BACKGROUND TO CLIMATE INVESTMENTS IN NIGERIA: REMARKS BY RT HON SAM ONUIGBO FCIS, FNIM, KJW, PRESIDENT, GLOBE LEGISLATORS, SPONSOR OF NIGERIA'S CLIMATE CHANGE ACT 2021, AND CONVENER OF THE INAUGURAL NIGERIA CLIMATE INVESTMENT SUMMIT (NCIS) ON TUESDAY, 23 JUNE, 2026, AT MANSION HOUSE, CITY OF LONDON, DURING THE LONDON CLIMATE ACTION WEEK 2026.

[Protocol]

Appreciation

First, I must commend GLOBE Legislators, whom, as a founding partner of the London Climate Action Week (LCAW), made it possible for us to convene this inaugural summit, which is now a flagship event of LCAW. It speaks to vision and strategic positioning for this to be possible. In the same vein, I commend SOStainability for being a worthy partner of GLOBE Legislators, and for working assiduously with us as a team to make this very important summit a reality. I thank you.

Introduction

I welcome you all to this inaugural Nigeria Climate Investment Summit which is clearly an opportunity for investors to engage in productive discussions about Nigeria's transition to sustainable and climate-aligned capital.

Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and a key market remains top choice for investors. Not that alone, it has enormous potentials: with the massive opportunities created by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as the largest free trade area in the world, alongside 55 participating African countries, the market has over 1.3 billion people today. That is a combined GDP exceeding US$3.4 trillion. It is expected that investments in Nigeria's climate sector would generate returns beyond its borders and provide access to a continental market.

As clear evidence that Nigeria is investors' preferred destination, the 2025 Sovereign Green Bond worth 50 Billion Naira attracted 91 Billion Naira in subscriptions, exceeding the target by 82%. Similarly, the Lagos State Green Bond was heavily oversubscribed by 97.7%.

Going by the **United Nations World Population Prospects, b**y 2050, Nigeria's population is projected to reach nearly 400 million, with Africa's population growing to 2.5 billion. This purports that about one in six Africans could be Nigerian. The resulting demographic growth is expected to accelerate green economy investments, while AfCFTA can scale up climate investments continent-wide through reduced tariffs and harmonized regulations.

Here is another perspective: The **2023 African Union Climate Declaration** highlights that 600 million Africans still lack electricity. In response, Mission 300, an initiative of the World Bank Group, aims to mobilise US$250 million, while the African Development Bank will contribute US$50 million to connect 300 million people to energy access by 2030, so as to catalyse rapid economic development and job creation.

Specifically, the World Bank says that more than 90 million Nigerians lack access to electricity, thereby "making Nigeria the country with the largest number of people not connected to electricity. Consequently, Nigeria accounts for 12 percent of the global energy access deficit." Energy is a crucial asset for rapid economic transformation. Simultaneously, the demand for power is expected to surge as Nigeria's population nears 400 million. But here is the irony: even though the African Development Bank notes that Africa possesses approximately 60% of the world's best solar resources, it still accounts for less than 1% of installed solar generation capacity. This gap represents one of the largest renewable energy investment opportunities globally.

I commend President Bola Tinubu for recognizing this opportunity and taking proactive measures to promote green investments in Nigeria. The first far-reaching and courageous decision he took during his swearing-in on May 29, 2023 as the President of Nigeria was the removal of fuel subsidy which ultimately reduced emissions in Nigeria. In November 2023, during the presentation of the 2024 Appropriation Bill at the National Assembly, he directed his appointees to attend COP28 and attract climate-related investments. His involvement in COP28, along with his speeches at the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week in 2025 and 2026, reflects his commitment. Additionally, initiatives like the launch of the Presidential Initiative on Compressed Natural Gas, the rapid growth of Electric Vehicles (EVs), charging networks, and battery swapping ecosystems, as well as the adoption of the National Carbon Market Framework (NCMF) and the launch of the National Carbon Registry to enhance Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems, demonstrate a focus on developing Nigeria's green economy. The operationalization of the Climate Change Fund, along with the development of the Energy Transition Plan, NDC 3.0, and a Long-term Low Emissions Development Strategy, further point to this commitment.

