



**Remarks by Dr. Kase Lawal
Women and Youth Empowerment Foundation (WAYEF)
Thursday, November 6, 2008
Abuja, Nigeria**

Good evening to Her Excellency, The First Lady of Nigeria, Mrs. Turai Umar ‘Yar Adua, distinguished ministers, governors, other important government guests, members of the clergy, and fellow Nigerians. I am truly honored to be among you tonight to witness the kickoff of the Women and Youth Empowerment Foundation here in Abuja, Nigeria.

We are honored to have a First Lady such as ours, who in her many roles and responsibilities as the wife of our great leader, is herself a civic leader and a humanitarian. Now, she has decided to champion and launch the Women and Youth Empowerment Foundation (WAYEF), a non-governmental organization. For one who exhibits such great compassion and genuine concern for her fellow countrymen, her activity in this worthwhile cause is a blessing to us all.

It is WAYEF’s vision to create and to provide support for sustainable socio-economic and political development of women and youth towards achieving the overall development of our country. The objectives of WAYEF are several-fold and stretch into health and wellness, business and industry, youth and arts and culture sectors.

As a proud son of Nigeria, I welcome the concrete work and action on these initiatives and I look forward to supporting them in any way that I can as a private citizen and businessman. Nigeria is rich in people and in mineral resources. The First Lady’s assessment of why government should intervene in these very important issues is correct.

Our future and our success as a country and as a people will depend upon how we address these needs. For example, we cannot advance in our society if women’s basic needs and equality and gender issues are not addressed, if the issues of health disparities and medical treatment are not addressed for our various populations, if our educational institutions are not opened for all to attend, or if our people are cannot create enterprises that will earn an income that they can provide for their families. It is for these reasons that WAYEF should be supported by us all.

There is a saying that states “As goes Nigeria, so goes Africa.” I, for one, think that the example of the success of the WAYEF initiatives, once they reach every corner, hamlet and metropolitan center in Nigeria, will become the one example that we should

export to every country on the continent. The First Lady and WAYEF are rolling out a broad sweeping agenda tonight. It is one that requires a persistence of vision from this administration to subsequent administrations. The highest calling in life is to do for the least of us. The Women and Youth Empowerment Foundation is an exemplary mission and it is one that we should all support.

Thank you and enjoy the rest of your evening.

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