. He observed that these strengths, when complemented by Nigeria's large and dynamic consumer market, strategic position as a gateway to the African market, abundant natural resources and substantial human capital, offered significant opportunities for mutually beneficial economic partnerships.

Against this backdrop, the Permanent Secretary encouraged increased Swiss investment in Nigeria's priority sectors, including agriculture and agro-processing, manufacturing, renewable energy, infrastructure, healthcare, pharmaceuticals and digital technology. He also expressed Nigeria's readiness to explore the possibility of a bilateral free trade arrangement, while calling for improved market access for Nigerian non-oil exports, greater value addition and stronger business-to-business engagements to promote enterprise development, technology transfer and employment generation.

On migration, Ambassador Ahmed reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to the Migration Partnership established in 2011, and called for strengthened cooperation in addressing irregular migration and human trafficking. He further advocated enhanced collaboration in promoting regular migration pathways, skills development and the protection of migrants' rights.

The Permanent Secretary expressed Nigeria's appreciation for Switzerland's sustained humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts, particularly its support for vulnerable populations in North-East Nigeria and the wider Lake Chad Basin. He also identified opportunities for deeper cooperation in peace and security, humanitarian assistance, mutual legal assistance, asset recovery, education, scientific research and cultural exchange. In particular, he acknowledged Switzerland's constructive role in facilitating the restitution of Nigerian cultural artefacts.

On multilateral cooperation, Ambassador Ahmed called for sustained collaboration between both countries within the United Nations and other relevant international platforms, particularly in promoting the reform of the UN Security Council towards an expanded, more representative and equitable structure. He also emphasised the importance of working together to advance international peace and security, sustainable development and effective global governance.

The consultations enabled both countries to take stock of progress in their bilateral partnership, review the implementation of existing commitments and identify priority areas requiring further attention and follow-up by relevant institutions. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of sustained diplomatic engagement, strengthened institutional cooperation and effective implementation of agreed commitments in advancing their shared interests and further consolidating the longstanding partnership between Nigeria and Switzerland.

Signed:

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