

**Statement by Mr. Abubakar Atiku Bagudu,
Minister of Budget, Economy, and National Planning of Nigeria**

Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to address the 17th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) on behalf of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. I thank the government and people of the Republic of Azerbaijan for their hospitality and commend H.E. President Ilham Aliyev for hosting this important summit.

This year's theme, "*New Economy, New Global Vision for a Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Future*", is timely and significant. The effects of climate change—droughts, floods, desertification, and extreme heatwaves—are now undeniable and devastating, especially across Africa and parts of Europe. These disruptions have intensified food insecurity, forced displacement, and economic instability.

Nigeria, as Africa's most populous country and a strategic gateway to West Africa, is committed to close collaboration with ECO member states on climate adaptation, mitigation, and green industrialization. We are finalizing our 2026 National Development Plan, building on our current 2021–2025 strategy, with climate action at its core.

For true sustainability, our economies must be interconnected. We advocate for:

- Harmonized tariffs and simplified customs procedures;
- Regional logistic platforms that link Africa with global markets;
- A just energy transition—leveraging Nigeria's fossil and renewable energy resources to increase access to clean technologies;
- Inclusive growth benefiting rural farmers, fishers, women, and youth entrepreneurs.

Nigeria also supports youth innovation, digital skills, and gender equity in regional trade and energy initiatives. We urge stronger public-private partnerships to fund grassroots climate adaptation—from regenerative agriculture to local green enterprises.

Looking ahead to 2030 and beyond, we believe ECO must lead as a unified bloc for climate justice, equitable financing, and fair trade. Together, we can be both the *shield* and *ladder* for our region's prosperity.

Let us reimagine trade as a tool for peace and cooperation, and infrastructure as a source of empowerment. Together, let us build a sustainable, climate-resilient, and human-centered economic future.

Thank you for your kind attention.