

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

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## UN reaffirms commitment to Nigeria in addressing economic recession and North-East Crisis



The Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of the United Nations in Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon, has reaffirmed his commitment and that of the United Nations system in Nigeria to supporting the country's efforts at addressing current challenges such as the economic recession and the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the North-East. "I am also aware of the numerous challenges in the middle-belt and in the south of the country", Mr Kallon acknowledged during his one-week mission (10 - 14 April 2017) to Lagos State where he engaged Lagos State government, the private sector, the media and a few Federal Government parastatals. He further committed to supporting the government in implementing the recently launched Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP).

"Addressing these challenges", he noted, "would require a strong partnership between the Federal and State Governments and the United Nations." "We need each other's support and a strong partnership. A Stable North-East is good for business, a prosperous Lagos, is fertile ground for more investment and a stronger Nigeria is good for Africa." He added.

Mr Kallon, who is also UNDP Nigeria Resident Representative, disclosed that his visit to Lagos afforded him an opportunity to engage with the Governor of Lagos State, H. E. Mr Akinwunmi Ambode and reach out to the private sector in order to explore avenues for enhanced partnership in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in addressing the crisis in the North-East.

Discussing with the Governor, Mr Kallon observed that "the phenomenal past growth and future growth prospects of Lagos should accrue equitably to all segments of society and all geographic areas of the State. There is need to ensure that the fruits of prosperity in the State are enjoyed by all. There is need to sustainably tame the ocean, pay attention to improving access to basic services while addressing poverty in all its dimensions without leaving anyone behind." He emphasized, noting that the SDGs provided a framework which the State could use to address its development challenges...*Continue on page 2.*



**Top:** Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of the United Nations in Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon (Left) receives a souvenir from the Governor of Lagos State, Mr Akinwunmi Ambode (Right) during a courtesy visit to the Governor on 13 April 2017.

**Down:** Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, UN Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon (Left) and the Chairman of Dangote Groups, Alhaji Aliko Dangote (Right) exchange pleasantries during the visit of the UN delegation to Alhaji Dangote on 12 April 2017.

## FAO D-G Visits Northeastern Nigeria, Calls for Urgent Increase in Assistance



FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva visits a farm centre in Maiduguri, northeastern Nigeria

**I**t is imperative to immediately ramp up humanitarian assistance to hunger-threatened rural communities in the strife-torn Lake Chad Basin region, FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva said during a visit to some of the affected areas in northeastern Nigeria.

"If we miss the coming planting season, there will be no substantial harvests until 2018. Failure to restore food production now will lead to the worsening of widespread and severe hunger and prolonged dependency on external assistance further into the future," Graziano da Silva said. The time for all of us to act is now."

Insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin - which incorporates parts of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and northeastern Nigeria - has resulted in the largest humanitarian crisis in Africa. The conflict has forced an estimated 2 million people to abandon their homes and their predominantly agricultural livelihoods, in northeastern Nigeria alone.

During the visit, the FAO Director-General publicly presented FAO's Response Strategy (2017-2019) for the Lake Chad Basin crisis.

Across the Lake Chad Basin region, some 7 million people risk suffering from severe hunger during the lean season and require immediate food and livelihood assistance.

"The situation we have now is largely due to the conflicts and armed groups that have devastated the lives and livelihoods across the whole of Lake Chad region. It is like an opportunistic infection, which is largely taking advantage of an already weak body from underlying problems of environmental degradation, related droughts, low investment in rural development and limited employment and livelihood opportunities for young men and women. We need to work on the symptoms by restoring peace and treat the disease by making the body stronger. This is all about resilience," Graziano da Silva stressed.

More than 1 million returnees and the majority of internally displaced people in areas which have recently become relatively strife-free, have access to land and may benefit from the forthcoming rainy season starting in May 2017 should sufficient agriculture support be provided.

"Protracted conflict has eroded coping capacities, exhausted livelihoods and left people with no way to feed themselves and their families. Agriculture cannot be an afterthought. More than 80 percent of people rely on farming, fishing and herding for their livelihoods," the FAO Director-General said.

Graziano da Silva met local farmers on several FAO supported farms in Gongolong and Old Maiduguri, northeastern Nigeria's Borno State. He also held talks with the Honorable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, T.H Audu Ogbeh.

### UN reaffirms commitment to Nigeria

*(continued from page 1)*

...“SDGs as a development framework is about national vision, national leadership and national ownership.” He explained.

Responding, Governor Ambode reiterated the commitment of Lagos State Government to working with the United Nations. “We are willing and ready to learn from the UN experience and technical expertise.” He said.