It is important to emphasize that Nigeria's NDC 3.0, submitted in 2025, outlines an ambitious emissions reduction pathway towards achieving net-zero emissions by 2060, with an estimated investment requirement of nearly US$350 billion. While Nigeria is expected to contribute a portion of the financing, a substantial share of the capital will need to be mobilised from international funding sources, creating significant opportunities for development partners, institutional investors and private capital to participate in the country's green transition and sustainable growth agenda. Central to this effort is the National Carbon Market Framework (NCMF). The framework is projected to unlock between US$2.5 billion and US$3 billion annually in carbon finance over the next decade, positioning climate action as a compelling investment opportunity.

Invariably, climate investments in Nigeria should not be viewed as investments in about 230-million-person Nigerian market, instead, they should be viewed as investments positioned to access a significant proportion of the 1.3 billion African population with a potential for a market of approximately 2.5 billion people in 2050.

For investors, this demographic reality creates a powerful demand prospect for food production, sustainable housing, transportation, water supply, healthcare, and pollution control. All of these sectors intersect directly with climate change investment opportunities and are clearly addressed in the Nigeria Climate Change Act 2021, which we enacted as the country's first stand-alone legal framework to drive climate action. The Act birthed the multi-MDA National Council on Climate Change, which has ensured the unfettered participation of different MDAs and the private sector in climate action for the country.

Side by side with the Act, we introduced other progressive climate policies, since estimates from development institutions indicate that climate impacts could reduce Nigeria's GDP significantly over the coming decades if adaptation, sustainable infrastructure, and renewable energy investments are not accelerated. These climate actions cover pollution remediation, and other climate impacts such as drought, desertification, gully erosion, and coastal erosion.

For instance, Nigeria's power sector offers massive investment opportunities as the nation has endured many decades of energy poverty, while it grapples with the challenge of providing reliable electricity to power homes, schools, hospitals, pharmacies to preserve critical drugs, and businesses, because of an overburdened and fragile national grid, and the sheer size of the country.

To resolve this shortcoming, Nigeria has unbundled the electricity sector through a constitutional amendment, with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu assenting to the Electricity Act 2023, just 9 days after assuming office on May 29, 2023. This important Act has further undergone amendments in , in 2024 and 2026 to address flagged gaps. While signing the amended Act, the President stated that, "This law marks a new era in Nigeria's energy sector. States now have the constitutional authority to provide stable and efficient electricity to their residents, fostering industrialisation and job creation."

This significant and progressive development now allows for investments in renewable energy, mini and off-grid power projects in underserved and unserved areas. Following the enactment of Nigeria's Electricity Act 2023, several subnational governments have also produced electricity market laws. To date, 15 out of Nigeria's 36 states have completed the transition to independent regulation of their intra-state electricity markets, thereby effectively assuming regulatory responsibilities previously exercised by the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC).

It is clear that this new impetus has enabled investors to enter the market, partner with subnational governments, and establish structures across the country.

Further, the **Nigeria Energy Transition Plan (ETP)** is a well-tailored plan that combines energy access, climate mitigation, industrial growth, job creation, and social inclusion into a single, comprehensive, and coherent framework. In 2021, at COP26 in Glasgow, Nigeria committed to attaining net-zero emissions in 2060. Consequently, the ETP targets net-zero carbon emissions by 2060 with a focus on 5 critical sectors: sustainable power, clean cooking, oil and gas (utilizing natural gas as a transition fuel), sustainable transport, and industrialization. It projects an investment opportunity of USD1.9 trillion (about USD10 billion annually), while USD25.8bn will be needed to provide universal electricity access in Nigeria, with 106 million people and 19.3 million households benefitting through mini-grids.

