



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**STATEMENT
BY**

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ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
AGENDA ITEM 86
“PROTECTION OF PERSONS IN THE EVENT OF DISASTERS”**

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[Please check against delivery]

Mr. Chairperson,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group.

The African Group thanks the International Law Commission (ILC) for its crucial work in the progressive development of international law and its codification. The ILC product on *the protection of persons in the event of disasters* is a valuable contribution to fill the gap on the protection of persons in the event of disasters.

The frequency and the severity of natural disasters, many of which are exacerbated by climate change, and their damaging impacts on societies, including their impediment on the full realization of their sustainable development goals, is of concern to the African Group.

The number and scale of disasters and their devastating impact in recent years, which have resulted in massive loss of life, food insecurity, water-related challenges, displacement, humanitarian needs, and long-term negative economic, social, and environmental consequences, are worrisome. The impact of disasters is more severe in the African region, in countries that suffer lack of capacity on early warning. Moving forward on our discussion is how to avert or to reduce to a minimum the impact of disasters. It is also important to streamline humanitarian aid and assistance detailed in General Assembly resolution 46/182 and should not be politicized.

Mr. Chairperson,

The protection of persons in the event of disasters is an important issue in many parts of the world, in particular in Africa. The impact of natural disasters often strike developing countries the hardest. Therefore, the African Group stresses that the intensity and impact on affected populations of natural disasters call for solidarity and international cooperation, through the form of, inter alia, humanitarian assistance.

In this regard, the African Group would like to underscore the strong need for the international community to address all obstacles that limits States from adequately and swiftly preparing for and responding to the devastating effects of disasters when they occur. Regrettably, lack of capacity and the necessary resources to tackle disasters as particularly experienced by communities in vulnerable situations continues to pose a serious challenge for the Group; and the use of unilateral coercive measures by some States heighten these challenges for targeted countries to protect their citizens in the event of a natural emergency. The African Group wishes to draw attention to the provisions in resolutions of the African Union AU/Res.1 2023 (XXXVI), Human Rights Council A/HRC/RES/52/13 and the UN General Assembly A/C.3/77/L.26, and call upon all states not to recognize unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures or legislative acts imposed by any state.

The African Group emphasizes that an affected state should retain the prerogative to request for, give consent to the entry of, and coordinate the provision of humanitarian assistance within its borders. In this regard, the protection of persons in case of catastrophies should not put the sovereignty of the affected states in jeopardy or be misconstrued as yielding sovereignty to any foreign humanitarian aid provider.

The African Group takes note of the recommendation of the International Law Commission on the elaboration of a convention on the basis of the draft articles on the protection of persons in the event of disasters and welcomes the discussions on this agenda item within the Sixth committee. The African Group will be engaging actively and in good faith in the intersessional deliberations, with the view of conducting deep substantive discussions and exchange of national views on the draft articles.

I thank you for your attention.