

**OPENING REMARKS**

**BY**

**ABUBAKAR MALAMI, SAN, CON**

**HONORABLE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION AND  
MINISTER OF JUSTICE**

**AT THE**

**SIGNING OF THE ASSET RETURN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE  
GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA AND THE  
GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE  
REPATRIATION OF ASSETS RECOVERED FROM THE FORMER  
GOVERNOR OF BAYELSA STATE, MR. DIEPREYE SOLOMON PETER  
ALAMIEYESEIGHA**

**THURSDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2023**

**AT THE**

**FEDERAL MINISTRY OF JUSTICE ABUJA, NIGERIA.**

## **Protocols**

**Your Excellency, The Ambassador of the United States, Mrs. Mary Beth Leonard,**

**The Attorney General of Bayelsa State, Mr. Biriyai Dambo, SAN.**

**The Representative of the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs,**

**The Special Advisers to the President,**

**Directors in the Ministry,**

**Gentlemen of the Press.**

I am most delighted to welcome the United States Ambassador to Nigeria and her team to this much anticipated event in respect of the execution of the Bayelsa Agreement on repatriation of funds looted by Mr. Diepreye Solomon Peter Alamiyeseigha, former Governor of Bayelsa State. I am glad that we are finally at this stage after much deliberations and hard work between representatives of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and USDOJ.

2. Permit me to express my gratitude towards the efforts of the Government of the United States of America in ensuring that looted funds are returned to Nigeria not only in this case but in other pending cases such as Galactica, Blue Assets, Saborne amongst others.

3. You may recall that this asset return arose from the forfeiture and recovery of approximately \$1million USD linked to the corrupt practices of Former Bayelsa State Governor, D.S.P Alamiyeseigha. The United States Government, in collaboration with the Federal Republic of Nigeria initiated

and completed forfeiture proceedings against certain real property and investment funds located in Maryland and Massachusetts against the Former Governor which resulted in the net forfeiture to the Government of United States of America totaling the sum of **\$954,807.40**.

4. Following the court order, the FRN and the USA have negotiated and finalized the terms of the asset return agreement.

5. It is worthy to note that in line with the terms of this Agreement, Mr. President has already approved the expected sum to be utilized for implementation of a Health Center Project for the benefit of the people of Bayelsa State and to be monitored by the Civil Society Organizations and the Federal Government, through the Federal Ministry of Justice.

6. On this note, I welcome all of you to this event and urge the Government of the United States of America to continue to demonstrate the usual cooperation and understanding, in other pending cases, so that the Agreements in relation thereto can be concluded as soon as possible, to ensure that these funds are repatriated to Nigeria in earnest. I wish to state that Nigeria is in dire need of these refunds to support the implementation of more projects for the benefit of Nigeria and its citizens.

7. Thank you.

**ABUBAKAR MALAMI, SAN,CON**

HONORABLE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2023