



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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**AMBASSADOR
OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA TO THE
KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS**

**ON
CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY**

AT

**THE 78TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

NEW YORK, 12 OCTOBER 2023

Mr. Chair

I am particularly delighted to be part of this important discussion. Nigeria aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished Representative of Uganda on behalf of the African Group. However, we would like to make the following statements in our national capacity.

2. Nigeria condemns crimes against humanity in totality and calls for more concerted efforts in tackling these abhorrent crimes through an elaborate convention. We commend the International Law Commission for their effort on the draft article for the elaboration of a convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity. It provided a robust basis for our discussions during the intercessional session in April last year. In our next engagement, we will continue to support open, constructive, and inclusive dialogue that will lead to consensus, while taking note of existing national and international laws.

3. Crimes Against Humanity continue to be a topic of interest to the Nigerian delegation because of the devastating impact of these crimes to its victims and to humanity at large. Such acts destroy families, shatter dreams, displaces persons; and have lasting impacts even on the survivors. Every responsible government must put in place structures to fight these crimes to the full extent permitted by international law.

4. Nigeria would continue to make efforts in strengthening its already existing laws and mechanism introduced to combat

these crimes. We will continue to collaborate with the international community with the view to ensuring that the international legal frameworks for preventing and punishing such heinous crimes are fully always utilized.

Mr. Chair

5. The Federal Government of Nigeria created the Complex Case Work Group (CCWG), in response to crimes against humanity. It is working assiduously to create an electronic case file and evidence database to serve as a repository for such crimes including terrorism and corresponding judgement thereof. This data base will help Nigerian prosecutors to build better cases against perpetrators of egregious crimes to better address impunity. The Government appointed Investigators and Prosecutors as Serious Crimes Response Team (SCRT) to address alleged serious human rights violations and other crimes committed within the Nigerian territory.

Mr. Chair,

6. For any meaningful and sustained progress to be achieved, the international community must do more to ensure equity, fairness, and justice in dispensation of justice and prosecution in all global mechanisms set up in combating these crimes. All states parties must be equal before the law.

7. Nigeria expresses its unwavering support to the Rome Statute, and we will be guided by its principles and use this occasion to call on States Parties that have not yet acceded to the Statute to do so. Crimes Against Humanity, as codified in

the founding Statutes of the international criminal tribunals and international laws, should be respected, and implemented. Ignoring such crimes is ignoring the suffering of the people and our common community.

8. On the recommendation of the Commission in respect to Article 12 of the draft article for the elaboration of a convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity, we agree and support for a comprehensive approach by States to take all necessary measures to ensure equal access to competent authorities, including guarantees that all victims, complainants, and witnesses are protected against ill-treatment or intimidation. Nigeria also joins in welcoming the promotion of mutual Legal Assistance under Article 14, that will afford States under relevant laws and treaties access to investigations, prosecutions judicial and other proceedings.

9. In respect of draft Article 2 on the definition of Crime Against Humanity, my delegation does not agree with the recommendation on the Decision of the Commission to delete Article 7(3) of the Rome Statute, purportedly on the ground that it is outdated. We call for transparency and openness moving forward with this discussion. My delegation supports the African Group position to include slavery and exploitation in all forms as Crime Against Humanity. These crimes are not captured in either the Convention on War crimes or Genocide, we will at an appropriate place and time elaborate on these matters.

10. As we resume deliberations next year, Nigeria looks forward to a constructive and collaborative exchange of ideas and views and is committed to work with you all to collectively rid the world of impunity to crimes against humanity and to ensure accountability.

I thank you.