Earlier on his mission, the Resident Coordinator paid a courtesy call on Nigeria’s former President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo at his Hilltop residence in Abeokuta and also engaged with the Chairman of Dangote Group, Alhaji Aliko Dangote on the humanitarian crisis in North-East Nigeria and the need to act fast within the next eighteen months.

Mr Kallon who was accompanied on the mission by a few Heads of UN Agencies in Nigeria and other technical experts, also had interactive sessions with representatives of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in Lagos State; management of Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi (FIIRO) and the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC).



## Provision of Water Helps More Children Learn at a School in Northern Nigeria



Doksemua Rumkies, 12 years old, is thrilled about the changes in the school and happy the distractions of going in search of water is now over. She can now concentrate on achieving her life's ambition, -- to be a teacher. © UNICEF Nigeria/2017/Yeo

Having quick drink in the middle of a hot school day, until recently, meant Doksemua Rumkies and her friends had to run all the way home, or to the nearest stream.

The lack of water also meant Nbeet Local Educational Authority Primary School in Plateau State had no washing or sanitary facilities, which contributed to patchy levels of attendance.

'Because the homes of the pupils are far from the school, most of the pupils never returned to classes once they left in search of water,' headmaster Peter Dabok, 57, explained. 'That ultimately affected learning outcomes at the school.'

But life at the dusty, rural school in northcentral Nigeria has changed for the better since UNICEF sank a borehole, funded by the EU and the Plateau State government, and more children than ever before are benefiting. School numbers have increased by more than 30 per cent,

from 130 children to 182, since the hand pump was installed, Mr Dabok revealed.

Grade six student Doksemua explained, 'Before now, during break time or whenever we got thirsty, we had to run back to our homes or sometimes to a seasonal stream about 300 metres away in search of water to drink.' New, separate latrines for girls and boys and hand washing facilities have also improved sanitation and overall hygiene practices among the school population.

And it is not just the children and their teachers who are enjoying the arrival of piped-in water - the rest of the Pangshom community are benefiting too.

Some of those who come to draw water are part of the school's management committee, who use the opportunity to monitor the learners' progress.

'We don't turn them away because the school and the community melt into one soul to receive the benefits of this facility,' the headmaster said.



## Northern Traditional Leaders Rise Against Meningitis Outbreak



A cross-section of Northern Traditional Leaders Committee on Primary Healthcare (NTLC) at an emergency meeting with Governors of the 19 Northern States

Northern Traditional Leaders Committee on Primary Healthcare (NTLC), with support from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), convened an emergency meeting with Governors of the 19 northern states and other stakeholders to discuss the management of the current outbreak of *Neisseria Meningitidis* serotype C. The major objective of the meeting aimed to devise holistic strategy to forestall fatalities and avert future occurrences.

The Emir of Zaria, Alhaji Shehu Idris who represented the Sultan of Sokoto and Chairman of the NTLC at the meeting in Kaduna on 11 April 2017, noted that the number of fatalities, was “unacceptably high” but added that the crucial gathering was convened in fulfilment of their customary roles and responsibilities as custodians of society.

By end of March 2017, 4,637 suspected meningitis cases with 489 deaths have been reported across Nigeria. Zamfara, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger and Sokoto in Northwest and Northcentral zones account for 95% cases reported nationwide. Reactive vaccination campaign, targeted at the outbreak of *Neisseria Meningitidis* serotype C going on in targeted wards of Zamfara and Katsina states.

To forestall future occurrences, NTLC members strongly called on the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) to meet

with the 25 countries in the ‘Meningitis Belt’ to conduct synchronized campaigns using conjugate polyvalent vaccine rather than the usual monovalent and polysaccharide vaccine. Additionally, the paramount rulers urged FGN to always be more proactive and also position treatment drugs and strengthen surveillance for meningitis as well as being prepared for vaccination of susceptible populations, especially children, around the seasonal outbreak.

Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, the host Governor, His Excellency Malam Nasir EL-Rufai of Kaduna State noted that interventions by FMOH and partners reduced the high mortality due to new strain of the organism previously not implicated in epidemics in the north. The Governor commended World Health Or-

ganization (WHO) for facilitating the mobilization of vaccines from the International Coordinating Group on Vaccine Provision (ICG), providing supplies, supporting government to preposition drugs, support for surveillance and epidemiological analysis and building capacity of healthcare workers on case detection, case management and infection prevention and control.

Earlier, the Minister of Health, Professor Isaac Adewole appreciated the traditional leaders for rising up to the occasion. He however emphasized the need to identify and respond to any alert threshold even if only one suspected case is reported.

