

**FULL TEXT OF SPECIAL REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE
MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, DR OGBONNAYA ONU,
AT THE SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE INTERNATIONAL ENERGY
CHARTER BY NIGERIA ON TUESDAY 7TH MARCH 2017, HOLDING,
AT THE PRESIDENTIAL VILLA, ABUJA**

I am delighted to address this historic gathering today marking the important occasion of our beloved country, Nigeria, signing the International Energy Charter. Today, as Africa's most populous nation, we say it loud and clear that Nigeria has moved beyond an observer status in this important global body to become the full member it should and has become. Indeed, this ceremony has generated so much interest from key State Parties from across Europe, Asia, Africa and other regions of the world. The sheer number of the very distinguished guests who have attended this ceremony shows the interest it has deservedly attracted.

Before I continue, let me pay glowing tribute to an important leader of our beloved country in making today's event both historic and important. Indeed, our hearts go out to our dear Mr. President, Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, for graciously granting approval for Nigeria to join the Charter, the entry ceremony of which we are witnessing today. I salute his vision and commitment to strengthening the role Nigeria should play in international co-operation for the good of the nation.

Nigeria is resolute in her conviction that she will benefit immensely from her membership of the Charter. It is our strong intention as a nation to utilize the principles of the Charter to improve our energy systems by sharing modern and evolving technologies, enhance local content through skill and capacity enhancement, pursue the attainment of international best practices benchmark in policy implementation and strengthen transparency in energy utilization investment, thereby enhancing Foreign Direct Investment needed to strengthen our economy. In doing these, we shall draw strength from the gains we have already made to enhance the deployment of research and innovation as important components of our resolve to diversify our economy, create jobs, reduce poverty and stimulate national rebirth.

I am confident that the overall thrust of Nigeria's Energy Policy will be better served when the gap in sustainable energy supply in the country will be narrowed by our co-operation with the International Energy Charter. This will remarkably help improve Nigeria's energy supply situation

necessary to improve standard of living, reduce poverty and enhance prosperity.

In the journey that Nigeria has begun today, we thank the representative of the Depository Country – The Netherlands – for her commitment to the administration of this Charter with Nigeria as a signatory. I also thank the Secretary General of the Energy Secretariat, Dr. Urban Rusnak; representative of Turkmenistan and Japan, the current Chairman and Deputy Chair of the Conference of the Energy Charter, resident representative of the EU Delegation in Abuja, the President of ECOWAS and others too numerous to mention. I thank you for being there for Nigeria. I assure you all that today's ceremony will strengthen the role of energy as an important instrument for economic rebirth and social progress in Nigeria.

We are hopeful that our engagement with the International Energy Charter will be to our mutual benefit for both Nigeria and a better world.

I thank you. God bless Nigeria.