

ADDRESS BY

H.E. MUHAMMADU BUHARI

**PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER- IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

**AT THE PLENARY SESSION OF
THE THIRD INDIA-AFRICA FORUM SUMMIT**

NEW DELHI, INDIA, 29TH OCTOBER 2015

- **Excellency, Pranab Mukherji, President of India;**
- **Excellencies, Presidents and Heads of State of African Nations;**
- **Excellency, Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India;**
- **Prime Ministers of African Countries;**
- **Distinguished Delegates;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I wish on behalf of my delegation, to convey our warm appreciation to the People and Government of India for hosting this Summit in the beautiful and historic city of New Delhi, and for the excellent arrangements that have been made for our deliberations. I should also thank the Prime Minister and his Government for the cordial reception and warm hospitality that have been extended to us since our arrival.

2. I am delighted to participate at this Summit, being the third in the India-Africa Forum since its inauguration. I note, with great satisfaction, that the Forum has provided a useful platform for interaction between Africa and India. It should therefore deepen in practical terms, the South-South Cooperation that countries of the South have desired for so long. Africa has a number of partnership arrangements with other countries of the world, but this promises to be different as it is not only a partnership between friends, but between countries and peoples who have had similar historical experiences of colonial rule.

3. The potentials of this arrangement is evidenced by the growing volume and improved terms of trade between Africa and India as well as the increasing presence of several Indian enterprises in Africa.

4. Today's gathering is different in the sense that for the first time since the inception of this platform in 2008, all African leaders have been invited to participate in reshaping and strengthening relations between Africa and India. This contrasts with the two previous editions when only a select number of African countries participated. Our forum is intended to serve as a platform for Indian and African leaders to rub minds on issues affecting their respective peoples and governments and most importantly, to find effective and innovative means of addressing problems on the basis of equality, shared values and mutual benefits.

5. At the first India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi in 2008, it was agreed that the two sides should work together to chart a new beginning which would build a much more robust and enduring relationship to propel their aspirations into concrete benefits for their peoples. I believe that this meeting provides us the opportunity to review and evaluate what has been achieved since 2008.

Excellencies,

6. The current international economic and political environment is far from being favourable, particularly for developing countries. As the global economy appeared set to recover from the economic crisis of the recent past, the positive trend is now threatened by the current stock market collapse in some parts of the world and commodity crisis in others.

7. Fresh political conflicts have erupted, accentuated by terrorism and extremism in the most awful forms. Trans-border crimes, illegal arms trade, irregular migration and cybercrimes have all added to the new global threats that demand our collective action. Amidst all these challenges we now have double standards in defining globalisation. We must collectively insist that globalization as defined by the international community should mean free movement of goods, services and people without any hinderance or exception.

8. Furthermore, the world is facing the challenge of Climate Change in which Africa remains badly affected with severe threats to food security and social stability. The global institutions of governance are outmoded and under extreme stress, calling for new approaches that reflect changing realities and shift of economic and political power. From the West to the East, North to South, virtually every country in our respective regions is faced with unacceptable levels of poverty, unemployment and a youth bulge.

9. India and Africa must develop a new spirit of solidarity, cooperation and partnership to confront these emerging threats. We must recognise that, in this globalised age, we all live interconnected lives in a fragile planet. We must therefore work together to uplift the lives of our people in a manner that preserves the sustainability of our living environment.

10. All these challenges call for a renewed sense of urgency among African countries for economic development. It is an open secret that Africa possesses all the prerequisites to become a major growth region of the world. There is therefore the need for India and Africa to strive together to build a virile framework for partnership and cooperation in order to address common challenges in key areas including health, education, interconnectivity, power and employment generation as well as the strengthening of institutions of governance and democracy.

Excellencies,

11. In order to meet increased demand for Indian goods and services in Africa and with the right environment, India needs to improve its trade ties and investment flows to the continent with greater value addition and transfer of technology. The private sectors should equally be fully involved in the efforts to integrate our economies.

12. The various laudable policy pronouncements of Prime Minister Modi, including the **Digital and the Skills India** initiatives, which we have followed with keen interest, should put India in a better position to engage Africa in all fields of joint endeavour, not least, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), health care delivery, defence-industrial complex and good governance, among others. India should also be much stricter in enforcing quality of exports especially foods and medicaments to Africa.

13. Africa expects investment flows to the real sector to promote start-up of African enterprises. Our over-riding objectives are to tackle the challenge of unemployment, wealth creation, food security through farmer-centred agricultural revolution, the provision of essential infrastructure, and support for industrial development centres for small and medium scale enterprises. These are just a few of the areas that require outside investment.

14. We are convinced that Africa can only leverage productively on the potentials of partnership arrangements in an atmosphere of political stability and security of lives and property as well as in a policy environment that guarantees the sanctity of contracts on the basis of the rule of law. This is why we have, since we assumed responsibility of governance in Nigeria in May this year, embarked upon the task of re-focusing our governance on the real needs of the vast majority of Nigerians.

15. As a Government, we have demonstrated our strong determination to change the direction and content of governance, including the management of our resources through accountability, transparency and result-orientation in governance. We are confident that India, as a tested friend and dependable partner, will always stand shoulder to shoulder with us in the discharge of the mandate entrusted to us by our people.

Excellencies,

16. Today, the people of Africa and India stand at the threshold of a historic opportunity. We account for a whole range of linguistic, religious and ethnic diversity in the world. It is therefore our hope that this year's Summit will consolidate on the gains of the previous fora, while assisting Africa to address some of the major deficits and challenges of economic development currently facing the continent.

17. At the end of our deliberations, I believe we should come out with a clear and sustainable roadmap for this strategic engagement which, while beneficial to India, will assist Africa in its efforts at promoting rapid socio-economic development in the continent.

18. Let me end by congratulating India on its success in space exploration and for launching its rocket to Mars, thus becoming the first country to have achieved that feat at its first attempt. We have also noted the giant strides India has made in various other fields of human endeavour, notably in lifting hundreds of millions of souls out of poverty into employment and self-respect. Your achievements offer inspiration and opportunities for others to aspire to.

19. I wish the Summit a successful and fruitful deliberation.