

**STATEMENT MADE BY VICE PRESIDENT JOSEPH N. BOAKAI, SR.  
AT A COCKTAIL  
IN HONOR OF DEPARTING NIGERIAN SPECIAL SECURITY SERVICE OFFICERS**

**March 30, 2006**

**YOUR EXCELLENCY MADAM ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF  
PRESIDENT, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**

**YOUR EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR EINEJE E. ONOBU  
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY & PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE FEDERAL  
REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

**DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS**

**UNMIL FORCE COMMANDER, MR. ISAAC OBIAKOR**

**HONORABLE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, HON. BROWNIE SAMUKAI**

**NIGERIAN FORCE COMMANDER**

**DIRECTOR AND MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL SECURITY SERVICE**

**DISTINGUISHED NIGERIAN MILITARY ADVISOR**

**DISTINGUISHED HONOREES**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

It is hard and sad to say goodbye to someone you cherish and admire. But no matter what, it is always good to say goodbye. A farewell is always a reminder that no matter how long, we will always meet again. I can still see familiar faces amongst us here of those who we bided farewell to after serving with ECOMOG in the 1990s.

Today, we have again gathered here to bid farewell to another group of our brothers and sisters from Nigeria, after their sacrificial and indispensable professional services to help restore a nation. We recall, with gratitude, the long standing relationship between Nigeria and Liberia dating back to the years of

struggle for independence and the Liberation of the African continent from the forces of oppression and apartheid.

This relationship spans over several decades. One of Nigeria's former presidents, the late Dr. Nnadi Azikwe lived in Liberia for several years before becoming president of Nigeria.

It is no wonder that Nigeria took up the challenge and mustered the courage to lead the ECOMOG peace keeping force in 1990, when the people of Liberia were burning and killing each other, while the rest of the world stood looking at the theatre of a devastating civil war. It was Nigeria again, little over two years that paved the way for UNMIL to come to Liberia.

Liberians, from all walks of life, appreciate and will never forget the level of sacrifice exhibited and done in saving our country from the brinks of total collapse.

In spite of all of the struggles and difficulties you have encountered in our country, you have never failed us. You continue to show love to us as a people in need of brotherly and sisterly love. As securities, your job is to protect your principal with your very life. That you have done very well.

What greater love is this that a man will lay down his life to save another?

As we bid you farewell, you have indeed demonstrated that we are linked by a common identity and purpose. That is, we are Africans. And as such, our destinies are linked to the same lineage. Let me on behalf of our government express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to President Olusegun Obasanjo for making you come to assist us.

I can not overemphasize our gratitude as a people, for the services and security protection you have provided us. Even in the discharge of your duties, we are aware that you have made friends here.

We look forward to seeing you here one way or the other.

You have served us well. Your professional expertise must be emulated by all security personnel because you served with diligence and commitment in the discharge of your duties.

Henry & Henry, Asuquo, Taiwo, Yusuf, John, Raphael, Gabriel, Christiana, Timi, Mohammed, Toyin, Patrick and Sunday; the distinction with which you served our people will remain in our minds forever. Let me say that the Nigerian security is a model for security discipline in Africa. As such, Liberia stands ready to utilize your security expertise as we evolve a new restructured and trained security service.

Our goodbye is never for long. The next time you come here, it will be on a friendly visit.

I thank you.