

COURAGE TO LEGISLATE, WILL TO LEAD

Address by the President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Distinguished Senator Godswill Obot Akpabio, GCON At the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments Geneva, Switzerland

I bring you greetings from the Senate and the resilient people of Nigeria. Thank you for this opportunity to address this conference. I come from a nation that has endured fire and risen from ashes. A nation that finds clarity in confusion and keeps sailing through storms and rough weather.

This conference—“A World in Turmoil: Multilateralism for Peace, Justice and Prosperity for All”—meets the moment. Across the globe, conflict drowns out the songs of peace. War consumes not only homes but the hopes of families. And while science surges, millions—especially in developing nations—remain trapped in cycles of fear and want.

With the world now a global village, these are not distant crises. I urge affected nations not to surrender to despair. We in the Nigerian Senate have chosen to legislate in the storm, reform in the furnace, and lead with courage.

We face armed conflict, climate disruption, and youth disillusionment. Terrorists exploit poverty and displacement. Farmer-herder clashes and small arms proliferation threaten our unity. But we are not defined by what we face, but by how we rise. In the furnace of turmoil, we are becoming stronger, wiser, and more determined to build a greater nation.

In parliament, we are legislating to secure the future. In partnership with the Executive, we have passed laws to confront insecurity and rebuild trust: the

Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons Act, the Terrorism Prevention and Prohibition Act, and the Out-of-School Children Education Act etc.

We are investing in innovation, through a 10-year National Digital Strategy, to equip our youth to bridge the divide. Through the Start-Up Act, expanded credit access, and digital training, we unlock potential long caged by poverty.

We are also advancing inclusion. The Not Too Young To Run Act was a summons to a new generation. Women and persons with disabilities are no longer on the margins. And legislation is underway to institutionalize gender quotas—because inclusion, not exclusion, must be our standard.

We have devised strategies to fight poverty: education loans, vocational training, tax reforms for the vulnerable, and cash transfers to the poorest households—all aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Multilateralism must not become a rhetoric. It must rise as a movement of resolve. The Nigerian Parliament believes in international solidarity as a shared responsibility. For humanity is a single tapestry and when one corner is torn by conflict or injustice, the whole fabric is weakened.

Let us therefore stand in partnership, committed to peace, justice, and shared destiny. We must not simply convene; we must command. Let us bind our futures not only in treaties, but in tenacity and remain paragons of purpose.

As parliamentarians, let us commit to collaboration and the courageous pursuit of solutions that transcend borders and partisan divides.

Thank you. And may Providence guide our deliberations.