

Nigeria, Saudi Arabia Sign MoU to Deepen Defence and Military Cooperation

On 9 December 2025, in a significant step toward strengthening bilateral defence relations, the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at enhancing cooperation across multiple military and security domains. The agreement marks a new chapter in the diplomatic and strategic ties between the two nations, signalling a shared commitment to regional stability, counter-terrorism efforts and defence modernization.

The MoU was formally signed by the Honourable Minister of State for Defence, H.E. Dr. Bello Mohammed Matawalle, MON, on behalf of the Government of Nigeria, and Dr. Khaled H. Al-Biyari, the Assistant Minister of Defence for Executive Affairs, representing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. According to both parties, the agreement provides a structured framework through which the countries will collaborate on training, technical assistance, intelligence sharing, logistics, joint exercises and other mutually beneficial military activities.

Describing the development as a "significant milestone," Dr. Matawalle highlighted that the MoU had been under consideration for a considerable period before its finalisation. He emphasised that the agreement not only reflects Nigeria's growing international defence partnerships but also aligns with efforts to enhance the operational capability of the Nigerian Armed Forces.

"The signing of this MoU is a significant milestone," Matawalle stated. "It has been on the drawing board for some time, and its conclusion will strengthen Nigeria's defence architecture and enhance the capacity of our armed forces."

Under the terms of the agreement, the MoU will be effective for an initial period of five years, with provisions for review and renewal for additional terms of the same duration. Either nation may terminate the agreement by providing a minimum of three months' written notice through diplomatic channels, ensuring flexibility as both countries adapt to evolving strategic needs.

Experts say the partnership is expected to deliver tangible benefits, particularly in the areas of capacity building, interoperability, and counter-terrorism. Nigeria stands to gain expanded access to professional military education, specialist courses and training exchanges intended to improve the skills of its defence personnel. Joint military exercises and the sharing of operational doctrine are also expected to strengthen the effectiveness and readiness of Nigeria's armed forces.

A notable component of the MoU is enhanced cooperation on security threats such as terrorism, violent extremism, insurgency and organised crime. Improved intelligence sharing and technical collaboration are anticipated to bolster Nigeria's ongoing efforts in combating Boko Haram, banditry and other security challenges affecting various regions of the country.

The Ministry of Defence has welcomed the agreement as a strategic instrument for advancing Nigeria's long-term security aspirations. Officials noted that the partnership aligns with ongoing reforms to modernise equipment, upgrade training standards and improve the efficiency of the armed forces.

As Nigeria continues to pursue multilateral and bilateral defence alliances, the newly signed MoU with Saudi Arabia stands as a testament to the nation's determination to build strong, mutually advantageous global partnerships aimed at promoting peace, stability and national security.

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