In a goodwill message, the WHO Country Representative to Nigeria, Dr Wondimagegnehu Alemu, commended the NTLC for their individual roles in disease control and prevention. He directed the attention of the participants to the fact that most deaths arising from the current outbreak would have been averted with strong surveillance system in Zamfara and Sokoto states.

Dr Alemu called on the traditional leaders to utilize mobilization machinery at their disposal to create awareness and strengthen community surveillance not only for meningitis, but for other diseases.

## Yobe State Governor Lauds Collaboration with WHO for Decline in Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

The Executive Governor of Yobe state, Alhaji Ibrahim Gaidam has expressed gratitude to the World Health Organization (WHO) for providing technical, financial and human resources towards improving the health indicators of the people of Yobe state, including displaced persons, despite extant insecurity.

Welcoming the WHO Country Representative (WR) Dr Wondimagegnehu Alemu to the Government House in Damaturu, Alhaji Gaidam noted WHO’s role in supporting the state to maintain a polio-free status despite risk of importation, as unique, critical and unparalleled. In his words, “With the support of WHO, Yobe state has interrupted the transmission of wild polio virus for the past three years. We look forward to a more robust collaboration with WHO especially in areas of capacity building for the healthcare work force and technical guidance”.

Yobe shares extensive borders with Borno state, with daily cross-cultural activities. However, with the support of WHO and other development partners, the state successfully implemented all scheduled supplemental immunization activities and no wild poliovirus transmission has been re-



Governor Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State (Left) welcomes the WHO Country Representative (WR) Dr Wondimagegnehu Alemu to the Government House in Damaturu,

ported in the past three years from either acute flaccid paralysis surveillance or environmental sewage samples.



## Preventing Genocide, a Shared Responsibility – UN Secretary General



A drama sketch performance on the genocide in Rwanda staged by students of Start-Rite School, Abuja.

As the world marked the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda at the weekend, the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has noted that preventing genocide and other monstrous crimes is a shared responsibility of all and a core duty of the United Nations. “The only way to truly honour the memory of those who were killed in Rwanda is to ensure that such events never occur again.” He said in a video message watched by 300 students and parents who had gathered in Abuja to mark the Day.

“The world must always be alert to the warning signs of genocide, and act quickly and early against the threat.” Mr Guterres continued, “History is filled with tragic chapters of hatred, inaction and indifference – a cycle that has led to violence, incarceration and death camps.”

The Secretary General therefore urged everyone to learn the lessons of Rwanda and work together to build a future of dignity, tolerance and human rights for all.

Welcoming the audience to the educational briefing event organised by the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Lagos in collaboration with the Rwanda High Commission and Start-Rite School, Apo Legislative Quarters, Abuja, the National Information Officer of UNIC, Mr Oluseyi Soremekun, explained that “We are observing the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda to educate on the lessons of the genocide in Rwanda in order to help prevent similar acts happening anywhere in the future.”

He enjoined the students and other participants to see all tribes and religions as equal and complimentary of one another with none inferior to the other. ‘Tribes and tongues may differ’ Mr Soremekun continued, ‘but you must stand together in peace and unity.’

The Second Counsellor, Rwanda High Commission, Mr Protogene Nsengumuremyi, in his keynote address drew attention to the UN Security Council Resolution 2150 which condemns without reservation, any denial of the genocide and calls upon States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide to consider doing so as a matter of high

priority.

The programme featured film screening, reading of survivors’ testimonies and a drama sketch performed by students of Start-Rite School, Abuja. The programme was attended by students from seven schools including the host school, Start-Rite.

April 7 every year is the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda.



R-L: National Information Officer of UNIC Lagos, Mr Oluseyi Soremekun; Deputy Director of Start-Rite School, Mrs Loretta Akpoke; Director/ CEO of Start-Rite School, Mrs Amaka Ndoma-Egba and Second Counsellor, Rwanda High Commission, Mr Protogene Nsengumuremyi at the event.



## UN Urges Editors to Get Acquainted with SDGs



Director, United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Nigeria, Mr Ronald Kayanja addresses the biennial conference of the Nigerian Guild of Editors held on Saturday, 29 April 2017 in Lagos.

The Director of the UN Information Centre (UNIC) in Nigeria, Mr Ronald Kayanja, has urged the Nigerian Editors to acquaint themselves with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework as a component of a wider 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He noted that “Editors as the final gatekeepers in the news production process, are critical to the achievement of the SDGs by 2030.”

He said this in his goodwill message at the just concluded biennial convention of the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) held on Saturday 29 April 2017 at the Airport Hotel, Ikeja Lagos. According to Mr Kayanja, the public rely on the media for information on the progress of implementation by the government.

