



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

DELIVERED BY

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OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

ON BEHALF OF THE
THE AFRICAN GROUP

AT THE

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE
65TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK, 4TH OCTOBER, 2010

I am speaking on behalf of the African Group, to congratulate you on your election as the chairman of the First Committee of this 65th United Nations General Assembly. The African Group wishes to equally congratulate the other members of the Bureau. *We believe that your relevant diplomatic experience will stand you in good stead* as you guide our various meetings to a successful conclusion. The African group is assuring you of its full co-operation *as we address the tasks ahead of us.*

2. *The Group wishes to associate itself with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement earlier delivered by Indonesia, and reiterates its commitment to the principle of promotion of International peace and stability based on the principle of undiminished security for all States.*

3. *The Group remains strong on its commitment to the achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control as inter alia affirmed by article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.* Africa also believes that multilateralism and solutions derived there from, especially within the ambit of the instrumentality of the United Nations Charter, will expedite achievement of most, if not all of our goals. While noting the contributions of efforts at other levels, we believe that multilateral negotiations remain the most effective means to address matters of disarmament and international peace and security.

4. The African Group emphasizes its principled positions on nuclear disarmament, which remain its highest priority, and on the related issue of nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects. The ultimate aim in the disarmament process is

the general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

The Group wishes to express its strong belief in the achievement of the principles and objectives of *the* non-proliferation treaty in line with the provisions of the Treaty and commitments agreed to at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, in particular the Resolution on the Middle East, as well as the agreed 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 Review conference.

5. To that end, our Group welcomes the adoption by consensus of the “Conclusions and Recommendations for Follow-on actions” of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, inter alia, on the Middle East mandating the UN Secretary General and the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution, in consultation with the States of the region, to convene a conference in 2012, to be attended by all States of the Middle East on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

We further reaffirm that the International Atomic Energy Agency is the sole competent authority responsible for verifying and assuring compliance by States Parties with their safeguards agreements undertaken in fulfillment of their Treaty obligations.

6. The African Group is convinced that the early ratification by the remaining NWS of the CTBT will contribute to its entry into force to bring into effect a comprehensive ban on nuclear test explosions, this will represent a concrete and meaningful step towards the realization of a systematic process to achieve nuclear disarmament. It stresses the significance of achieving universal adherence to the CTBT, including in particular, by all Nuclear Weapon States.

7. Pending the total elimination of those weapons, a legally binding international instrument should be established under which nuclear-weapon States undertake not to *use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States*. The African Group stresses the importance of ensuring that any nuclear disarmament process be transparent and verifiable and irreversible, in order for it to be meaningful *and effective*.

8. The Group wishes to stress the need to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in order to effectively promote to the nuclear disarmament process. The African Group emphasizes the importance of strengthening existing multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements by ensuring full compliance with, and effective implementation of, those agreements.

9. As the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) enters the final year of its current three-year cycle, the African Group calls upon all Member States to show flexibility and adequate political will to create the atmosphere sufficiently favourable to a consensus outcome. The Group notes the High Level Meeting on revitalizing the work of the conference on disarmament convened by the UN secretary General, and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations. The Group reaffirms its strong belief in strengthening the existing disarmament machinery and in this regard emphasizes the importance of convening the SSOD-IV as the most appropriate forum to address such issues comprehensively.

10. We are calling on the Conference on Disarmament, being the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, to commence negotiations on the basis of its agreed programme of work of 29th May 2009 as soon as possible. The African group hereby calls on Nuclear Weapon States that have not to please do so. **The African Group particularly calls upon the NWS that have not yet ratified the relevant Annexes to the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (the Pelindaba Treaty) to ratify the Treaty protocols without further delay, in order to ensure its effectiveness.**

11. The African Group calls on all States to take strict and effective measures to prevent any dumping of nuclear, chemical and/or radioactive wastes. As a means of enhancing the protection of all States from the dumping of radioactive wastes on their territories, the Group also calls for the effective implementation of the International Atomic Energy Agency Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste.

12. The African Group takes note of the outcome of the 4th BMS on national and regional implementation of the Programme of Action (POA) on SALWS. The group believes that the full implementation of the POA should be vigorously pursued. Africa hereby expresses its concern at the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of small arms and light weapons. We hereby draw attention to the necessity of focusing more on the needs of the developing countries for technical and financial empowerment to enable them address adequately the menace of illicit SALW.

13. Africa underscores the inalienable rights of the Non Nuclear weapon States to engage in the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Chairman,

14. While we express appreciation for the renewed impetus so far given to the UN regional center for peace and disarmament, in Lome, Togo, we believe that the centers till needs

the continuing support of the UN.

15. During this session, the African Group will be submitting three draft resolutions as follows:

- African Nuclear- Weapon-Free Zone
- prohibition of dumping of radioactive waste;

16. While not being among the major producers and exporters of conventional weapons in the world, many African States however suffer disproportionately, the pernicious effects of illicit transfer of arms causing serious destabilizing effects on its socio-economic stability.

In this connection, the African Group takes note of the commencement of the ATT process. The African group is of the firm view that this process should aim at a treaty that should be universal, balanced, fair and resistant to any political abuse.

17. In conclusion, the African Group hereby appeals to all delegations to demonstrate adequate flexibility and requisite political good will during this session of the First Committee negotiations. On its part, the African group assures you once again, of its readiness to participate fully and constructively in all negotiations. As we say in Africa, it is when the left hand washes the right and the right washes the left hand, then both hands will be clean.

18. I thank you.