**Inauguration of the Indian High Commission Chancery**

**[26 September 2016]**

**Remarks by the High Commissioner**

**Hon’ble Vice President of India and Madam Ansari,**

**Hon’ble Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Sri Arjun Ram Meghwal ji,**

**Hon’ble Member of Parliament Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita ji,**

**Hon’ble Member of Parliament Shri Dilip Kumar Tirkey ji,**

**Hon’ble Member of Parliament Shri Mohammad Salim ji,**

**Member of the Indian delegation,**

**Friends,**

Today is an important day in the annals of the Indian High Commission in Abuja and also in the India-Nigeria bilateral engagement.

I have the privileged honour to welcome amidst us Hon’ble Vice President of India SHri M. Hamid Ansari saab, Madam Salma ansari, and other senior members of the Indian delegation to Abuja, and in particular to the Indian High Commission.

It is also a momentous occasion, as we have just witnessed the inauguration of the Indian Hgih Commission Chancery by Hon’ble Vice President of India. It is also a matter of pride for all of us in the High Commission that the foundation stone for this project was laid by Former Prime Minister of India Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

I take this opportunity to convey our gratitude to Madam Salma Ansari for inaugurating the Photo Exhibition titled ‘India-Nigeria relations: From Evolution to Strategic Partnership’ which chronicles the high level engagement between India and Nigeria since the visit of first Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru to Nigeria in 1962 to till date. Also our gratitude to Hon’ble Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal ji for launching the e-book on the same theme.

Sir, with your permission, I wish to recognize the seminal contributions made by two of my immediate predecessors Amb. Mahesh Sachdev and Amb. A.R. Ghanashyam in ensuring the completion of the Indian High Commission Project. It would be remiss on my part if I do not refer to the hard work and diligence in steering this project by my colleague Counsellor M.S. Kanyal. Special words of appreciation also to Capt. Gautam Marwaha, Defence Advisor, and Shri Sivan, Second Secretary for ensuring that Indianness breathe through the premises through Indian art works, and to Smt. Shanta Roy for curating the Photo Exhibition with enthusiasm and complete dedication.

**Friends,**

Without any further delay, I would now like to request Hon’ble Vice President of India to kindly address the gathering to share his thoughts.

Hon’ble Vice President of India Shri Hamid Ansari saab……..