

12 July 2021

President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR  
Head of the State and Commander in Chief  
of the Armed Forces  
State House  
Abuja  
Federal Republic of Nigeria

*My President*

Today is an **extremely proud occasion** for **Nigerians everywhere**. We mark the **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Nigeria's Membership of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)**. Over the course of the subsequent five decades, the unique relationship between OPEC and Nigeria has had a multitude of positive effects for both parties.

The intertwining of the destinies of OPEC and Nigeria even precedes Membership. On **14 September 1960**, OPEC was founded on the banks of the River Tigris, in Baghdad. Just two weeks later, on **1 October 1960**, Nigeria joined the fraternity of independent nations. Since these momentous events, both OPEC and Nigeria have repeatedly demonstrated their commitment to the universal values of **international cooperation, dialogue, sustainable development** and **working towards the common good**. These principles have anchored all of our activities despite the many challenges we have faced over the 50 years.

At OPEC, we are acutely conscious of the unique contribution which you, Mr. President, have played in this successful partnership. You are the only currently serving Head of State who worked as a head of OPEC delegation earlier in your career. From **May 1976 to September 1978**, you served as **Commissioner for Petroleum, NNPC**, and **Head of Nigeria's delegation to OPEC**.

Mr. President, all of us in the OPEC family know the enormous debt of gratitude we owe you for the pivotal role you played in our historic achievements. Your **inspirational leadership, visionary courage** and **diplomatic nous** were instrumental in bringing together OPEC and non-OPEC countries and reaching consensus in recent years, particularly through the adoption of **the 'Declaration of Cooperation' (DoC) on 10 December 2016** and the **'Charter of Cooperation' signed on 2 July 2019**.

You have consistently shown your impeccable credentials as a bastion of the principles underpinning international relations: respect for all nations, fulfilling one's responsibilities, transparency and fairness. I thank you most sincerely for your contributions to the broad efforts made to ensure that the DoC evolved from a noble vision to a transformative force-for-good – one that has had a profoundly positive impact on the global oil industry. Nigeria plays a leading and inspirational role on the African continent in oil and gas affairs and cooperation.

Nigeria is consistently regarded as one of the most admired and respected members of the OPEC family, particularly in the realm of consensus-building. Many giants of Nigerian public service have been responsible for this successful relationship. Today is an important opportunity to reflect on their legacy and give thanks for the ways in which they have molded our Organization.

I firmly believe that the partnership between OPEC and Nigeria can continue to flourish over the next 50 years. In undertaking this noble endeavour, we will continue to rely on your full support.

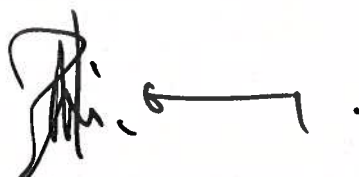
Mr. President, on the occasion of **Nigeria's 60 year anniversary of independence on 1 October 2020**, you said to the Nigerian people,

***"If we pursue our aspirations together we would be able to achieve whatever we desire."***

These are sagacious words and I see them as a guide for the future of OPEC and Nigeria's Membership of our Organization. We are always stronger together.

Once again, Mr. President, allow me to thank you for your steadfast support for OPEC. You have made an immeasurable contribution to the betterment of our Organization.

Please accept Excellency, assurances of my highest consideration and respect.



Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo  
Secretary General