STATEMENT BY NIGERIA

AT THE

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2015 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

CLUSTER III SPECIFIC ISSUE: PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AND OTHER TREATY PROVISIONS

DELIVERED BY

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*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
Mr. Chairman,

Nigeria associates itself with the statement delivered by Egypt yesterday on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) on this issue. We reiterate our position that the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons is, in our view, a call for unwavering national, regional and universal responsibility to humanity. In this regard, we believe that one of the fundamental pillars of the NPT - the peaceful uses of Nuclear Energy - should carry with it the burden of responsibility to humanity for any state desirous of its immense benefits. We also believe it is a field that should be considered and approached by concerned members of the international community in a fair, balanced and non-discriminatory manner.

Mr. Chairman,

Article IV of the NPT guarantees all state parties the inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the NPT, just as it calls for the undertaking of states to facilitate and engage in the fullest level of cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with non-nuclear weapons states, and with due consideration for the needs of developing areas of the world.

Nigeria has commenced work towards the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We note the importance of safety, security and safeguards in the application of nuclear energy for peaceful programmes and hasten to assure the international community that our exercise is in complete adherence of international safety and security safeguards, and in particular, in complete collaboration with the IAEA.

Our decision to diversify our energy sources was a result of necessity. Taking into account Nigeria’s large population and great industrial needs, it should be easily conceivable that out of national pragmatism, Nigeria would explore the option of including nuclear energy into our energy mix, as a clean energy source for our sustainable development. We view this as a very vital path to explore for our socio-economic development.
Mr. Chairman,

President Goodluck Jonathan has repeatedly underscored Nigeria’s support for a nuclear free world, as well as Nigeria’s desire to apply nuclear energy in the country. He made this known at the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit in April 2010 in Washington and the recently held Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, in March 2012 by pointing out that Nigeria’s interest in nuclear technology was for agricultural and power generation purposes. In his words, he stated that (quote) “as a country, we are desirous of the application of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes only. We are committed to the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons and we would continue to work assiduously with like-minded countries to achieve that goal....our commitment is unwavering...” (unquote). He also pointed out that Nigeria had ratified all existing relevant International Treaties and Conventions in this regard.

In further demonstration of the ideals espoused, he informed the gathering of steps Nigeria had already taken to support the resolutions of the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit and the UN Security Council Resolution 1540, including collaboration with the USA, China and the IAEA to convert the country’s research reactor from Highly Enriched Uranium type to Low Enriched Uranium in order to reduce the risk of fissile materials being stolen by criminal or terrorist groups. He also urged states to adopt the procedure as well as remove nuclear materials from facilities in order to reduce the risk of their wrongful proliferation.

Similarly, he noted that Nigeria was working with the IAEA and other international expert institutions to enhance the training of Nigeria’s security agencies personnel to meet the challenges of nuclear security threats. To this end, a national institute for nuclear security training is being established in the capital, Abuja, to provide human capacity development for the country and other African nations.

Mr. Chairman,

The IAEA’s Technical cooperation programme has provided considered support to Nigeria. Since 2006, Nigeria worked in tandem with the IAEA to set up a
national agency to develop the National Nuclear Roadmap to coordinate the peaceful application of nuclear energy in Nigeria - the Nigerian Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC) - and continues to work in collaboration with Nigeria through other established agencies, including the Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority to implement our nuclear energy ambitions for peaceful uses. Nigeria has also been a beneficiary of the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Group’s Cooperation and support.

Our National Atomic Energy Commission has now developed the Strategic Plan for the implementation of its mandate with the assistance of the IAEA. It is projected that the first Nuclear Power Plant in Nigeria would roll-out by the year 2020 and generate clean energy supply. Nigeria is fully aware of its responsibilities in this sphere, including the meticulous, paced, and secure implementation of this exercise, as well as due consultations and appropriate reviews by the IAEA.

Our preparation has also involved the development of university based research and development centres to enhance human capacity development in the field. It is projected that at least 2000 indigenous professionals will be trained for the nuclear power industry between now and the year 2020. In cooperation with the IAEA, five new Technical Cooperation projects have been approved for implementation in Nigeria during the 2012 and 2013 TC cycle in the areas of capacity development for Nuclear Power planning, and repair and maintenance of nuclear equipments and devices. New TC projects concepts are already being prepared for the Agency’s consideration for the 2014-2015 cycle.

Mr. Chairman,

While we are already in bilateral and technical agreements with friendly states and cooperation partners, we still require technical and scientific support. In this regard, we join the call by South Africa yesterday and other like-minded stakeholders in urging States to ensure that the IAEA resources for Technical Cooperation activities are sufficient, assured, and predictable.
Finally Mr. Chairman, Nigeria reiterates her full support for the universality of the NPT, remains fully committed to its provisions and discourages actions that may threaten the integrity of the NPT.

I thank you.