Disclosing that the UN promotes Free, Independent and Pluralistic media all over the world, the Director charged the editors to uphold the high ethical standards for which NGE is known and pledged the support of the UN Information Centre to the body.

Declaring open the biennial convention, Governor Akinwunmi Ambode of Lagos State called on the Nigeria media to embrace partnership as an option for the growth and development of the country, saying recession was not a crime but a period for government at all levels to re-arrange its expenditure and give priority to capital expenditure.

“One of the major responsibilities of the media is to advance the cause of good governance. Whilst free media is at the heart of true democracy, our focus should be how the media can more effectively support this agenda. Your role in this pursuit of resilience, therefore, is to lend the needed support in bringing our noble efforts to public consciousness,” he added.

In a communiqué issued after the convention, and signed by the newly elected President, Funke Egb-

mode and the General Secretary Victoria Ibanga, NGE noted that the nation’s economic recession has impacted negatively on all sectors of the society, particularly the media industry, saying despite these challenges the media still played a key role in educating the populace on how to revive the nation’s economy.

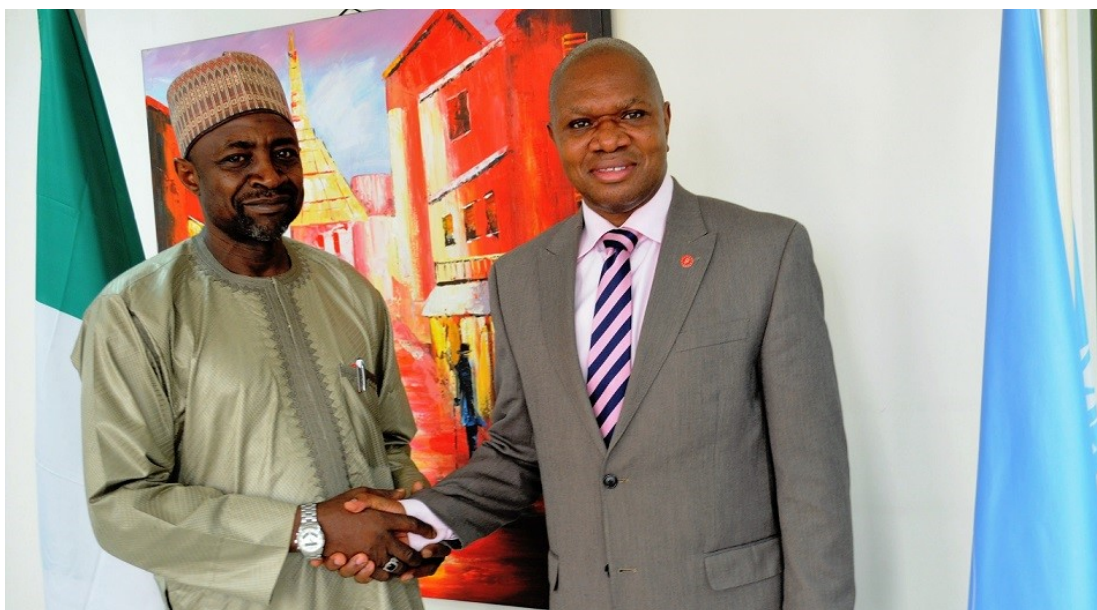
The communiqué further stated that “The media should, consequently intensify efforts in promoting government’s policies on economic diversification. Government’s efforts towards diversification of the economy are well commended, with the Central Bank of Nigeria for moderating the exchange rate, therefore Nigerians should support the Made in Nigeria posture of the apex bank in diversifying the economy.”



L-R: Director, UN Information Centre (UNIC) Nigeria, Mr. Ronald Kayanja; National Information Officer, UNIC Nigeria, Mr. Oluseyi Soremekun; Abia State Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr. Bonnie Iwuoha and a delegate to the conference.



## Nigeria, the Focus of UN's Industrial Development Projects in Africa



(R-L) : UNIDO Representative to ECOWAS and Regional Director, Nigeria Regional Office Hub, Mr. Jean Bakole, and the Executive Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure (NASENI), Prof. Mohammed Sani Haruna, during a meeting with UNIDO Rep. at UNIDO Regional Office, Abuja.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has said that given the Federal Government's commitment towards economic diversification through industrialization, the Organization had made Nigeria the epicentre of its industrial development projects in Africa.

The UNIDO Representative to ECOWAS and Regional Director, Nigeria Regional Office Hub, Mr. Jean Bakole, disclosed this during a meeting with the Executive Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure, Prof. Mohammed Sani Haruna, in UNIDO office, in Abuja.

