



INDEPENDENCE GOODWILL MESSAGE 2020

My fellow Nigerians, congratulations to Nigeria @



It is with great pleasure that I present to my fellow countrymen and women this morning my Independence Goodwill Message.

With a great sense of humility and respect, I say our country has come a long way; 60 years today in the life of a nation is a significant milestone. The journey has no doubt been that of a mixture of challenges and successes, with the greatest success being our unity, our togetherness.

Let me also say that despite the challenges, we have wonderful opportunities ahead of us to rally our people to see our country as a nation with a destiny. Nigeria belongs to all of us and we have to appreciate our differences and forge ahead to build a united prosperous nation.

All through our history, our leaders have spoken a great deal about our common values, our unity and our prosperity, it is a call that is genuine and necessary. A call to action by all.

As we celebrate Nigeria at 60, we Nigerians should re-dedicate ourselves to the unity and development of our dear country, and think more of the harmony and progress, and less of tribal and religious differences.

Our National Anthem and the Pledge are words of wisdom and a reflection for us to love one another, because the words 'one nation bound in freedom, peace and unity' is a call to action.

It is no more a story that in the last few months, the world has been grappling with the outbreak of the coronavirus. The COVID-19 pandemic has slowed economic activities and growth and put pressure on services output in different sectors of the economy.

The unexpected public health emergency caused by the COVID-19, coupled with the drop in oil revenue from the ebbing economic activity, has led the government to take difficult decisions to keep the economy afloat at a critical time as this.

President Muhammadu Buhari did mandate a Committee which I chaired to ensure that the business of government continues to run as normally as possible, with government agencies considerably funded.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the government has continued to invest in critical infrastructure like roads, rail and electric power to ensure continuous growth hinged on programmes and projects that will enhance employment of large percentage of our youth.

Now we are working on ways and means in which government revenue will be stabilised to restore adequate fiscal space to fund the Federal Government and the States through the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC).

My dear brothers and sisters, we are known all over the world as intelligent, resilient, resourceful and confident people. Today, therefore, let us celebrate our diversity, our pride, our unity and our hope together.

Let us remember our men and women in uniform and all our security agencies who work hard day and night to keep us and the country safe.

Let us also remember the families of the fallen heroes and pray that God gives them the fortitude to bear the loss of their loved ones.

Once again, congratulations to all Nigerians. Happy 60th anniversary!



Mrs. (Dr.) Zainab Shamsuna Ahmed
Honourable Minister of Finance,
Budget and National Planning