

## Advertorial

On 5 September, 2003 a delegation of Reach Africa Foundation led by the Chief Executive, Chief T. A. Osuji, met the founder and Chairman of WOTCLEF H. E. Chief (Mrs.) Amina Titi Atiku Abubakar. The meeting took place at the Embassy of Nigeria in The Hague. During the meeting H. E. Chief (Mrs.) Amina Titi Atiku Abubakar gave a brief history and the achievements made by WOTCLEF since it was established in 1999. The founder of WOTCLEF said the main objective of WOTCLEF is to eradicate the trafficking of women and child labour in Africa. She said the aim of WOTCLEF was to place the African dimension on the global agenda for special attention and action, to mobilise and motivate stakeholders at all levels to



**Reach Africa team with Mrs. Atiku after holding discussions**

respond to the challenges posed by trafficking and child labour migration, to network and collaborate with concerned parties and campaigners world-wide on concerted, creative, pragmatic and proactive action for the eradication of all forms of trafficking and child labour, and to rehabilitate, reorient and equip the victims with appropriate skills to re-integrate into society.

Most of the activities which the foundation has been carrying out since its founding have focused on Nigeria, neighbouring countries and Europe. Among the activities which WOTCLEF has been undertaking is the deportation to Nigeria of women and children who were trafficked to neighbouring countries and Europe for prostitution and child labour. For example, between October and December, 1999, 154 young girls were involved in prostitution in Italy were deported to Nigeria. On June, 2000 a group of 20 girls and 19 boys were deported from The Netherlands and efforts to round up and

## REACH AFRICA AND WOTCLEF TO COOPERATE IN COMBATING WOMEN TRAFFICKING FROM AFRICA TO EUROPE

deport women who are prostitutes in Europe will continue unabated. She thanked European countries which have been very co-operative in tracking down and deporting Nigerian girls who are involved in prostitution.

On the home front H. E. Chief (Mrs.) Amina Titi Atiku Abubakar said her organisation was tracking down all those who are involved in this illicit business. She said WOTCLEF campaign in Nigeria was two-pronged namely, enlightenment campaign to mobilise public awareness and support and crack down on those who deal or facilitate the trafficking of women and children for prostitution and child labour. She said the enlightenment campaign has been undertaken deep down to the villages and it has involved seminars, workshops and conferences aimed at mobilising everybody to join the fight against women trafficking and child labour. In order to rehabilitate women and children who are deported back home WOTCLEF is building an international based skill centre on Lokja-Zuba. The objective of the centre is to train the victims of human trafficking and child labour on appropriate skills that will enable them become self-reliant and re-integrate into society.

The Federal Government has also been very supportive to WOTCLEF's efforts in combating women trafficking and child labour in the country. She said there has been a tighter security measure at Nigerian borders to prevent human trafficking. The Nigerian Police Force has formed an inter-ministerial committee on human trafficking. Syndicates specialising on human trafficking have been smashed, several pimps have been netted and those on the run have been declared wanted by the Police and the Nigerian Immigration Services.

The founder of WOTCLEF said in order for all these efforts to succeed the co-operation of both local and international NGOs was crucial. For, she said, the fight against human trafficking is both local and global and there-

fore it is imperative that Africans in Diaspora should work with WOTCLEF in this endeavour. The trafficking of women and children for work and sexual exploitation is an international, organised, criminal business that in addition to violating of human rights it grossly increases the underdevelopment of Africa. It is therefore the duty of every African in diaspora to combat the trafficking of women from Africa to Europe. Thus, she urged Reach Africa Foundation to work with WOTCLEF in combating women trafficking and child labour.

Responding to H. E. Chief (Mrs.) Amina Titi Atiku Abubakar, the Chief Executive of Reach Africa Foundation Chief T. A. Osuji thanked the Embassy of Nigeria for arranging the meeting. Chief Osuji said the meeting was a great honour and opportunity for Reach Africa Foundation. The Chief Executive of Reach Africa gave a brief presentation of the foundation and the achievements gained since the organisation was founded on 5 August, 2002. He informed Her Excellency that the focus of Reach Africa was on improving the well being of Africans in Diaspora and on the continent and therefore the campaign against women trafficking and child labour were problems which are within the focus of the organisation and are given top priority. Chief Osuji said Reach Africa Foundation is prepared to work with WOTCLEF



**Her Excellency addressing the group**

in combating the trafficking of women from Africa to Europe. He assured Her Excellency that Reach Africa will utilise its network to sensitise the matter in Europe by organising seminars, conference and the mobilisation of financial resources to support projects undertaken by WOTCLEF.



