

NIGERIA's STATEMENT
delivered by
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at the

Article XIV Conference of the CTBT,
17th – 18th September, 2007,

Vienna, Austria.

Mr President,

On behalf of the Nigerian Delegation, let me congratulate Their Excellencies, Ms Ursula Plassnik, Federal Minister for European and International Affairs of Austria, and Mr. Bruno Stagno Ugarte, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, who have been jointly elected as President of this Conference. Nigeria has implicit confidence in their leadership qualities and professional experiences to successfully pilot the proceedings of this Conference to a fruitful outcome.

My delegation also wishes to express its profound appreciation to Ambassador Thomas Stelzer and Ambassador Anna Teresa Dengo of Costa Rica for the important role they played in superintending the preparatory conference as co-President, as well as for the able way and manner they conducted the informal consultations that produced the Final Draft Declaration for this Conference. We commend them for the good quality of work, and hope that this will facilitate a successful 2007 Conference and herald the Entry Into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

2. Let me also thank the UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon for his goodwill message to the Conference, which was ably delivered by the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Sergio Duarte, and the Executive Secretary of the CTBTO, Ambassador Tibor Toth, for his comprehensive reports on the activities of the CTBTO since the last Conference in 2005. We are also appreciative of the excellent work of the staff of the Provisional Technical

Secretariat (PTS) for their preparation of the relevant documents for this Conference.

3. At the outset, my delegation associates itself with the Statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Malaysia on behalf of the the Non-Aligned States Signatories to the CTBT.

Mr. President,

4. Nigeria wishes to take this opportunity to reiterate its strong support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), as it believes the Treaty provides a credible framework for securing the world from the threat of nuclear weapons. It is in this context, that we support the main objective of the Treaty, namely, the total prohibition of nuclear explosion and the qualitative development of nuclear weapons, so as to pave the way for their total elimination. We believe that the universal adherence to the Treaty, including by the five nuclear weapon States, would contribute towards the process of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and, therefore, towards the enhancement of international peace and security.

5. The nuclear weapon States should continue to sustain the voluntary moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions, pending the entry into force of the Treaty. The moratorium, nevertheless, does not substitute for the signing and ratification of the Treaty; it is imperative, the nuclear weapon States should honour their full implementation of the 13 practical steps to advance systematically and progressively towards a nuclear weapon free world, and to recognize that the first step

among these 13 steps is the early entry into force of the CTBT, which is an integral part of the international non-proliferation regime.

Mr. President

6. The entry into force of the Treaty is still uncertain as only 34 States out of the 44 States listed in Annex 2 to the Treaty, whose signature and ratification is required for entry into force of the Treaty have ratified it. In this regard, my delegation calls upon these States, especially the remaining two nuclear weapon States, to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible.

7. Nigeria believes that the total elimination of nuclear weapons offers one of the most effective and credible guarantees against the use or threat of use of these weapons. We recognize the difficulty in achieving this objective, but while the world waits anxiously for the day nuclear weapons would be eliminated, we applaud and encourage all unilateral and bilateral endeavours geared towards this end, and call on the nuclear weapon States to do much more to lower the threshold of possible use of these weapons.

8. Unfortunately, at the moment, an increasing number of States have acquired the technology to produce fissile materials and nuclear explosive devices. This potentially dangerous state of affairs is the consequence of the continued possession of nuclear weapons by some States and the tendency to increase their state of destructive potency, and elevation instead of diminution, of the role of nuclear weapons in security policies by these same States.

9. We believe that as long as nuclear weapons constitute a threat to both those who have and the many others who do not have them, the only effective and credible guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapon is, therefore, their total elimination. The reality is that non-proliferation will remain a mirage unless there is total commitment towards nuclear disarmament.

Mr. President,

10. Nigeria's commitment to non-proliferation is further affirmed by its untiring effort, working in concert with other countries, to catalyze the process of full ratification and coming into force of the Pellindaba Treaty, which seeks to declare Africa as a nuclear weapons free zone. Nigeria is unequivocally committed to global peace and appreciates the pivotal role the CTBTO plays in promoting non-proliferation and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

11. My delegation commends the good work of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO and call upon States Signatories to support the development of all elements of the verification regime, including the On-Site Inspection (OSI) and outreach activities.

12. As a State Signatory, Nigeria has continued to offer its full support to the promotion of the early entry into force of the CTBT at the highest levels, both at the bilateral and multilateral levels. Nigeria's political support to the CTBTO has been underlined through ratification and active participation in the

activities of the Commission, the Policy Making Organs (PMOs), as well as within the context of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU).

13. I wish to recall that at the invitation of Nigeria, the PTS, in collaboration with ECOWAS, organised as Workshop on CTBTO International Cooperation for National Implementation of the CTBT for States in West Africa, in 2006, in Abuja.

14. The objective of the Workshop was to sensitize the countries of the West African sub-region about the adherence to the Treaty in order to bring it into early entry into force, as well as the civil and technological benefits which the Treaty can offer to States Signatories. In furtherance of its commitment to fully participate in the activities of the CTBTO, Nigeria is intensifying efforts to ensure that its National Data Centre for the CTBTO becomes fully operational. Nigeria also welcomes the plan of the CTBTO to station a Radionuclide Detection Centre within its territorial area.

Mr. President,

15. This Conference offers a unique opportunity for States Signatories, Non-States Signatories and Ratifiers to re-invigorate the Treaty through practical commitments. However, we recognize the difficulties some delegations, especially those from the developing countries, face in their attempt to sign or ratify the Treaty or even participate in the activities of the Treaty. On her part, Nigeria shall continue to support any initiative that will facilitate the early entry into force of the Treaty.

16. Our hope and expectation is that at the end of this Conference, our collective decision would contribute to the ongoing efforts to fully realize the objectives of this Treaty. In this regard, we support the Draft Final Declaration of the Conference, which calls for the early entry into force of the Treaty and its universal application to ban nuclear tests.

17. I thank you, Mr. President.