STATEMENT BY NIGERIA AT THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF
THE THIRTEENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON CRIME
PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DOHA, QATAR FROM
12-19 APRIL, 2015

Mr. President

Let me start by congratulating you on your election as the chairman of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. I have no doubt that under your able leadership the work of the Congress will progress to a successful conclusion. My congratulation also goes to other members of Bureau. I assure you and the Bureau of the support and cooperation of my delegation.

2. It is my great pleasure and honour to be in this beautiful City of Doha, particularly among special friends to deliberate on the global common good to humanity. On behalf of members of my delegation, I wish to express my deepest profound appreciation to the government and people of the State of Qatar for the wonderful hospitality and arrangements made for this 13th congress.

3. Furthermore, I must seize this opportunity to applaud the Secretariat for providing us with necessary documentation for this conference including the facilitation of the regional preparatory meetings.

4. Nigeria associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the Africa Group.

Mr. President

5. My delegation wishes to underscore the importance of the congress and the theme “Integrating Crime prevention and Criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and public participation”. The impact and grave consequences of corruption, human trafficking, smuggling of migrant, piracy, firearms, drug trafficking and terrorism etc., on our respective countries cannot be overemphasized. This calls for concerted global action and shared responsibility on the part of all Nations. In this connection, my delegation wishes to express our appreciation to the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime for the tireless efforts it has
made since the First Conference in elaborating and promoting the ideals of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organised Crime and its protocols and the invaluable support to State Parties in their quest to implement the Convention.

6. Nigeria like other countries is committed to a fair, effective and transparent Criminal Justice System. We are also committed to Independent and impartial Institutions that drive the Criminal Justice System. In line with our strong political will, our Criminal Justice System continue to be under constant review to meet the changing challenging trend in crime prevention and criminal justice and to improve the capacity of Criminal Justice Administrators to prevent, prosecute and punish criminal offenders.

7. In dealing with human trafficking, the National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP) which is dedicated to combating human trafficking and related crimes has made commendable progress in the discharge of its mandate. NAPTIP continues to maintain close collaboration with other Law Enforcement Agencies and the UNODC in the implementation of programs aimed at strengthening our capacity to discharge our obligations under the convention. Government is also taking measures to address the concerns and weaknesses identified in our Human Trafficking laws.

Mr. President

8. Nigeria strongly condemns terrorism in all its ramifications as nothing can justify the wanton destruction of innocent lives and properties that we have witnessed in Nigeria and across the globe. Nigeria re-affirms its determination to work in concert with international community to fight terrorism. Our national anti-terrorism efforts are being conducted within the rule of law and the observance of international human right norms. We enacted the Terrorism Prohibition Act in 2011 to provide the requisite legal frame work for the war against terrorism and terrorism financing. In response to the gaps identified in the regime, we have presented the Terrorism Prevention Bill 2012 to the National Assembly for enactment into law to address the weaknesses in the extant law.

Mr. President

9. Terrorism remains a transnational crime that requires international collaboration to tackle. A coalition consisting of
Nigeria and four other West African nations namely Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger have deployed allied troops to fight the growing regional threat of Boko Haram terrorist group is as a result of this ongoing collaboration. As at today almost all the territories occupied by insurgents/terrorists have been reclaimed while all internally displaced citizens are going back to their communities and normalcy is returning to the affected areas. Nigeria registers its profound gratitude to all its neighbouring States as well as the International community and the UNODC for their support and assistance. In addition, Nigeria has recently released the National Counter- Terrorism Strategy (NACFEST) 2014 and a National Security Strategy document of 2014 to deal with other emerging crimes.

Mr. President

10. Nigeria recognises the incidence of corruption on our development agenda and is fully committed to discharging her obligations under the relevant international legal instruments aimed at combating corruption. Our resolve is well demonstrated in our various representations to the Working Groups on Corruption Prevention and Asset recovery. Nigeria stands ready to participate fully in all international initiatives aimed at fashioning out strategies to stamp out corruption. My delegation wishes to reiterate the importance of international cooperation in the fight against corruption.

11. While acknowledging that remarkable success has been recorded in asset recovery, particularly in recent months, Nigeria appreciates the quantum of assets so far returned from foreign jurisdictions and looks forward to the return of other stolen assets that have been traced or identified in several other jurisdictions.

12. At the domestic level, Nigeria’s Anti-Corruption Agencies have successfully prosecuted corruption cases and seized and recovery stolen assets within the country. In addition it has reduced corruption-prone processes through regular System Studies and Review of government departments and Agencies. We have set up Citizen’s Anticorruption Volunteer Corps, incorporated the teaching of anticorruption studies in our tertiary educational institutions, assisted professional bodies; Lawyers, Engineers, Accountants, etc. to better regulate and sanction
infractions, while increasing collaboration with the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), among other initiatives.

13. Nigeria has also been able to return assets to other victim States through the adoption of flexible approaches, which often go beyond the minimum thresholds in the implementation of the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Convention (UNCAC). For instance, Nigeria has afforded other jurisdictions Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) and continues to do so, even in the absence of bi-lateral treaties, in compliance with the UNCAC.

Mr. President

14. The significant progress Nigeria has made in the recovery of stolen assets has only been possible through cooperation. We call on the Member States to continue to take measures to prevent, prosecute and punish corruption; illegal transfers abroad and laundering of assets derived from corruption; cooperate and assist in their identification, freezing and seizure; recovery and unconditional return of such assets to their countries of origin and simplification of legal procedures.

Mr. President

15. Nigeria calls on Member States to consider, among other effective measures within the frame work of their national legislation, criminalizing activities related to all forms and aspects of trafficking in cultural property and related offences by using a broad definition that can be applied to all stolen, looted, unlawfully excavated and illicitly exported or imported cultural property. We also invites them to make trafficking in cultural property, including stealing and looting at archaeological and other cultural sites, a serious crime as defined in article 2 of the United Nations Convention against transnational Organized Crime, with a view to fully utilizing that convention for the purpose of extensive international cooperation in fighting all forms and aspects of trafficking in cultural property and related offences.

Mr. President

16. As we focus on integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges, sufficient attention need to be paid to the root causes of crime across the globe especially in developing countries. Poverty, underdevelopment, unemployment, food
security are some of the reasons proffered for the rising crime wave. Our post-2015 Development Agenda should therefore take cognizance of these issues in Sustainable Development Agenda.

17. Our Extradition Act and Mutual Legal Assistance Legislation are being reviewed, this is in addition to the implementation of ECOWAS Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and ECOWAS Convention on Extradition. Nigeria is also exploring the possibility of using the Transnational Organised Crime Convention as a basis for Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition pending the conclusion of the requisite bilateral agreements.

18. I wish to once more, convey the immense gratitude of the Government and People of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to UNODC and all our development partners for their support and technical assistance which has contributed in no small measure in equipping and strengthening our national institutions in the fight against crime prevention and criminal justice.

19. Lastly, Mr. President, Nigeria remains undeterred and unflinching in our resolve to support democracy and uphold democratic values, rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights and other fundamental freedoms. To this effect, our recently concluded general election has reinforced the democratic traditions in Nigeria. These are necessary imperatives to achieve peace, stability and development.

20. I thank you for your kind attention.