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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

33RD REGULAR SESSION

AGENDA: HALF-DAY PANEL DISCUSSION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST
INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

20TH SEPTEMBER, 2016

STATEMENT BY NIGERIA

Mr. President,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group and welcomes this Panel discussion on “Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls”. It is unfortunate that this magnitude of discriminatory socio-political cum economic practices and harmful gender-based stereotypes continue to persist despite numerous international instruments available to address the injustice.

2. Indeed, Indigenous women and girls have continued to suffer, in all continents despite their contributions as a productive force. They are subjected to harsh labour conditions and in addition, get sexually and physically violated. Indigenous women and girls are continuously denied quality education, forced to live in rural settings, secluded from enlightenment facilities, and allowed to remain in ignorance. They are often lured into sex slavery with the prospects of gainful employment overseas; and brute force is used against them when they realize the purpose for which they are being taken away.

3. My Government takes an aversion to these harmful practices. The protection and promotion of women and girls’ rights are among our national priorities. One piece of our safeguard legislations, the Violence Against

Persons Prohibition Act, has drastically reduce violence against persons in which those against women form the larger percentage of those inflicted.

4. I am glad to inform this Council that Nigeria has taken a number of concrete initiatives targeted at improving the social status of women. In this regard, we are implementing financial inclusion programmes for women in small and medium businesses through the Central Bank of Nigeria and the Bank of Industry. A National Social Protection Policy is also being developed to specifically address poverty, vulnerability, and inequality particularly among Nigerian women. We are currently working on an enterprise programme designed to provide financial support for over 1 million women traders, artisans, and agricultural workers, including indigenous women nationwide and to assist in the rehabilitation of the economies of rural communities, including those impacted by Boko Haram terrorist activities.

Mr. President,

5. While we continue to do our best in Nigeria for indigenous women and girls, we encourage all Member States, in line with Goal 5 of the SDGs, to make effort to eliminate all forms of violence against women particularly Indigenous Women and Girls, by giving them equal access to resources, reducing their level of ignorance through education, and enhancing the social protection policies that could alleviate their sufferings.

I thank you.
