

STATEMENT DELIVERED

BY

MUHAMMAD ZAYYANU BANDIYA
MINISTER COUNSELLOR
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF
NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

AT THE

THEMATIC DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE:
OUTER SPACE CLUSTER (DISARMAMENT ASPECTS)

77TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

26TH OCTOBER 2022

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Mr. Chairman,

The Federal Republic of Nigeria aligns itself with the Statements delivered on this cluster by the African Group and NAM respectively, and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

2. Given the challenges of the outer space and contemporary global security environment, my Delegation underscored the importance of ensuring continued international commitment and attention on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, thereby, enhancing global security and the maintenance of international peace.

3. Prevention of an arms race in outer space has assumed greater urgency because of the vulnerability of the outer space environment and taking into consideration of legitimate concerns that existing legal instruments are inadequate to deter further militarization of outer space or prevent its weaponization. For that purpose, Nigeria recognizes the need for a comprehensive legally binding treaty on the placement of weapons in outer space as well as on armed attacks against outer space objects.

4. My Delegation also stresses the importance of the international legal framework that allows for the equal exploration of the outer space based on the principles of non-appropriation and peaceful uses of outer space in conformity with the five United Nations Treaties governing space activities, in particular, the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the activities of States in the exploration and the use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies.

5. For Nigeria, a legally-binding instrument on PAROS is a necessary condition for the promotion of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and preserving international peace and security. It is therefore essential that any treaty of such nature should, inter-alia, ensure the primacy and applicability of the United Nations Charter in outer space; the use of the moon and other celestial bodies exclusively for peaceful purposes; the freedom of access to outer space without discrimination and on a basis of equality; the pacific settlement of disputes; the right to develop technology for peaceful purposes; international cooperation and assistance in facilitating the peaceful uses of outer space, including provisions for training and capacity building; and the objective of general and complete disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

6. My Delegation reaffirms its support for the prohibitions of the placement of any weapons in outer space for offensive or defensive purposes; any armed attacks or use of force against satellites or other outer space objects, including through the use of missiles or other kinetic methods such as maneuverable satellites or robots; any use of outer space objects as a weapon to conduct armed attacks or harmful interference against outer space or terrestrial targets; any intentional harmful interference that would interrupt or affect the normal functioning of satellites or other outer space objects that is under the jurisdiction of another State or group of States; and developing, testing, and stockpiling weapons that are designed for the sole purpose of conducting armed attacks against satellites or

other outer space objects, including Anti-satellite weapons (ASATs), or for the use as an outer space weapon.

7. My delegation believes that all States, especially those with major space capabilities, have a special responsibility to contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. They should also refrain from actions contrary to that objective and to the relevant existing treaties in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international cooperation.

8. We also reemphasize the urgent need for the commencement of substantive negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a legally binding and multilaterally verifiable instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) in all its aspects.

9. Thank you.