Chief Osuji informed Her Excellency that Nigeria was one of the target countries in West and therefore the call for Reach Africa Foundation to work with WOTCLEF was timely. He said Reach Africa Foundation has a project on economic enfranchisement of poor women in Ogbenneisi in Imo State and plans are underway to visit Nigeria in November this year to commission the commencement of the project. Therefore Reach Africa will use this opportunity to pay courtesy call on Her and visit some of the projects of WOTCLEF. Chief Osuji said Reach Africa will be pleased to collaborate with WOTCLEF in undertaking jointly projects that focus on curbing women trafficking and child labour and rehabilitation of the returnees. Responding to Chief Osuji, Her Excellency expressed, on behalf of WOTCLEF, her appreciation for Reach Africa Foundation being ready to collaborate with WOTCLEF in combating women



Time to eat with Her Excellency

trafficking and child labour from Africa to Europe. She remarked that this was a very important commitment and WOTCLEF values very much any type and amount of support from any organisation. Her Excellency said WOTCLEF is looking forward to receive the delegation of Reach Africa Foundation in Nigeria in November this year.

This is a great opportunity for Reach Africa Foundation to work with WOTCLEF. For, WOTCLEF has earned itself a distinguished track record that has been recognised by the United Nations. On July 2003 the United Nations granted WOTCLEF a special consultative status which permits the organisation to designate official representatives to the UN Headquarters in New York and its other offices in Geneva and Vienna. WOTCLEF is also permitted to maintain regular presence at all activities of the United Nations.

### Retrospect on the Liberia saga.

Last month, the United Nations warned former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor not to muddle with the new political dispensation in Liberia as there were information that he is still trying to influence decisions from exile in Nigeria.

Maybe many of us has quickly forgotten the scenario that saw the exit of Charles Taylor. I bring you what he said before he left and maybe we may understand the allegations against him by the UN.

The former president of the republic of Liberia, Dr. Charles Gankay Taylor says and I quote: "Liberia is a sovereign state and must remain sovereign". "I want to be the sacrificial lamb-I am the whipping board". "I am leaving but know that the constitution of Liberia is intact". "The Liberian government should be formed in Monrovia and not in Accra"

"I am ongoing now but history will tell that I warned about this"

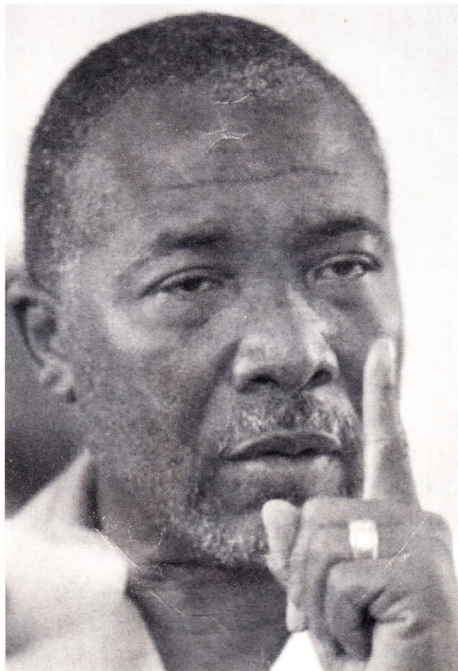
"The US should serve this opportunity to help Liberia"

"I have nothing against George Bush-I know he's a Christian and a man of good heart. I believe he made decisions based on lies.

Bush has been misled with lies and information- It is true that we have some disagreement, but I am entitled to my opinion just as he is entitled to his"

"History will be kind to me. I have fulfilled my details. I am leaving for the interest of the

## WHAT CHARLES TAYLOR TOLD THE LIBERIANS AND THE WORLD!



Liberian people-above all else the people must matter"

"I leave you with these words; God willing I will be back".

The month of August in Liberia's history has marked another day of remembrance. Besides August 24 which Liberia's celebrates as national Flag Day; she has just added August

11th as a memorable day when Charles Taylor flew into exile in neighbouring country, Nigeria. Taylor's departure came when he yielded to international pressure. Taylor's favourites argue that he must stay because he possesses the legitimacy of the Liberian presidency while others say he must go and give peace a chance.

Critics say Taylor is the centre point of the 14 years Liberian civil war. It is not surprising that Liberians took to the streets dancing and shouting, "We want peace and no more war". Others even took the courage by saying and displaying placards "Taylor must leave now, he's the problem, we want peace keepers to come and help us; George Bush please come and help us". It has turned into a polemic. Taylor then said he would only leave if the international peace keepers arrive. His ministers and other top government officials say they would give their support to him while rebels' forces, the Lurd and Models advance on the capital, Monrovia.

Liberians displayed dead bodies in front of the American Embassy. President Obasanjo of Nigeria made a short visit to Liberia offering Taylor a new haven in Nigeria. Bush warns Taylor to leave Liberia to stop the