

**The Award of the First Lady of Nigeria, H.E. MRS AISHA MUHAMMADU BUHARI  
For Her relentless Achievements at Fighting Gender-Based Victimization, Human  
Trafficking, and Uplifting Womenfolk in Nigeria**

**Date:** Thursday, 27 September 2018|**Time:** 1:00pm - 3:00pm |**Venue:** Nigeria House, New York

**Speech by Dr. Queen Blessing Itua, Winner of President Barack Obama Lifetime Achievement Award**, the Global Empowerment Movement Founder and Award-Winning Nigerian-American Author and Development/Gender Advocate.

**Your Excellency,**

The Wife of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Mrs. Aisha Muhammadu Buhari,

Your Excellency, the First Lady of the Republic of ..... Mrs.

Your Excellency, the Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the United Nations,

Prof. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, OFR.

Honourable Ministers,

Please permit me to stand on the existing protocol,

The phenomenon of human trafficking is a global challenge. But while human trafficking is a global phenomenon, African human trafficking is interwoven with and tied to poverty. Quite often, human trafficking involves some form of forced, coerced, sexual or labor exploitation, including the quest for greener pastures as seen in the movie “Mrs. Adams.” Many are being deceived or coerced, while a significant number willingly acquiesced into being trafficked in order to seek supposedly “better life” abroad, only to be lured into forced prostitution or forced labor.

*The situation has reached an alarming proportion and the trend is high and is rising.*

There is need for continuous conversation and dialogue around the phenomenon of human trafficking among us all as the Blessings, I called solution in the book: empowerment book: “*We Are The Blessings of Africa, Reshaping Our Greatness Together*” with the view of proffering holistic solutions that would result in comprehensive and integrated approach founded on behavioral modification, character reorientation, continuous sensitization, mentoring, as well as empowerment and support to victims of human trafficking in tandem with the objectives of Agenda 2030 of leaving no one behind.

**It is also important to begin to recognize the efforts of individuals** who have taken the campaign beyond borders and in the process garnered critical mass of attention of global leaders and policymakers to the destructive impact of human trafficking on the economy, social cohesion and community ties, by ensuring that policies and programmes are formulated and established to confront the pervasiveness of the scourge of the human trafficking.

Amongst these is the wife of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Her Excellency Mrs. Aisha Muhammadu Buhari, has, through her various programmes on women, young girls and children support, assist, integrate and provide hope to numerous victims of some of the societal ills in Nigeria, including human trafficking. Mrs. Buhari, through her pet project, “Future Assured,” campaign for women and girl-child education, empowerment, and commitment to

improving the lives of the people she serves. She has also been a strong advocate against victimization, inhumanity, including the rape of minors. Within this context, she has complimented government various initiatives by teaming up with relevant stakeholders in Nigeria and beyond to address some feminine challenges in the country.

The following represents some of the achievements of Her Excellency, Aisha Muhammadu Buhari, in advancing the cause of womenfolk in Nigeria:

- *Her Excellency create a vanguard of women that have suffered gender-based violence including battery and rape. Serves as an advocate against the rape of minors.*
- *She recently declared war against abuse of vulnerable people through a well-attended workshop in Abuja, calling for a review of disproportionate laws and punishment against abusers.*
- *Her Excellency also launched a campaign tagged: "Leave our Daughters Alone" in Nigeria which is designed to put pressure on perpetrators of the abduction of girls and those engaged in other maltreatment of girls. The campaign has resonated tremendously around the country.*

In this connection, today, the First Lady of Nigeria will be bestowed with the **Distinguished Global Award for Excellence in Women Empowerment and Gender Development by Global Empowerment Movement Corporation, USA**

**Her Excellency is also receiving the Honorary Citizen of Georgia Award from the State of Georgia and a Resolution from Georgia Senator Steve Henson of District 41 as initiated by the Honorable Senator Donzella James of District 35, who wanted Her Excellency to come to visit us in Georgia, but for her tight schedule. We hope to formally receive Her Excellency to the State of Georgia in the near future as "Honorary Citizen of Georgia."**

At this point, I will now invite Her Excellency, Mrs. Aisha Muhammadu Buhari to come forward and receive her awards.

1. The Resolution from Georgia Senator Steve Henson, District 41.
2. The Honorary Citizen of Georgia Award
3. The Distinguished Global Award for Excellence in Women Empowerment and Gender Development by the Global Empowerment Movement Corporation, USA

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The awareness-educational Anti-Human Trafficking movie: "*Mrs. Adams*" and an empowerment book: "*We Are The Blessings of Africa, Reshaping Our Greatness Together*" produced by Dr. Queen Blessing Itua

Global Empowerment Movement Corporation, USA - an International Non-Governmental Organization, in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, devoted to global and domestic charity initiatives, established to bridge the gap, empower lives, address critical impoverishment issues, provide skill development, and economic empowerment support for the underprivileged women and their families vulnerable to victimization.