



*Anyim Pius Anyim* LLB, LLM

### **HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY (IWD)**

As the world stands up for women on this auspicious occasion of the International Women's Day (IWD), I join all men of goodwill in celebrating our women for all they do to maintain the balance of the human society.

I am sad, that our women in Nigeria, will be observing this year's International Women Day with a deep feeling of disappointment and anger, arising from the rejection the women/gender related bills at the constitution amendments hearings of the National Assembly last week. I understand that the normal legislative processes were duly followed and the outcome was that the bills did not receive the required number of votes for their passage. However, it is very unfortunate that those bills were rejected.

On matters that are critical to the peace, development and harmony of our country, like giving our women a sense of worth, belonging, confidence and inclusiveness, we must look beyond processes and procedures and take actions and decisions that will engender stability and progress in the society. With an estimated population of over 104 million – (49.32% of Nigeria's population, 2021 estimate), Nigerian women have only 29 out of the 469 members of the Nigerian National Assembly. This is grossly inadequate to represent the views and put the voice of the women on the table when dealing with national issues, especially as they affect women and children.

Without inclusiveness, we will not make the desired progress in our efforts at nation building. The matter of gender balance and women inclusiveness in governance is one area we must resolve by deliberate actions and policies. I therefore stoutly stand with Nigerian women on their demand for a more equitable and fair representation in government at all levels.



As a demonstration of our love for, and appreciation of the invaluable contributions of Nigerian women to the peace, progress, development and stability of our country, the National Assembly, as a matter of urgent national importance, needs to revisit the rejected women/gender related bills to give our women the confidence and sense of belonging they require to continue to serve our country and humanity at large, in the manner they have always done. We do not have to wait for women to occupy the National Assembly before we do the right thing.

Let me assure our hard working and patriotic Nigeria women that I recognise the important role they play in stabilizing the society. I appreciate their invaluable contributions to the development of our country, and above all, I value them as indispensable partners in nation building. When, by the grace of God and the will of all Nigerians, I am given the opportunity to serve our great country as president, Nigerian women will have their deserved place of pride in the administration I will superintend.

**This is wishing our women a Happy International Women's Day 2022**



**ANYIM PIUS ANYIM GCON**