



**SPEECH DELIVERED BY HIS EXCELLENCY, BOLA AHMED TINUBU
GCFR, THE PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN CHIEF OF THE
ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA AT THE
4TH NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND
DEVELOPING STATES HELD IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA FROM
27TH – 30TH MAY, 2024.**

PROTOCOL

Distinguished Heads of State and Government, Esteemed Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is an honor to address this august assembly at the 4th Nations International Conference on Small Island Developing States. As we gather under the theme "***Charting the Course Toward Resilient Prosperity***," we must remind ourselves of the collective responsibility to support the sustainable development of small island nations that face unique and devastating challenges.

2. Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are at the frontline of global environmental crisis due to climate change and other factors such as pollution and loss of biodiversity. Despite contributing less than one 1% percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, these nations suffer disproportionately from the impacts of climate change resulting to rising sea levels, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and the degradation of marine ecosystems. These factors pose existential threats to the livelihoods and cultures of millions of people in these region. Innovative adaptation strategies as well as robust international support and partnerships are essential to enhance and build resilience in these vulnerable islands.

3. Nigeria stands in solidarity with SIDS and is committed to contributing to global efforts aimed at mitigating climate impacts and promoting sustainable development. Despite these challenges faced by SIDS, they also have opportunities to move towards a green economy, they possess both unexploited terrestrial and oceanic natural resources such as fish stocks, minerals, potential pharmaceutical products, renewable energy such as wind, sun, ocean, wave, hydro and geothermal. If harnessed properly, SIDS have the potentials to take a lead in defining models of sustainability

and human well-being whilst moving towards a Green Economy. Nigerian Government addressed environmental issues such as pollution and flooding in our major island in Lagos state by establishing and empowering Government Ministries and Agencies that are related to environment to implement robust waste management programmes.

4. Ladies and Gentlemen, the challenges faced by small island developing states are a reflection of broader global issues that require collective action. By supporting SIDS, we are also advancing the broader agenda of sustainable development and environmental stewardship. We must collaborate with SIDS and prioritize investments in climate resilience infrastructure which includes building sea defenses, developing early warning systems, and implementing sustainable land and water management practices. Collaboration with international financial institutions and the private sector is essential to mobilize the necessary resources. The economic vulnerabilities of SIDS are exacerbated by their heavy reliance on tourism and external markets. Diversifying their economies through the promotion of sustainable industries, such as renewable energy, fisheries, and agriculture, can create more resilient economic structures.

5. Access to concessional financing is critical for SIDS to address their development challenges. We must advocate for tailored financial mechanisms that recognize the unique circumstances of SIDS and provide them with the fiscal space needed to invest in sustainable development and create more climate resilient environment. Strengthening regional cooperation among SIDS and fostering partnerships with larger economies can drive innovative solutions and share best practices. Nigeria is committed to working with SIDS and other nations to facilitate knowledge exchange and capacity-building initiatives.

6. In conclusion, let us reaffirm our commitment to the principles of equity, justice, and shared prosperity. The Lands, Water and Air all belongs to humanity and together, we can chart a course toward a more resilient and sustainable environment for our future and generations to come.

Thank You and God Bless.