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STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE

THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ON AGENDA ITEM 27: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SUB ITEMS (a - c)

NEW YORK, 7TH OCTOBER, 2013
Mr. Chairman,

Thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me the floor. I wish to begin by congratulating you and members of the Bureau on your election. My delegation is confident that you will bring your wealth of experience to bear on the proceedings of the Committee. We thank the Secretary-General for his insightful reports on the Agenda item under consideration today.

2. My delegation associates itself with the statements made by Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and Ethiopia on behalf of the African Group and wishes to add Nigeria’s perspective to the debate.

3. We appreciate the opportunity to share the progress and challenges confronting the Social Development Sector as they relate to Persons With Disabilities, the Family, Older Persons, the Youth and other vulnerable groups in the country.

4. In order to strengthen our commitment to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) and its Optional Protocol, both of which we have ratified. The National Assembly is working assiduously to ensure the passage of the Nigerian Disability Bill into law. When passed into law, it would provide for the education, health care and the protection of the social, economic, political and civil rights of Persons With Disabilities. In addition, the Act will provide for the establishment of a National Commission for Persons With Disabilities (NCPWDs) which will serve as the platform for the enforcement of all provisions of the Disability Act.

5. To ensure effective service delivery to Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), a Baseline Survey on Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) was carried out in 2009 and again in 2010. Disability data obtained from the surveys have aided the government in the formulation of appropriate intervention
measures and strategies for mainstreaming of Persons With Disabilities towards participation in the socio-economic and political development of the nation.

6. We are collaborating with local and international organizations including Disabled People Organizations (DPOs) at Federal, State and Local Government levels to formulate policies, plan and implement initiatives that will incorporate PWDs in the country’s development agenda. We are also establishing structures to mainstream disability perspectives across all the Ministries, Departments and Agencies at the Federal level. My country in 2012 endorsed and sponsored the election of Ms Ekaete Judith Umoh as Vice President (Africa Region), Rehabilitation International (RI) during the 22nd World Congress of RI held in Incheon, South Korea in October, as a mark of her commitment in issues of Disabilities.

7. We are currently undertaking a National Survey of Social Welfare Correctional Institutions the outcome of which will be utilized for the improvement of our juvenile criminal justice administration for proper guidance and correctional measures to re-integrate discharged juvenile ex-offenders into their families and communities with re-settlement tools to create jobs and prevent recidivism.

8. Worthy of note is systems and institutional strengthening of the Social Development Workforce in Nigeria. My Government is working in collaboration with UNICEF/USAID in this respect. A survey has been undertaken to identify the Social Development Workforce in Nigeria to enable capacity building that would ensure quality social welfare delivery services.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Nigeria remains committed to observing 15th May every year as the International Day of Families in line with the proclamation in General Assembly Resolution 47/237. We have used the occasion to promote
understanding of Family issues among citizens and facilitating the mainstreaming of such issues in national Development. Nigeria is earnestly looking forward to celebrating the 20th Anniversary of this Day in 2014 in consonance with the UN position on this matter.

10. Nigeria has also developed robust family-targeted empowerment programmes of skills acquisition and financial grants to families in Nigeria for job creation and poverty alleviation. This includes the empowerment of Persons With Disabilities funded by the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Referral cases and work programmes for reintegration of vulnerable and stranded migrant children with their families is being carried out by the Federal Government through the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in collaboration with the International Voluntary Organisation/International Social Services (ISS). The reintegration measure helps to remove impediments to children’s wellbeing as well as enhance their capacity to function maximally as members of the family unit.

Mr. Chairman,

11. Nigeria is further committed to the various declarations in respect of Older Persons such as the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPA) 2002 and other resolutions on this matter. Concrete actions are being instituted to realize the goals and objectives of these declarations. Aids and Appliances are consistently distributed to Centres for the Care of Older Persons in Nigeria. These are aimed to improve the condition of Older Persons in Old People’s Homes and the community.

12. We also celebrate the United Nations International Days of Older Persons every year, which form the basis for continuous advocacy on issues on Ageing and facilitates the mainstreaming of Older Persons in the development Agenda.
13. In conclusion, we would like to assure the international community that the Nigerian Government remains firmly committed to ensuring inclusion of issues of all vulnerable groups in its national development agenda.

14. I thank you for your kind attention.