

STATEMENT
BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL
ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF
CANADA TO NIGERIA
24th SEPTEMBER, 1978

**THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT OF THE
PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA TO NIGERIA**

THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONFEDERATION OF CANADA

AFTER DINNER STATEMENT
BY HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT OLUSEGUN OBASANJO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF
CANADA TO NIGERIA
ABUJA, 9TH NOVEMBER, 1999

I have the honour and pleasure to welcome you, The Rt Honourable Minister Jean Chretien to Nigeria. I hope you and your entourage have a pleasant stay with us.

The Right Honourable Prime Minister, your visit is not only a veritable demonstration of the warmth in the relations between our two countries and peoples but indeed an expression of your confidence and support for the new path on which Nigeria has embarked. While we are all charged with a new sense of hope and great expectations in the rebirth of our country. I wish to assure you that we as Nigerians are very conscious of the requirements and demands for the entrenchment of the new order in our country. We know that we have made the right choice and are resolved to do our very best to build the new Nigeria of our dream.

Permit me, Your Excellency, once more, to express to you, your government and the people of Canada our sincere appreciation and gratitude for your commitment and unrelenting support for Nigeria and her people during the darkest days in our post-independence history. I wish here to put on record, our recognition of Canada's unique role in galvanizing international moral authority against evil in our land. The entire world was horrified by the extent to which Nigerians were being traumatised inside their own country, but many nations dithered and muffled their outrage with diplomatic expediency. Canada distinguished herself by unequivocally condemning and taking a firm stand against tyranny in our country. You were right and those who stood by diplomatic niceties were wrong. Nigerians will always remember Canada as a reliable and trusted friend. By your visit, we are reassured and confident of Canada's continued support and co-operation as we nurture our young and fledgeling democracy.

I would like you and the Canadian nation to be assured of our continued friendship and determination to entrench enduring democracy in Nigeria. You will always find in us a committed and dependable ally in the global struggle for the upliftment of humanity.

In the course of your visit, we have had the opportunity to put our heads together in discussions and agreed on specific actions not only to further consolidate and strengthen our two countries, bilateral relations but also to harmonise our position on major international issues.

Our discussions have been frank and very fruitful, reflecting the rekindling of the warmth which hitherto had characterised our relations and heralding a new dawn of understanding, mutual respect, friendship, co-operation and collaboration between our two governments and peoples.

I would want to recognise here your country's demonstrated commitment to the resolution of conflicts and peace-keeping around the world and in particular, the role and contributions made towards bringing permanent peace to the West African sub-region through the provision of logistic, financial and other forms of support and assistance to the human victims of war in Sierra Leone. With your Government's support, we have been able to establish normalcy and we are now in the process of consolidating peace in that country.

We, in Nigeria, share Canada's concern and are deeply embarrassed by the current climate of insecurity, conflict and war that have aggravated human suffering in the African continent. To us therefore, no price is too much to pay for peace especially in the African continent.

While one might make haste to attribute these to the result of misrule, misplacement of priorities of government policies, corruption and mismanagement on the part of past leaders, these alone do not completely explain the fundamental causes of the all pervading crisis which has continued to afflict Africa. The root cause of these conflicts and crisis is to be found in the impact of global economic disequilibrium, the external debt burden, lack of access to capital and declining overseas development assistance which jointly militate against the growth of states and their resultant inability to provide basic social services and amenities to the people.

These, and the situation where Africa alone accounts for 32 of the least developed countries in the world are unacceptable indices to carry into the new millennium. African leaders are very much aware of this, hence the resolve at the last Summit of the Organisation of African Unity to signpost the year 2000 as the **Year of Peace, Security and Solidarity in Africa.**

As we are resolved to do everything needed to bring all conflicts in Africa to an end, there is no gainsaying that our continent requires the support of all friends, Canada inclusive, and the international community to put an end once and for all to the unfortunate cycle of human suffering and under-development in order to prepare Africa to take up its rightful place in the global system.

Your Excellency, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to acknowledge and commend Canada's efforts towards the cancellation of Third

World debts. It is our hope that the international financial institutions and other creditors at the Paris Club would exhibit the same kind of understanding for our predicaments and grant the desired remission on our debt burden.

Your Excellency, it is also in this vein that I would like to call on your country to support and assist us in our efforts to repatriate to Nigeria, some of our monies illegally siphoned and stashed away in foreign banks. Apart from the contribution which the recovery of these monies would have on the recovery of our economy, we see this effort as part of the programme to institute accountability in our society by ensuring that public office holders understand that no place will be safe for their ill-gotten wealth and that they will no longer be left to enjoy their loot.

To Canadian investors and private business community, I wish to assure you, that this is the best time for us to enlarge the frontiers of our economic co-operation. Against the backdrop of the right investment and investor-friendly policies of our Administration, you should find that the scope and opportunities for profitable investment in Nigeria is very vast.

As you ponder over the wide areas opened for investment in Nigeria, let me, once again, assure you that the new "Nigeria" has set-off on a credible note and is committed to ensuring that the ills of the past are not repeated. We will, however, continue to look up to friends like Canada for co-operation and assistance in achieving this onerous task.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, to mark this memorable occasion, I would like to invite all present here to please rise and join me in a toast to the continued good health and personal well-being of the Prime Minister of Canada, a distinguished statesman and a great internationalist, the Right Honourable Jean Chretien, and for the peace, progress and continued friendship of the peoples of Canada and Nigeria.

Long Live Canada-Nigeria bilateral relations.

I thank you.

Worldwide. It is our hope that the international financial institutions and other
countries of the world will support the same kind of assistance for our
people and help the people to get the same kind of assistance.

It is our hope that the international financial institutions and other
countries of the world will support the same kind of assistance for our
people and help the people to get the same kind of assistance.

It is our hope that the international financial institutions and other
countries of the world will support the same kind of assistance for our
people and help the people to get the same kind of assistance.

It is our hope that the international financial institutions and other
countries of the world will support the same kind of assistance for our
people and help the people to get the same kind of assistance.

It is our hope that the international financial institutions and other
countries of the world will support the same kind of assistance for our
people and help the people to get the same kind of assistance.

I hope the people of the world will support the same kind of assistance
for our people and help the people to get the same kind of assistance.