Bakole said, "Nigeria is now the epicentre of UNIDO projects and programmes aimed at promoting and supporting Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID). As the biggest economy in Africa, the government of Nigeria has, over the years, demonstrated support and commitment towards diversifying its economy through Inclusive and

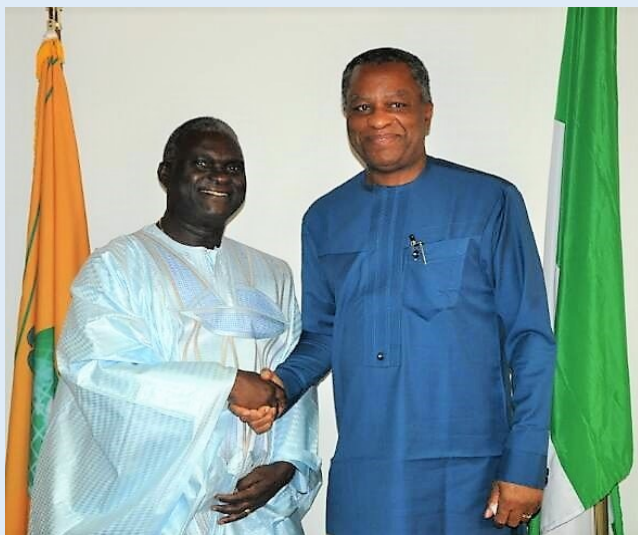
especially by enhancing NASENI's capacity to locally manufacture some critical industrial equipment such as small hydro power plant turbines. "Our target is to be able to domesticate and integrate existing technologies for the benefit of our industries." He added.

For over three decades, UNIDO has been actively engaged in Nigeria where all technical assistance services from the Organization have been deployed in critical sectors of the nation's economy such as agribusiness development; entrepreneurship and job creation; investment promotion; quality and trade facilitation, renewable energy for productive uses; water management, as well as various initiatives to contain ozone-depleting substances, persistent organic pollutants and promoting safe practices in artisanal mining activities. UNIDO has also leveraged substantial funds from the donor community to support the efforts of the Nigerian government in these areas.

Sustainable Industrial Development."

The UNIDO Representative also reaffirmed the Organization's commitment towards supporting the Federal Government's efforts towards industrializing the country. Speaking during the meeting, the Executive Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure, Prof. Mohammed Sani Haruna, noted that NASENI's partnership with UNIDO had gone a long way in increasing the technical capacity of the Agency especially

## Antonio Canhandula Assumes Office as UNHCR's Rep. to Nigeria and ECOWAS



UNHCR Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Jose Antonio Canhandula (Left) exchanges pleasantries with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyeama, in Abuja after presenting his Letter of Credence.

The new United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Jose Antonio Canhandula has officially assumed his function, following the presentation of his credentials to the Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyeama, in Abuja.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr. Canhandula thanked the Nigerian government for accepting him to serve in the country, and promised to put his best into the assignment entrusted to him by the High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi. He commended Nigeria for its development strides and for making Africa proud.

On his part, Mr. Onyeama praised Antonio Canhandula for his appointment and stressed the need for him to hit the ground running as the humanitarian crisis in northeast Nigeria is still very high on the agenda.

"Your impressive trajectory speaks for itself and there is no doubt you will be up to the task," Onyeama said as he assured UNHCR of Nigerian government's support.

As a former Representative in Chad, Mr. Canhandula, a Mozambique national, is quite familiar with the situation in Nigeria.



## PHOTO NEWS: Visit of the UN RC Mr Edward Kallon to Lagos (10 - 14 April 2017)



Chairman, Dangote Group, ALhaji Aliko Dangote welcomes Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of UN Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon to his office in Lagos



A group photograph of the UN Delegation and Dangote team members after an interactive engagement on the need for urgent intervention in North-East Nigeria.



A group photograph of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of UN Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon and some UN Staff in Lagos and the environs after a Town Hall meeting held on 12 April 2017 at the Library Auditorium of UNIC Lagos



Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of UN Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon discusses with the Minister of State, Ministry of Budget and National planning, Hon. Zainab Ahmed at the private sector engagement on the humanitarian crisis in the North-East.



L-R: Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of UN Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon (Left) and the Director General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Mrs Yetunde Oni (Right) during the tour of NAFDAC's facility in Lagos on 13 April 2017.



L-R: Dr Chinma Igwe, representing the Director General of Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi (FIIRO); Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of UN Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon and UNESCO Officer-in-Charge, Dr Saidu Jallow at FIIRO, Lagos on 13 April 2017.



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