

STATEMENT DELIVERED

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY, GEORGE EDOKPA
AMBASSADOR AND DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT THE 77TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FIRST COMMITTEE GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL THE DISARMAMENT
AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS

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Mr. Chairman,

The Delegation of Nigeria congratulates you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at this 77th Session. We also congratulate the other members of the bureau on their election. We assure you of our full support and cooperation. We have no doubt that our work will benefit from your experience and commitment.

2. Nigeria aligns itself with the Statements delivered by the Indonesia and itself on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group respectively and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

3. At the last session of the General Assembly, my Delegation joined other Member States to highlight the daunting challenges confronting our world. Sadly, little has so far changed to provide confidence and reduce the enormous challenges to global peace and security.

4. My Delegation reiterates continued concern over the current difficult and complex situation in the field of disarmament and international security. In this regard, Nigeria calls for renewed efforts to resolve the current impasse in achieving nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects.

5. Nigeria reaffirms its position on nuclear disarmament, which remains the agreed highest priority for the UN in the area of disarmament in accordance with the Final Document of SSOD-I. Nigeria is deeply concerned by the non-compliance by Nuclear-Weapons States and the threats that pose to the non-proliferation regime and international architecture of security.

6. Nuclear weapons represent a grave existential threat to humanity. Nigeria, therefore, underscores the importance of resolution 70/34, as an integral part of the multilateral disarmament effort.

Mr. Chairman,

7. My Delegation is mindful of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that could result from the deliberate or accidental use of nuclear weapons. To that end, my Delegation calls on all states, particularly Nuclear-Weapons States, to take into consideration the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of these weapons on human health, the environment, and vital economic resources among others, as well as, to take necessary measures aimed at dismantling and renunciation of their nuclear weapons.

8. Nuclear weapons remain the ultimate agents of mass destruction and their total elimination should be the final objective of all disarmament processes within the broad spectrum of goals being pursued by the United Nations. It is in this context that Nigeria strongly supports all efforts aimed at the total elimination and de-legitimisation of nuclear weapons as the utmost prerequisite for maintaining international peace and security. In this spirit, my delegation recalls the historical entry into force of the Landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on 22nd January 2021. Nigeria remains proud to have participated in the processes leading to its adoption, as well as being one of the first states to sign and ratify the Treaty.

9. We urge all members of the international community, especially nuclear weapon States and those under the so-called “nuclear umbrella”, to seize the opportunity to sign and ratify the Treaty at an early date and to pursue the goal of a nuclear-weapons-free world.

Mr. Chairman,

10. My Delegation reaffirms its full support to the adoption of the Declaration of the First Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW entitled, “Our commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons”, which reaffirmed the determination to realize the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

11. My Delegation also reaffirms its support for the Vienna Action Plan adopted during the First Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty held in Vienna, from 21-23 July 2022 to facilitate effective and timely implementation of the TPNW and its objectives and goals.

12. As a State Party to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, Nigeria remains committed to the Treaty of Pelindaba, reaffirming the status of Africa as a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and providing a shield for the African territory.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The Delegation of Nigeria underscores the importance of the continued respect of the inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy and stresses the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in ensuring the commitment of States to the implementation of Safeguards Agreements, as well as in the provision and promotion of technical assistance and cooperation

through maximizing the use of science and technology for socio-economic development.

14. We all owe a duty to protect the environment by respecting the moratorium against nuclear testing as we work assiduously in achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In this regard, my Delegation calls on all States yet to ratify the CTBT particularly, the remaining eight States listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty, to do so without further delay.

Mr. Chairman,

15. The Delegation of Nigeria underscores the importance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). We further underscore the significance, not only of preserving the Commission, but also the realisation of its deliberative objectives.

16. Nigeria joins other Member States to reaffirm the importance of the work entrusted to the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

17. My Delegation remains committed to the UN Programme of Action (UN PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in All Its Aspects.

18. Our commitment is further demonstrated by the signing and ratification of relevant international, regional and sub-regional instruments such as the ATT and the UNPoA, as well as establishing and sustaining robust partnerships with the AU, the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and other relevant organisations.

19. In addition, a National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) has been set up by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The Centre has been involved in activities geared towards stemming the tide of the proliferation of SALWs.

20. The full text of this statement will be circulated through the e-statements portal.

21. I thank you for your attention.

