



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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## **STATEMENT**

**BY**

**THE AFRICAN GROUP**

**AT THE**

**GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE  
62<sup>ND</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**NEW YORK, 10<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2007**

On behalf of the African Group, I wish to congratulate Ambassador Paul Badji on his election as the chairperson of the First Committee of this 62<sup>nd</sup> United Nations General Assembly. We equally like to felicitate with Ambassador Sergio Duarte on his recent appointment as the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. Through you, the African Group wishes also to convey its congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. We are *confident that you will bring your experience in the field of disarmament to steer the work of the Committee and the proceedings to a successful conclusion.* The African group is hereby assuring you of its unflinching support and unalloyed co-operation in *addressing the tasks ahead of us.*

*The African Group reaffirms its belief in the promotion of International peace and stability based on the principles of undiminished security for all States. The Group remains strong on its commitment to the achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. The Group will continue to pursue the goals of non-proliferation of*

weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects, *until this noble objective is attained.*

We call on all delegations to demonstrate the necessary political will to enhance progress in the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The African Group remains convinced that nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to *mankind and its civilization. It is therefore imperative that the International Community should agree on the Commencement without further delay of* multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat of use or use of nuclear weapons and on their total elimination. *In order to realize the objective, the Group calls on Nuclear Weapon States to commit themselves to stopping the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems. Pending the total elimination of those weapons, a legally binding international instrument should be established under which nuclear-weapon States*

undertake not to *use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States*. *The African Group stresses the importance of ensuring that any nuclear disarmament process be irreversible, transparent and verifiable in order for it to be meaningful and effective.*

The African Group recognizes that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament was a *landmark decision* in the history of multilateral efforts to achieve disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament. The Group once again wishes to express its regret at the non-implementation of the Final Document of that session (resolution S-10/2) three decades after it was adopted. The Group *therefore* underscores the need to convene a fourth special session devoted to disarmament in order to give real meaning to the nuclear disarmament process. It welcomes the momentum generated by the Working group under the chairmanship of Ambassador LABBE of Chile.

*The African Group welcomes the successful conclusion of the first session of the NPT Review process and reaffirms its belief in the*

*Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)* as a vital instrument in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Group endorses the 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference for systematic and progressive efforts to implement the unequivocal commitment undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament in keeping with article VI of the Treaty. The Group wishes to express its regret at the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference to produce a meaningful outcome.

The African Group reiterates its long-standing support for the total elimination of all nuclear testing. The Group stresses the significance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), including by all nuclear-weapon States, which, among other things, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. In that connection, the Group endorses the declaration adopted at the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT which took place in New York from 21 to 23 September 2005. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, it is important that the moratorium on nuclear-weapon test explosions or

explosions of any other nuclear device be maintained. The Group welcomes the recent increase in the number of signatures and ratifications of the Treaty.

The African Group emphasizes the importance of strengthening existing multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements by ensuring full compliance with, and effective implementation of, those agreements, including their universality.

The Group also reaffirms its strong belief in strengthening the existing disarmament machinery as a means of advancing the process of nuclear disarmament. In that connection, the Group welcomes the progress noticed in the work of the CD and express the hope that an agreement will be reached to begin substantive work. The Group calls on the Conference on Disarmament to agree on a work programme as soon as possible so that substantive negotiations can start.

The Group reiterates its support to the ongoing cycle in the UNDC and hopes for its successful conclusion during the 2008 session. It encourages the chairmen of its working groups to

continue their efforts in order to reach consensus on the outcome documents of the cycle.

The African Group reiterates its support for the concept of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the regions concerned. The Group further endorses the declaration adopted at the Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones held in Tlatelolco, Mexico, from 26 to 28 April 2005. We call for the ratification of the Treaty of Pelindaba, on the establishment of an African nuclear-weapon-free zone, by the required number of States, so that it can enter into force without further delay.

The African Group calls on States to take appropriate measures to prevent any dumping of nuclear, chemical and radioactive wastes that would infringe on the sovereignty of States. In that regard, the Group recalls the 1991 resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Commission of African Union regarding the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa. The

Group also calls for the effective implementation of the International Atomic Energy Agency Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste as a means of enhancing the protection of all States from the dumping of radioactive wastes on their territories.

The African Group wishes to restate its belief, as also recognized in the outcome document, in the full implementation of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects as a key element in promoting long-term security and for creating conditions for sustainable development in many developing countries, especially those in Africa. The Group calls for the holding of the next biannual review meeting in 2008.

The Group made a significant contribution to the agreement reached on the final text of a draft international instrument on tracing illicit small arms and light weapons. Cognizant of the fact that illicit arms brokering plays a significant role in the trade in illicit arms,

the African Group calls for the establishment of an effective international regime on brokering.

To achieve the desired results, it is imperative that the international community deal with the threat posed by the illicit small arms trade in a comprehensive and action-oriented manner.

The African Group welcomes the outcome of the First Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Landmines, which took place in Nairobi from 29 November to 3 December 2004, and, in line with the outcome document, calls on States parties to the Convention to fully implement their obligations under the instrument.

**Mr. Chairman,**

African group reaffirms its belief that regional centers for peace and disarmament can play an important role in promoting peace, security, arms control and disarmament. However, it notes with regret that the regional centre in Africa had been constrained by inadequate operational funds. The Group welcomes the conclusions

of the consultative mechanism established for the reorganization of the regional centre and its optimum performance.

I thank you.