Another ambitious climate investment initiative of President Bola Tinubu is the "Nigeria Evergreen City" (Project Evergreen), Nigeria's proposed green industrial zone, to be sited in Nasarawa State in a bid to leverage the state's rich lithium resources. That represents a bold step aimed at establishing the country as a leading African hub for renewable energy technologies, battery manufacturing and climate adaptation solutions. Although the project has secured a dedicated management structure and attracted international investor interest, it is still at the planning and investment mobilisation phase.

It is well-known that agriculture accounts for approximately 24% of Nigeria's GDP and employs a large proportion of the population especially those within rural communities. However, climate change threatens agricultural productivity. This offers another investment opportunity especially in climate-smart agriculture, sustainable and solar-powered irrigation; etc.

On the transport sector, the Government has intensified its efforts to decarbonise it by encouraging the adoption of locally-assembled electric vehicles for public sector fleets and private mobility, while also introducing a zero-duty import waiver on imported electric vehicles. Opportunities thus abound here with a conducive environment already assured.

It is evident therefore, that, from delivering power to transport; climate-smart agriculture for food security, to resilient cities and buildings; several opportunities abound in Nigeria for investors

Currently, 70 to 75 percent of Nigerians depend on unsafe cooking methods, leading to approximately 100,000 deaths each year from Indoor Air Pollution (IAP) and respiratory illnesses. In response, the Nigerian government introduced the National Clean Cooking Policy. Additionally, the $2.2 billion pledge made at the Summit on Clean Cooking in Africa highlights the significant investment opportunities within Nigeria's clean cooking sector, given its population of about 240 million.

Also to be noted is that oil pollution and gas flaring, especially in the Niger Delta, remain a key challenge to Nigeria's just energy transition. Yet, it further creates investment opportunities in gas flare commercialisation, methane reduction, spill remediation, land restoration, water treatment, carbon capture, and ecosystem rehabilitation. These approaches can help reduce emissions, restore damaged environments, and support a just transition.

The opportunities are not just evident to Nigerians alone. For instance, the International Finance Corporation estimates that climate-related investment opportunities in emerging markets could exceed US$23 trillion by 2030, with sustainable infrastructure accounting for a major share. Furthermore, Nigeria's urbanization trajectory makes it one of the most attractive destinations for such investments in Africa.

Again, global demand for carbon credits is growing as corporations pursue net-zero commitments. Nigeria possesses significant natural assets capable of generating carbon credits. Investments in afforestation, reforestation, and biodiversity conservation can generate tradable carbon credits, while producing environmental and social benefits.

Despite these opportunities, it is a genuine cause for continental concern that Africa currently receives only about 2 per cent of global renewable energy investment while holding more than 30 per cent of the critical raw materials required for the global energy transition. The Nigeria Climate Investment Summit, therefore, provides a strategic platform to help reverse this imbalance, even as it advances the African Union's Agenda 2063, which envisions an inclusive, sustainable socio-economic development aimed at turning Africa into a global powerhouse for economic growth and development.

Once the challenging situations are considered, it becomes evident that this carefully planned Summit is more than just a ceremonial event. It serves as a gathering of forward-looking stakeholders united by the goal of showcasing Nigeria's opportunities: emphasizing the favorable investment climate and using London Climate Action Week as a platform to highlight the country's investment potential.

Over the course of the day, different panels will highlight the opportunities ranging from renewables, sustainable infrastructure, and carbon markets to immense opportunities at the sub-national level. We welcome you to participate actively.

Let me conclude with this: a quarter of a century ago, Nigeria unbundled its telecommunications sub-sector. We invited so many international investors at the time. Most of them declined. None was meticulous enough to see the opportunity that a nation that was then nearing 200 million people, most of whom are a young and educated population, presents. In the end, the African companies that saw the opportunity and took it became behemoths. Today, the same opportunity has presented itself in the green investment corridor. May the mistakes of the past not be repeated.

As I welcome all of us to this important inaugural summit, I pray that we do enjoy a productive deliberation.

God bless you.

Rt. Hon. Sir Sam Onuigbo FCIS, FNIM, KJW
Convener, Nigeria Climate Investment Summit