

Your Excellency, Honorable Minister of National Planning, Dr. Shamsudeen Usman, on behalf of the entire Nigerian Community in Belgium, and the Diaspora at large, we welcome you to Brussels. We feel honoured by your presence and the opportunity you accorded us to dialogue with you during this your short visit to Brussels.

We like to thank His Excellency Ambassador Felix Edozor Awanbor, Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the European Union, His Excellency Ambassador I.B. Rabiou, Deputy Chief of Mission, and other members of the Mission for making this occasion possible.

With your permission, Your Excellency, Hon. Minister, we shall dwell here on two issues of national development importance.

Global Database of Nigerians in Diaspora

NIDO Europe initiated in 2009 the Global Database of Nigerians in Diaspora in a well-publicized formal launch in London by the Speaker of the House at the time. It was obvious at the time that without the collaboration and facilitation of the relevant arms of Government, the success of this initiative, which was hailed by all as laudable, will be limited. At this point in time NIDOE has not succeeded in completing this project, partly because the necessary collaboration and facilitation of the Government was not forthcoming. We like to call on you to use your good office to partner with us so that this project is accomplished. We would appreciate it if you could assign a member of your team as our key contact person to enable us drive this project beyond words.

Nigerian Diaspora Policy

Our current Federal Government must be lauded for its record in appointing into key public positions, qualified Nigerians in Diaspora who are today helping to change the face of governance at home. While we encourage the administration to keep up the good work in this respect, we believe that you can do more. Being the Chief Strategic Officer of the federal Republic of Nigeria, it is our conviction that you could use your office to influence the government to support a more proactive, clear-cut Nigerian Diaspora Policy. Your Excellency, we are proposing that you work together with recognized Diaspora Organisations, the Foreign Missions and our Development partners to articulate a robust Diaspora Policy for Nigeria. An objective policy approach that will consult the human capital database, if promulgated as a policy, for appointment into key positions and participation in National development effort should be considered. Permit us to quickly underline that this policy would enriched the human capital base towards our National development aspirations.

Your Excellency, we hope you will contact us for further consultations and actions on these subjects.

Once again, we thank you for this opportunity to meet with you. We wish you and your entourage a safe journey back home. God bless you!

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