

WELCOME ADDRESS

BY

**DR DALHATU SARKI TAFIDA, OFR,
NIGERIA HIGH COMMISSIONER TO THE
UNITED KINGDOM**

AT

**THE CONFERENCE ON INVESTING IN
NIGERIA,
SAVOY HOTEL, LONDON,
WEDNESDAY, 22ND APRIL 2009**

**His Excellency Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCON
Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria**

Honourable Ministers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

**Your Excellencies, Governors of the various States of the Federal
Republic of Nigeria**

**Baroness Lynda Chalker of Wallasey,
Chairperson, Africa Matters Limited and Coordinator of the
Honourary International Investor Council on Nigeria**

**Ambassador Dozie Nwanna, OON
Deputy High Commissioner of Nigerian to the United Kingdom,**

**Members of the Delegation of the Vice President of the Federal
Republic of Nigeria**

Gentlemen of the Press,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with profound delight that I welcome you to this important Conference, organised to ensure that the interest of foreign investors in our country is re-ignited, retained and sustained beyond the current global economic downturn.

The case for investing in Nigeria can never be overstated. It rests squarely on the level and quality of comparative advantages which the country possesses, including but by no means limited to Nigeria's huge and resourceful population, immense but largely untapped natural resources that are unparalleled in Africa.

Above all, the present Administration has adopted a clear vision and a road map of reforms and programme implementation through the Seven-point agenda with a view to translating these innate endowments into development assets that would make the country one of the top twenty most developed economies by the year 2020. Nigeria operates in investment climate that is

very competitive and volatile. And for the foreign investor, it is about choices. Hence, the recognition on the part of Government that, for Nigeria to continue to attract and retain foreign investments, it must make itself competitive. It must assert its credentials as an emerging market that is committed to the implementation of a solid domestic agenda of economic, political and social reforms, aimed at enhancing the country's capacity to attract and retain foreign investments that add value to the daily lives of the people through job and wealth creation, efficient infrastructure, access to education, health and other social services.

The timing of this conference could not have been more propitious, coming as it does at the most difficult period of global economic and financial down turn, comparable in its scope, intensity and impact to the economic depression of the 1930's. Organising this conference at this time is a demonstration of the confidence in the present Administration in Nigeria and an abiding faith in the future of the country. The country has chosen to face the challenge of the times head on rather than waiting for the economic recession in the United Kingdom to ease before reaching out of our borders once again in search of foreign investment.

This is why I must congratulate the main facilitators of today's event, Africa Matters and DMA for their ingenuity and the sustained interest in our country.

Times like this task the imagination of the human spirit,

That beyond the present storm is a calm sea leading to Nigeria as an investment haven of choice.