

**Mr. Chairman,**

**Your Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. Nigeria would like to associate itself fully with this joint initiative being undertaken by the AU, ECOWAS, the EU and the United Nations aimed at mobilizing adequate financial resources in support of the Malian Defence and Security Forces (MDSF) as well as the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA).

Excellencies,

2. The collaboration between these four organizations on this initiative is a clear demonstration of international solidarity, sympathy and cooperation required for a definitive resolution of the Malian crisis which has serious international consequences.
3. Nigeria, therefore, welcomes the efforts of these four organizations in putting together this donors' conference in acknowledgment of the common humanity of the Malian people with the rest of the world.
4. Nigeria has spared no effort since the inception of the Malian crisis in pursuing the realization of the ECOWAS two-pronged strategy of dialogue and military action; a strategy which has since been endorsed by the AU and the United Nations, the latter through Resolution 2085 adopted by the Security Council on 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2012.
5. The Resolution, among other things, provided for the establishment of a Trust Fund to which Member States could contribute. The establishment of the fund was to be done in collaboration with the AU and ECOWAS, hence the exercise which we are engaged in today.

Your Excellencies,

6. A lot has happened since the adoption of Resolution 2085. It is now clear that the troop level of 3,300 envisaged in that Resolution will be far exceeded giving the number of pledges received from Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) both from within the sub-region and beyond, thus far. While Nigeria welcomes this robust response by our partners in these efforts, we call for urgent adoption of another resolution by the Security Council that will reflect the unfolding situation.
  
7. Nigeria will also like to seize this opportunity to commend France for responding in a proactive manner to the request by the Malian authorities to stem the southward advance of the terrorists and criminal armed gangs in Northern Mali.
  
8. We commend also the various countries that have responded by contributing more troops than earlier envisaged, a clear indication of genuine commitment and determination to resolve the crisis in Mali.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Nigeria regrets the recent attack on the gas plant in the neighbouring and brotherly country of Algeria, which led to the loss of many innocent lives involving many nationalities. We, however, praise and congratulate the Algerian authorities for the swift and bold action taken to stop the dastardly intentions of the terrorist and criminal gangs aimed at engulfing the entire neighbourhood in an inferno.
  
10. From the onset of the Malian crisis, Nigeria has taken a number of steps to express our solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Mali and, also, in response to the actions taken by our sub-regional body, ECOWAS.

11. Specifically, Nigeria has:

- a. Commenced the deployment of 900 combat soldiers and 300 Air Force personnel to Mali as part of AFISMA. Nigeria has so far provided about \$32 million for the immediate deployment and logistical support for the troops.
- b. Prior to this, Nigeria dispatched relief and humanitarian supplies amounting to US\$2 million; and
- c. Nigeria has undertaken the re-construction and refurbishment of a number of clinics in the military barracks of some of the Malian Defence and Security Forces, as part of the Security Sector Reform (SSR) intervention, to the tune of US\$5.5 million.

12. At the political level, I visited Mali, in my capacity as co-mediator, on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012, to urge national consultations and dialogue in Bamako with a view to promoting a united political front on the basis of the ECOWAS roadmap for the resolution of the crisis in Mali.

Your Excellencies,

13. I am particularly delighted that Africa has come together to mobilize support for Mali. Nigeria's support for Mali is a continuous process. For this reason, the pledge I make today (of US\$.....) is in further expression of our commitment to a worthy international effort.

14. We suggest however, that the funds generated here should be used not only for defence and security purposes, but also for the provision of necessary humanitarian support.

15. Nigeria believes that the ultimate resolution of the Malian crisis rests with the implementation of the ECOWAS peace plan, which provides for the restoration of constitutional order and promotion of democracy in the country. The situation in Mali calls for cooperation, sacrifice and action on the part of strategic partners, the countries of the sub-region, Africa and indeed the entire international community.

Your Excellencies,

16. In the past, Africa surmounted many challenges with the support of the international community. As we commence the celebration of the golden jubilee anniversary of our unique continental organisation, I have no doubt that even the challenge posed by the situation in Mali can be overcome as we work towards the inauguration of an era of peace, security, solidarity, stability, democracy and cooperation in our continent.

I thank you.