

Vice President of Federal Republic of Nigeria, H.Excellency.

Professor Yemi Osinbojo,

Minister for Science and Technology, H.E. Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu,

Head of Energy Commission of Nigeria, H.E. Professor Eli Jidere
Bala,

The Secretary General of Energy Charter Secretariat, H.E. Dr. Urban
Rusnak

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Japanese Government, the vice chair country of the Energy Charter Conference last year, I would like to express our compliments on the signature of the International Energy Charter by the Federal Republic of Nigeria and express my gratitude to the Government of Nigeria and the Energy Charter Secretariat for all the effort to make today's signing ceremony happen.

Last November, Japan hosted as the chair the 27th Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference in Tokyo, with the participants of 78 countries and organizations including Nigeria, and adopted the 'Tokyo Declaration on the Energy Charter'. The Declaration confirms that the

Energy Charter Treaty can contribute to strengthening global energy security, and calls for more signatories for the International Energy Charter (IEC) to spread the Charter's effects worldwide.

The signing of the Charter by Nigeria today helps materialize the Tokyo Declaration and reinforce energy security of not only Nigeria but also the region as a whole. With last year's three new accessions of African regional organizations, G5 Sahel, ECCAS and EAC, Nigeria's participation in the Charter would accelerate an increase in the number of African signatories to the Charter. I hope more African countries become signatories of the International Energy Charter.

As the largest oil producing country in Sub-Saharan Africa and now as a home country of Secretary General of OPEC, Mr. Barkindo, Nigeria has been playing an important role in the international energy market. For us, by the way, Nigeria is Africa's largest LNG exporter to Japan.

We have witnessed the Nigerian Government is working on

reviewing the national energy policy for sustainable energy development by inviting more private investors into the energy sector. As the International Energy Charter requires its signatory to promote liberalization of trade in energy, and promotion and protection of investments in the sector, today's signing of the Charter will underpin Nigeria's efforts to improve the investment climate in the Nigerian energy sector and will help to attract more investments in energy development. Japan is ready to further cooperate with Nigeria in the energy sector.

I earnestly hope this signing ceremony will contribute to energy development and economic growth in Nigeria, and will lead to the reinforcement of the energy security in Nigeria and the region.

Thanks for your attention.