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SUMMARY: 9TH U.S.-NIGERIA BI-NATIONAL COMMISSION MEETING

Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman led the U.S. delegation to the ninth meeting of the U.S.-Nigerian Bi-National Commission in Abuja on August 15, 2013. The Under Secretary met with Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan and other Nigerian ministers during her visit. She called upon the working group to meet the challenge of implementing the many concepts agreed upon, and turning them into concrete, realizable steps that the Nigerian people could experience and feel, specifically:

Provide more training to the Nigerian military and other services of the Nigerian government to address the challenges it faces, particularly with the insurgency in the North and Northeast. The Under Secretary noted the inclusiveness of all voices in Nigerian society, Police, Intelligence, Military, Civil Society and State Government, in creating a comprehensive plan to deal with this challenge;

Acknowledged the need for greater public diplomacy: specifically the need to communicate that justice and accountability takes place, that training is ongoing and that the many things that are happening on the ground, provide hope to people and reduce the recruitment of additional extremists; and

Countering extremists within Nigeria requires using all of the strengths that Nigeria has to offer: its talent and its federal character that draws on the abilities of Nigerians from all regions, all sectors and all parts of the country, and its diversity that allows for approaching problems from multiple angles at the same time.

Under Secretary Sherman concluded by saying that the talents of all the people of Nigeria are needed to confront the issues before them and to seize the opportunities that exist to have a great and bright future as Nigeria becomes Africa's most vibrant and largest economy in the coming years.

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