

STATEMENT DELIVERED

ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP

BY

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AT THE

**TENTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE TREATY ON THE
NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

GENERAL DEBATE

New York, 1ST AUGUST 2022

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Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group. The Group congratulate you on your election as the President of the Tenth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and assures you of our full cooperation.

2. The African Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty and wishes to highlight the following points.

Mr. President,

3. The African Group is strongly committed to the NPT and fully supports the principle of complete nuclear disarmament, as the utmost prerequisite for maintaining international peace and security. It is in this spirit that we welcome the historical adoption of the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), on 7 July 2017. The Group stresses that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons does not undermine the NPT, but rather complements and strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime with the NPT as its foundation.

4. The Group therefore, wishes to urge all states to support the TPNW by signing and ratifying the Treaty at an early date. It is hoped that all members of the international community, particularly nuclear-weapon states would seize this opportunity to pursue the goal of a nuclear-free world.

Mr. President,

5. It is essential that all non-nuclear-weapon States should be provided with universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and legally binding assurance, by all nuclear -weapon States, against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. The African Group welcomes and underscores the importance of resolution 70/34, as an integral part of the multilateral disarmament effort.

Mr. President,

6. Seven decades after humanity had crossed a new threshold of horror and the world witnessed the first ever use of atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we ask ourselves whether the world has learnt from the past. Let's continue to speak with unanimity towards ensuring a world free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, as envisaged in the very first resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1946. It is also the moment to raise our voices against the slow pace and the lack of good faith and commitment on the part of nuclear-weapon States to dismantle these weapons and ensure that they are never produced again.

Mr. President,

7. The African Group regrets the failure of the 9th NPT Review Conference to reach consensus on a final outcome document despite the efforts made by many delegations and calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to demonstrate political will to enable the

10th Review Conference of the NPT to have concrete recommendations towards achieving nuclear disarmament, the overall key objective of the Treaty.

8. The threat posed to humanity by the continued existence of nuclear weapon is real and the risk significant. In this regard, the African Group insists on the implementation of all agreed measures and undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States in the context of the NPT.

Mr. President,

9. The Group reaffirms the central role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the consolidation of the NPT as well as in their contributions to addressing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation across all regions of the world.

10. In this context, the African Group remains committed to the Treaty of Pelindaba. In the same vein, the African Group restates its deep concern at the lack of progress towards the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which was an integral and essential part of the package of decisions and the basis upon which consensus was reached on the indefinite extension of the NPT.

11. The Group restates its concern over the Action Plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference regarding the establishment of a Middle-East-Zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The group wishes to reiterate the continued

validity of these commitments and obligations until their full implementation.

12. The Group welcomes the adoption of the General Assembly decision 73/546, entitled “Convening a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction” as an important step towards the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the basis of consensus and the free will of its invited States. All States of the region and observers are encouraged to participate in the conference taking into consideration the successful convening of the First and the Second Sessions of the Conference under the Presidencies of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Kuwait, as the Second Session witnessed the adoption of the rules of procedure and establishing an informal working committee to continue consultations between formal sessions.

Mr. President,

13. The African Group underscores the importance of the peaceful uses of the nuclear energy, and stressed the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in this regard, by continuing to verify the implementation of Safeguards Agreements and, in facilitating the provision of technical assistance and cooperation through maximizing the use of nuclear science and technology for socio-economic development.

14. The African Group reiterates the need for all states at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international

humanitarian law. Any use of nuclear weapons is a violation of the UN Charter and a crime against humanity. The total elimination of nuclear weapons and the assurance that they will never be produced again is the only unqualified assurance against the catastrophic humanitarian consequences arising from the use of such weapons.

15. The continued existence and possession of nuclear weapons do not guarantee security but serve as an affirmation of the risks of their potential use. Our world, including outer space, must be free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. It is in this context that the Group stresses the need for the nuclear-weapon States to cease their further modernisation, upgrading, refurbishment, or extending the lives of their nuclear weapons and related facilities.

16. The African Group also stresses the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), bearing in mind the special responsibilities of nuclear-weapon States in this regard. The Group believes that the CTBT offers hope of halting the further development, qualitative improvement and the proliferation of nuclear weapons, thereby contributing to the goal of nuclear disarmament.

17. In conclusion, Mr. President, the African Group joins other States Parties to reaffirm the importance of the work entrusted to the Conference on Disarmament (CD). In the same breath, we wish to underscore that multilateral disarmament negotiations will only

achieve tangible results if and when we generate the necessary political will to support the process.

I thank you.