

STATEMENT

BY

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On Behalf Of

NIGERIAN DELEGATION

Delivered At The

**2005 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF STATES
PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON NON-
PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR-WEAPONS**

Mr. President,

I congratulate you on behalf of the Nigerian delegation on your election as President of the 2005 NPT Review Conference. Your rich experience will no doubt be an invaluable asset in guiding our Conference to a successful conclusion. I assure you of the full cooperation of the Nigerian delegation in dealing with the task ahead.

Mr. President,

The Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has contributed immensely to international peace and stability. Nigeria along with other States Parties is proud to have contributed to this process by renouncing the nuclear option. My delegation wishes to reaffirm Nigeria's commitment to the Treaty as a vital instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security. As a demonstration of our commitment, and strong belief in a nuclear-free world, we have concluded safeguards agreement with IAEA and ratified the Treaty of Pelindaba on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. I wish to assure that Nigeria will continue to remain faithful to her obligations and responsibilities under the Treaty.

Mr. President,

This year marks the 35th anniversary of the entry into force of NPT, and as we gather for the seventh time to review its implementation, we should recognize that nuclear weapons still pose serious threat to humanity, in spite of the Treaty. We recall that from just 3 atomic bombs possessed by one State in 1945, the nuclear reality today is that there are over 36,000 nuclear weapons in the arsenals of five nuclear-weapon States, excluding other nuclear powers. Two new States have acquired nuclear weapon each decade since the end of the World War II. Their total stockpile is estimated at about 12,000 megatons of explosion, that is about 12 billion tons of TNT. The collective yield and destructive capacity of these nuclear weapons equal about 1 million Hiroshima bombs. Studies by experts have revealed that if those nuclear arsenals, or even a fraction thereof, were to be unleashed in warfare, the human civilization, as we know it today, will be totally annihilated. While the present global stockpile of 36,000 nuclear weapons represents a significant reduction from the 65,000 possessed by these States at the height of the Cold War, they are nevertheless estimated to be 2,667 times the firepower experienced in the entire six years of the World War II.

It is for this reason that the existence of nuclear weapons has continued to pose grave concern to the international community, including my delegation. In this regard, and bearing in mind that NPT is the only legally-binding international agreement that commits nuclear-weapon States to nuclear disarmament, Nigeria calls on States Parties to reaffirm their commitment, at

this Conference to fully implement the Treaty in all its aspects, particularly Article VI. We believe that this should be one of the major challenges of this Conference. Nigeria also underlines the importance and urgency of achieving the universality of Treaty.

The need to confront this challenge is in keeping with the resolve of the global community in the Millennium Declaration to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. In this connection, we also recall a similar commitment in the same declaration to keep all options open for achieving this aim, including the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways and means of eliminating nuclear danger. The urgent need to confront the threat of nuclear weapons is particularly relevant now as the Millennium Declaration is due for review in September this year.

Pending the total elimination of those weapons, it is imperative for Member States to agree on the establishment of a legally binding international instrument under which the nuclear-weapon States will undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States. The International Court of Justice had reinforced this principle in 1996 in its advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. Nigeria reaffirms its support for that advisory opinion because we firmly believe that nuclear non-proliferation can only be meaningfully sustained if non-nuclear-weapon States that have renounced the development or possession of nuclear weapons are themselves assured, under legally-binding agreement, against the use or threat of use of such weapons. By transforming the disparate assurances declared by the nuclear powers into a unified, legally-binding obligation, the nuclear powers will not only be fulfilling part of their commitments towards these States but also reinforcing the non-proliferation regime against possible future setbacks. My delegation, however, wishes to reaffirm its belief that the total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Nigeria, therefore, joins the vast majority States Parties in calling on this Conference to establish a subsidiary body on negative security assurances.

Mr. President,

Nigeria wishes to reiterate its support for the Final Document adopted by consensus at the 2000 Review Conference, as well as the decision on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. Similarly, we reaffirm our support for the resolution adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference as valuable platforms for the work of this Conference and for full implementation of NPT. In particular, we endorse the 13 practical steps adopted by the 2000 Review Conference for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement the unequivocal commitment undertaken by States Parties to accomplish the total elimination of their arsenals leading to nuclear

disarmament. We note with grave concern certain developments, including the emergence of new strategic doctrines in some nuclear-weapon-States which have shrouded the expected implementation of these important commitments with uncertainty. We believe that this Review Conference offers us a unique opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the obligations we assumed in 2000 under the 13 Practical Steps and to the Treaty as a whole.

In this regard, Nigeria wishes to reiterate its long-standing support for the total elimination of nuclear testing. As a demonstration of this support, Nigeria ratified Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 2001. We stress the significance of achieving universal adherence to CTBT, by all nuclear weapon States, which, among others, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. We call upon all States whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty to enter into force to do so urgently. This would enable the Treaty to enter into force without further delay. Pending its entry into force, the nuclear-weapon States and other nuclear powers should maintain the moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions.

Nigeria acknowledges the importance of bilateral efforts by the two major nuclear powers in setting in motion the process of reducing strategic offensive nuclear weapons as a positive step towards nuclear disarmament. My delegation, however, shares the view of the vast majority of Member States that reduction in deployments and in operational status cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of, nuclear weapons. Of equal significance is the need for these efforts to be transparent and verifiable.

The Nigerian wishes to underscore the need for establishment in the Conference on Disarmament of an Ad Hoc Committee to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral, and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. For the outcome of a fissile material treaty to be meaningful, it should contain a reliable verification mechanism that will not exclude existing stockpiles.

It is our view that this Review Conference should call on the Conference on Disarmament to agree to initiate substantive work on these issues before it as soon as possible. The initiative should include the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty. We reiterate our full support for the Five Ambassadors Proposal as a mechanism for breaking the existing impasse in reaching a work programme for the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. President,

My delegation recognizes the important role of IAEA in promoting international cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It is, however, regrettable to note that increasing efforts by some States in the past few years

to pursue the objectives of non-proliferation in the use of civilian nuclear reactors may hinder the peaceful application of nuclear technology as provided for in the Treaty. In this connection, we urge State Parties to adopt appropriate measures, at this Review Conference, to preserve the inalienable right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination as contained in the Treaty. We, however, underscore the need for all States Parties to place their nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards as essential for building confidence in this respect. On its part, the Nigerian Government has established an agency to regulate all nuclear-related activities in the country in conformity with the relevant provisions of NPT **and** the Statute of the IAEA.

The Nigerian delegation will continue to support efforts aimed at establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in all regions of the world on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States in the region concerned. In this regard, we welcome the decision of all five Central Asian States to sign the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty as soon as possible. We express our support for Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status as an important measure towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime in that region. We affirm the need for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

We consider the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones created by the treaties of Pelinadaba, Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Bangkok as positive steps towards attaining the objectives of non-proliferation and global disarmament. The international conference of States parties, ratifiers and signatories to these treaties that took place in Mexico last week is another demonstration of the resolve of the States in these treaty zones to further advance the objectives of non-proliferation. Nigeria participated actively in the Conference and we endorse the Declaration that emerged from it. We believe, that the Declaration will serve as valuable input to this Review Conference.

Mr. President,

The Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons rests on three pillars of nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. All States Parties share a common desire to realize the goals we have set for ourselves in relation to each of the three pillars but in doing so, there is need for caution and transparency to ensure that none of the three objectives is achieved at the expense of the other.

I thank you.