



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. AMBASSADOR BELLO RINGIM, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF THE
PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

ON

**THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED
NATIONS AND ON THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE
ORGANIZATION**

**AT THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL CHAMBER,
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK**

THURSDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2015

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairman,

Nigeria welcomes the report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on Strengthening the Role of the Organization as contained in document no: A/70/33. Nigeria aligns herself with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the African Group.

2. As we celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, it is important that the organization continues to remain the primary global multilateral institution that is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security and ensuring sustainable development. Therefore, no efforts geared towards the strengthening of the role of the Organization would be too much. However, such efforts should be a product of dialogue, cooperation and consensus building among Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

3. Nigeria reaffirms its position on the sovereign equality of all nations. This is the fundamental prerequisite for achieving international peace and security. Nigeria believes that an international intercourse anchored on the respect for sovereign

equality of nations and the promotion of common interest would ensure harmony and foster respect for each other.

4. Nigeria is of the view that the imposition of unilateral sanctions goes against the grain of sovereign equality and international law. The report of the Special Committee on the Charter is clear on this. Nigeria is of the view that the imposition of sanctions on any sovereign state should always be in conformity with the provisions of the UN Charter. Nigeria also notes that almost all existing sanctions are placed against developing countries belonging to the African Union, the G-77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement.

5. Accordingly, Nigeria reiterates that sanctions should only be used as a last resort, after all other peaceful means of settling disputes have been exhausted. Furthermore, the purpose of any sanction imposed on a country should not be to punish the population but rather to extract compliance with international obligation from such country. Therefore, not every violation of international obligation should attract sanctions, as there are several other peaceful means that can be explored.

6. In this regard, we urge Member States to make the most effective use of existing procedures and methods for the

prevention of disputes and their pacific settlement, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The role and significance of the International Court of Justice in the settlement of disputes through peaceful means should be reinforced while compliance with its decisions should become the norm. We also consider it a useful exercise, if the International Law Commission gives due consideration to the legality of unilateral sanctions and their impacts on the targeted states.

7. The frequency of the resort to unilateral sanctions must be reduced, their scope must be narrowed and their duration shortened in order to avoid prolonged damage to the interest of targeted States and their populations. This Committee should therefore consider deliberating on the legality of unilateral sanctions and recommending mechanisms for periodic reviews of all sanctions regimes.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Nigeria wishes to recall that Article 2.7 of the Charter of the United Nations prohibits the Organization from infringing upon the sovereign right of Member States particularly with regards to matters of domestic jurisdiction. States are not also obliged to submit such matters to the United Nations to settlement under

the present Charter. Consequently, the United Nations has no powers to make decisions that affect the law-making capacities of Member States, and neither does it have the power to impose any commitment of legal nature on the said Member States without their consent and participation in the norm-setting process.

9. In this regard, we note with concern the increasing tendency in the United Nations to attribute a legal sanction to so-called "sexual orientation and gender identity". Nigeria reiterates that the discussion of this issue in the UN seems to be based on the supposition that the concept is defined in international law. No such definition exists as a matter of fact. We also maintain that this concept has no basis in the corpus of international human rights law. This lack of legal recognition is also underpinned by the complete lack of consensus among UN Member States on the use of the term.

10. Under these circumstances, we wish to assert that Member States have no obligation to make laws that would provide individuals or groups any special considerations based on their sexual preferences, tendencies or behaviours. The fact that an insignificant number of UN Member States have recognized the notion of sexual orientation and gender identity does not make it a universally accepted notion. For this reason, we call upon the

UN to refrain from further entrenchment of this notion in its work, and retreat from its current posture of support for this agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

11. As I conclude, I would like to place on record that Nigeria as a responsible member of the United Nations would continue to fulfill her international obligations, through a foreign policy thrust anchored on the promotion of global peace and security and the recognition of sovereign equality of nations as enshrined in Article 2 of the United Nations Charter.

I thank you.