

JOINT COMMUNIQUE ON THE OFFICIAL VISIT TO NIGERIA
OF THE HONOURABLE SWISS FOREIGN MINISTER,
HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. PIERRE AUBERT

At the invitation of the Honourable Commissioner for External Affairs, His Excellency Major-General H.E.O. Adefope, the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Head of the Federal Political Department) of Switzerland, His Excellency Mr. Pierre Aubert, paid an official visit to Nigeria from 14th to 17th January, 1979.

2. During the visit, the Swiss Foreign Minister was received in audience by His Excellency, Lieutenant-General Olusegun Obasanjo, Head of the Federal Military Government, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Swiss Foreign Minister expressed deep appreciation for the useful and illuminating views exchanged with His Excellency the Head of the Federal Military Government.

3. The Swiss Foreign Minister held official talks with the Honourable Commissioner for External Affairs, Major-General H.E.O. Adefope. The talks were conducted in a frank and friendly atmosphere and in a spirit of understanding and mutual esteem. The two Ministers briefed each other on the foreign policy of their respective countries. The visiting Foreign Minister explained, among other things, the particular problems facing a permanently neutral country like Switzerland in Europe and in the world. On his own part, the Honourable Commissioner for External Affairs, underlined the importance of Africa in Nigeria's Foreign Policy and emphasized Nigeria's desire to work with other nations



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in strengthening the United Nation's Organisation (UNO) in the interest of world peace. The two Ministers then had a broad exchange of views on world problems, African problems, disarmament and the movement of Non-aligned countries.

4. Both Ministers condemned the violation of human rights all over the world and apartheid in particular. The Swiss Foreign Minister recalled the statement made by the Swiss representative at the World Conference for Action Against Apartheid held in Lagos (August 22-26, 1977) where he stated that apartheid was contrary not only to the traditions and ideals of the Swiss people, but also to the internationally recognised principles of human rights. The Swiss Foreign Minister commended the important contribution being made by Nigeria in the struggle for African freedom as well as her constructive role in the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The Swiss Foreign Policy on Southern Africa was explained to the Honourable Commissioner for External Affairs who took note in particular of the arms embargo imposed by Switzerland on South Africa since 1963. Both Ministers expressed the wish that a fair, peaceful and internationally acceptable solution, based on self-determination and independence, should be found for the problems of both Zimbabwe and Namibia. Nonetheless, the Commissioner for External Affairs reiterated Nigeria's full support for the just struggle for self-determination and independence of the heroic peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia under the leadership of the

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Patriotic Front and SWAPO respectively and also stressed the fact that the continuation of armed struggle is the only alternative should peaceful means fail.

5. The visiting Swiss Foreign Minister, recalling his government's endeavours to promote a system for the peaceful settlement of disputes in Europe, agreed with the Commissioner for External Affairs that settlement of intra-African disputes and conflict situations should best be handled by African mediatory efforts and regional machineries, namely, the OAU.

6. The Swiss Foreign Minister stressed the importance which his government attaches to the issue of disarmament and expressed the hope that international efforts to that end would be intensified. The Honourable Commissioner for External Affairs agreed that disarmament was vital to reducing international tension and further remarked that progress in this area is recognised to have economic advantages for both developed and developing nations.

7. Both Ministers discussed the problems of North/South Dialogue and the influence of its outcome in future relations among world nations. They regretted that the result of negotiations on international economic co-operation has not, as yet, yielded satisfactory results in all areas under discussion. Further serious and conscientious efforts are required with the aim of bringing about a just international economic order.

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8. The Commissioner for External Affairs agreed with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland in the assessment that the present state of bilateral relations between the two countries was satisfactory. Both Ministers noted that the economic relations between the two countries had increased substantially and that there was much scope for further development. They examined certain problems in order to ensure a further expansion of their co-operation.

9. The Swiss Foreign Minister stated that his visit which was the first by a Foreign Minister of Switzerland to Nigeria emphasized the will of the Swiss government to increase mutual understanding between the two countries. It was also meant to demonstrate his government's interest for Nigeria as well as Africa as a whole. Both Ministers expressed the hope that this contact would constitute a new link in the traditionally friendly relations between the two countries and set the base for even closer and mutually beneficial co-operation.

10. The Swiss Foreign Minister expressed satisfaction not only for the warm reception accorded him and members of his delegation but also for the general outcome of his visit. He extended an invitation to the Commissioner for External Affairs to visit Switzerland. The Commissioner gratefully accepted the invitation which will take place on a date to be mutually agreed upon in due course.

11. At the talks, the Swiss Foreign Minister was accompanied by :

- Mr. Marcel Heimo - Ambassador, Director for Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid, Federal Political Department.
- Mr. Jürg Iselin - Ambassador, Deputy Political Director, Head of the Political Division II (Africa, Asia, Middle East, Oceania and Latin America), Federal Political Department.
- Mr. Emilio Moser - Ambassador, Head of the Africa Department at the Federal Division of Commerce
- Mr. Francois Nordmann - Private Secretary to the Head of the Federal Political Department.
- Mr. Walter Rieser - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Switzerland to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- Mr. Stephan Nellen - Secretary, Embassy of Switzerland, Lagos.

12. The Honourable Commissioner for External Affairs was attended by :

- Ambassador E.O. Sanu - Director, International Organizations Department, Ministry of External Affairs, Lagos.
- Ambassador G.O. Ijewere - Director, International Economic Co-operation Department, Ministry of External Affairs, Lagos.
- Ambassador L.M.S. Osobase - Director, Africa Department, Ministry of External Affairs, Lagos.
- Ambassador J.D.O. Sokoya - Director, European Affairs Department, Ministry of External Affairs, Lagos.
- Dr. Abioye Awopetu - Special Assistant to the Honourable Commissioner.

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DONE in Lagos, this 17th day of January, 1979 in duplicate in French and English Language both of which are equally authentic.



H.E. Major-General H.E.O. Adefope
Commissioner for External Affairs
Federal Republic of Nigeria.



H.E. Mr. Pierre Aubert
Foreign Minister
of Switzerland.