



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

**AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 2010 REVIEW
CONFERENCE OF THE NUCLEAR NON
PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)**

NEW YORK, MAY 2010.

Mr. President,

May I on behalf of the Nigerian delegation also begin by congratulating you on your election as the President of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Like my other colleagues who have spoken before me, I am confident that your rich background and experience will serve well to effectively guide our deliberations to a successful outcome.

Nigeria is clear and unshaken in its commitment to the ideals and objectives of the NPT and to a nuclear free world. My country is proud to have been one of the early signatories to the Treaty – properly regarded as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation accord and the most widely endorsed multilateral disarmament agreement in history.

It is indeed remarkable that the NPT conceptualised more than forty years ago, despite its imperfections, still remains today the key barrier against nuclear insecurity in our world.

Nigeria's well documented commitment to non-proliferation of nuclear material for non peaceful purposes has been reinforced in recent years: our ratification of the 1997 Model Additional Protocol; the Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA and the entry into force in July 2009 of the Treaty of Pelindaba

– a commitment to an African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone are worthy of mention.

Our biennial resolution at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly on behalf of the group of African States further demonstrates Nigeria's resolve to abide by the NPT framework, its responsibilities and obligations.

Nigeria will continue to support positive initiatives aimed at establishing nuclear weapon free zones in areas of the world where they do not currently exist. We regard this as a positive additional step towards advancing the twin pillars of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

This year which marks the 40th anniversary of the coming into force of the NPT has witnessed a number of significant events, providing a welcome backdrop to this 2010 review conference. I refer to the recent signing of the START between the US and Russia; the encouraging 2010 Nuclear Posture Review and last month's successful Nuclear Security Summit.

The non-ratification of the CTBT by Annex II States that are yet to do so still remains one of the constraints to the CTBT becoming legally binding.

Maintaining the moratorium on nuclear testing in the mean time is critical to preserving the mutual trust necessary to safeguard existing assurances and highlights the importance of the Annexe II signatures.

Equally important is the need for a legally binding instrument to prohibit the production of fissile materials for the production of nuclear materials and nuclear explosive devices and the lowering of operational readiness of existing nuclear weapon systems with appropriate and reliable verification mechanisms.

Non-nuclear States such as Nigeria that have overtly denounced the development of nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices must themselves be assured against the threat or impact of deployment of such weapons under a legally binding framework.

Mr. President,

I wish therefore on behalf of the Nigerian delegation to reiterate Nigeria's endorsement of the thirteen practical interim steps for the systematic and progressive efforts by State parties to accomplish the total elimination of Nuclear weapons as the only absolute guarantee against the use, or threat of use, of such weapons.

Nigeria salutes the commitment and efforts of the IAEA in promoting international cooperation on the use of nuclear energy for development purposes.

As a country that has expressly declared its desire to seek international cooperation for the application of nuclear technology to boost its electricity generation and for other civilian applications, this third pillar of the NPT regime is of vital interest to us.

We hope that this review conference will also endorse appropriate practical measures to preserve the right of countries such as ours to exploit our entitlement under the NPT framework to use nuclear energy for such developmental purposes.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, Nigeria wishes to underscore the need for all State parties to consent to subject nuclear aspirations and facilities to full scope international safeguards. This is essential for building confidence and strengthening the NPT regime in an equitable, balanced and non-discriminatory manner.

It is our collective responsibility to seize the opportunity of the 2010 Review Conference to build that consensus that has eluded us.

Thank you.