

**PRESIDENT MUHAMMAD BUHARI'S SPEECH DURING HIS VISIT TO  
NIGER REPUBLIC, JUNE 3, 2015**

**PROTOCOL,**

Permit me to begin first and foremost, by expressing my deepest thanks to my host and brother, H.E. President Mahamadou ISSOUFOU and the good people of Niger Republic for the warm display of traditional African hospitality showered on me and my delegation since our arrival in Niamey.

2. I would also like to once again, extend my appreciation and that of the people of Nigeria to President ISSOUFOU for his excellent display of brotherliness with Nigeria as indicated in his solidarity visit to Nigeria on 22nd May, 2015 and his attendance at my Inauguration Ceremony on 29th May, 2015.
3. The extraordinary warmth and goodwill shown to us is further affirmation that indeed Nigeria and Niger are one. Our visit to this beautiful city has served to underline this deep rooted fraternal and age-long relationship that has existed between our two (2) sister countries.
4. Permit me also to acknowledge the consistency with which the government and people of Niger Republic have stood beside Nigeria under all circumstances. Here, I would like to convey the appreciation of Nigeria for the sacrifices by Niger in the on-going efforts to counter the menace of the Boko Haram insurgency. We appreciate your efforts and extend our condolences over the loss of lives occasioned by the insurgents' attack recently and pray that Almighty Allah will grant the bereaved families the fortitude to bear such losses. We also pray for the quick recovery of all those injured in the struggle.
5. Niger Republic has over the years, proven to be a reliable ally to Nigeria both at bilateral and multilateral levels. It is our hope and aspiration that this special relationship would be further consolidated during my administration.
6. As I highlighted during my inaugural speech, my administration will bring new impetus and a renewed commitment to the efforts to wipe out the menace of the Boko Haram insurgents. As a first step, we have directed the relocation of the command post of the counter-insurgency operations to Maiduguri until such a time that the insurgency is completely defeated.
7. I wish to reassure that with the new impetus and resolve to seek for closer collaboration with our neighbouring countries of Niger, Chad and Cameroun, Boko Haram insurgency will soon be defeated, insha Allah.
8. Another issue of concern to us which is closely associated with the insurgency in the region is the influx of refugees and other displaced persons. We are aware that currently, there are over one hundred and fifty thousand (150,000) displaced persons comprising refugees and returnees taking refuge in various parts of Niger.
9. We appreciate the untiring efforts and the huge burden being shouldered by the Government of Niger, International Humanitarian Agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as well as host communities. In the same vein, we wish to reassure that our administration will work closely with governments of the affected States to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the displaced persons and their host communities. The ultimate objective however, remains to end the insurgency and facilitate their return to their homes.

10. Another area we intend to work together with our friends and neighbours, particularly Niger Republic is the menace of Illegal Migration and Human Trafficking. Niger as a major transit point, has had to commit huge resources to curb the trend. Nigeria would support the new initiatives by the European Union (EU) and other stakeholders aimed at combating the menace of illegal migration and human trafficking.

11. Another major Trans National Organized Crime (TNOC) where my government would seek to work more closely with the government of Niger is the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Niger is geographically located in the centre of armed conflict zones with the attendant security challenges. We shall endeavour to improve surveillance and initiate joint patrols of our common borders with a view to curtailing the activities of the perpetrators of this crime.

12. On the regional level, we appreciate the active role being played by Niger within the Sahel, towards tackling insecurity. Nigeria and Niger share similar views on issues of common interest at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU) and other international platforms. It is our desire to sustain and further deepen this cooperation in the interest of our two countries.

13. At this juncture, may I once again, commend the peaceful outcome of the elections in Nigeria and Togo and express the hope that forthcoming elections in Cote d'Ivoire and Niger would set an even higher benchmark of successful organization of elections in our sub-region.

14. Once again, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the warm welcome extended to me and the members of my entourage.

15 Thank You and may God bless us all.