FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT).

(VIENNA, 30 APRIL – 11 MAY, 2007)

STATEMENT BY

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(MINISTER)

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK.
Mr. Chairman,

This gathering of States Parties is intended to review past commitments and develop new approaches to addressing the enormous challenges that confront the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Indeed, the current cycle of the Review process provides States Parties with a useful platform for introspection. It also represents a new beginning, given the failure of the 2005 Review Conference.

Let me at this juncture, associate the Nigerian delegation fully with the statement made by the Chairperson of the Non-Aligned Movement States Parties to the NPT. In addition, we would like to reiterate some salient points regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mr. Chairman,

The Nigerian delegation recognises the important role which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays in promoting nuclear non-proliferation. In particular, we attach utmost importance to its role as the global focal point for technical cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as well as in the field of nuclear verification and safeguards. We are, however, concerned that certain core Treaty provisions, including Article IV with respect to the inalienable rights of all Parties to the Treaty to develop research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I, II and III are being subjected to redefinition and re-interpretation. In this connection, my delegation reaffirms the legitimate rights of State Parties to the Treaty to their choices and decisions in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We are equally concerned at the unwarranted export restrictions of materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes to developing countries, and reiterate that such restrictions are beyond the provisions of the Treaty and needs to be reconsidered forthwith. In this regard, the Nigerian delegation expresses its conviction that proliferation concerns are best addressed in a transparent, comprehensive and in a non-discriminatory manner, through multilateralism, a core principle in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, aimed at maintaining and strengthening universal norms and enlarging their scope.
Mr. Chairman,

My delegation wishes to reiterate that at this crucial stage of Nigeria’s development efforts, access to necessary technology is very crucial. Imposition of unnecessary limitation and restriction on transfer of nuclear material, equipment or technology for peaceful purposes to states Parties to the NPT can only be a violation of the Article III of the NPT. Nigeria, like any other developing countries, need guarantees from the Nuclear Suppliers Group that it will not be denied access to vital nuclear technology and materials necessary for its socio-economic development, including electricity demands for industrialisation, which is expected to exceed current generating capacity levels five folds. Nuclear energy which is also environmental safer for this level of national and social development therefore becomes the only affordable option.

My delegation believes that the implementation and strengthening of the NPT is the responsibility of all States Parties and that the best way to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime is through full compliance by all States Parties, without exceptions, with all the provisions of the Treaty.

This Review Conference must therefore take steps to protect the rights of all States to pursue peaceful nuclear programmes in accordance with their national interests and priorities.

I thank you.