

**STATEMENT**  
**AT THE OPENING CEREMONY**  
**OF THE**  
**AFRICAN UNION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON**  
**THE ABUJA + 12 SPECIAL SUMMIT ON**  
**HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND MALARIA**

**BY**

**THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF**  
**STATE II FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE**  
**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

**13<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2013**

**ABUJA-NIGERIA**

## **Protocol**

### **Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to Nigeria for the African Union Abuja + 12 Special Summit on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. More than a decade ago, Africa began the tedious battle against the scourge of communicable and non-communicable diseases. I am happy to state that there have been positive improvements in the eradication of these diseases in Africa due to our commitments.

2. A Summit of this nature is a crucial moment in our history as we reflect on our actions and inactions in the process of intensifying efforts to eradicate HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis and other infectious diseases. The theme of the Summit, "Ownership, Accountability and Sustainability of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Response in Africa: Past, Present and the Future", is aimed to sustain renewed leadership and stewardship by African leaders to eradicate HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

3. From global statistics, Africa has the highest percentage of people, including pregnant women, living with HIV as well as suffering 90% of Malaria related deaths. It also tops the chart of Tuberculosis epidemic in the world. These situations call for concern.

4. We have to underscore the actionable steps Africa has taken in combating these diseases. During the Roll Back Malaria Summit in Nigeria on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2000, African Leaders targeted to halve malaria mortality by 2010 through *inter alia* actions at country,

regional and with partners to ensure management, provision and allocation of resources towards malaria control programme. In the following year still in Abuja, African leadership in their consideration of the scourge of Tuberculosis pledged to set a target of allocation of at least 15% of their annual budget to the improvement of health sector.

5. I am delighted to note that there has been recorded improvement in our health sector including the lowering of infection rates since the adoption of the Abuja declaration but lots still remain to be done. Our targets should be the total eradication of the diseases.

6. This informs the imperativeness for the periodic review of the status of implementation of the African Frameworks initiated in 2006, to identify the prospects and challenges and to articulate ways to achieving the ultimate objective of a disease free continent. In this regard, I wish to commend the Countries and the Regional Economic Communities that have mainstreamed issues of infectious diseases into their national policies and are also taking steps to scale up the fight against these diseases.

7. It is important for Africa to take issues of the diseases out of the domain of political debate. The ongoing debate on the Post-2015 Millennium Development Goals, while offering an important political platform to focus on general issues, Africa needs to fashion out a mechanism for owning and sustaining the fight against these diseases.

## **Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen**

8. This Summit should serve as a defining moment to achieve our objective of strengthening and deepening our commitment to roll back these diseases from our continent. The economy of these diseases impacts so much on the socio-economic lives of our continent.

9. Let me conclude with the statement of His Excellency Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria and the Chairperson of the 2000 Summit on Roll Back Malaria. **"Today we have begun to write the final chapter of the history of Malaria. We have raised the hopes and expectations of our people - we must not let them down. We cannot afford to let down. May malaria be rolled out and development rolled in all African countries"**.

10. This statement is a perpetual reminder of the huge challenge to Member States to roll out HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria from the continent.

11. Welcome once again to the beautiful city of Abuja and thank you for your attention.