STATEMENT BY LAWRENCE OLUFEMI OBISAKIN, MINISTER PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UN AT THE MAIN COMMITTEE 3 OF THE 2010 NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE-NEW YORK, 12TH MAY, 2010

Madam Chair,

As this is the first time that Nigeria is speaking in this segment, may I congratulate you on your election as the chair and equally assure you of our traditional Nigerian cooperation. We are convinced that your diplomatic dexterity shall guide us to a successful outcome.

The Nigerian delegation associates herself with the NAM position as read to us in this committee. We still believe firmly that the NPT conceptualized more than forty years ago, despite its imperfections, remains today, the key barrier against nuclear insecurity in our world. It is literally correct that article 10 of the NPT provides for withdrawal by each Party by exercising its national sovereignty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country. However, should a state in the exercise of a legal right at the national level jeopardize the peace and security of the international community by thus, albeit inadvertently, favouring nuclear proliferation and halting nuclear disarmament?

Nigeria recognizes that like most human activities which usually spring from a psychological board of the mind, the idea of withdrawal from the NPT is not different. The stage of psychological withdrawal that precedes the actualization of it should be discouraged. This can be largely achieved by promoting genuine dialogue and win–win negotiations, building confidence in terms of transparency, consistency and clear demonstration of understanding for the needs, both psychological and real, of the would-be withdrawing state, especially on disarmament issues, verifiable denuclearization by all nations, especially on the part of the NWS.

PEACEFUL USES

Madam Chairperson,

Allow me to use this opportunity to speak on peaceful use of nuclear technology. Nigeria believes in, and is faithfully committed to the third pillar of NPT, being the international cooperation for the application of peaceful nuclear technology by all States parties, thus giving them the right to develop research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination, and in conformity with Articles I and II of this Treaty. To this end, Nigeria has been working in full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency, fully complying with all her treaty obligations. We have in force safeguards agreement with the Agency, we have signed the Additional Protocol as well as all the international instruments on safe handling of nuclear materials.
Having fulfilled our commitment we would like to benefit fully from peaceful nuclear cooperation within the framework of the NPT and as provided for by virtue of our membership of the Agency. Our concern about how to provide adequate, electricity, food, and medical care, for the teeming populations of our country cannot be overemphasized. Today, the use of nuclear energy as an environmentally friendly power has become a critical path to follow, and nuclear application in the areas of health, industry, agriculture, food and potable water production, as well as other civil sectors are widely acclaimed.

Madam Chairperson,

One of the greatest killer diseases in the developing countries of tropical climate today is malaria. In fact more than a half of the world population is at risk of malaria. Every year there are 350 to 500 million cases of malaria attacks killing between 1 and 3 million persons. The application of nuclear technique, precisely the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT), which has helped to eradicate other insect pests in some regions of the world, must be widely applied to eradicate the malaria vector mosquitoes and thereby stop the ravage of human lives by this pest. With the help of the IAEA, some pilot projects applying this technique have been in existence for a while now in some African countries. This research programme must be intensified until it becomes widely applicable in all the tropical regions of the globe that are still prone to malaria. For the programme to achieve its objective, there is need for further technical assistance, support as well as research funds. The search for good and adequate health delivery, food security and basic infrastructure in the developing countries can benefit greatly from the application of nuclear techniques. Nigeria would therefore like to see more of the benefit of the atom devoted to this noble cause, especially as we de-emphasize the military use of nuclear technology.

Nigeria is pleased to see that the IAEA is mindful of the fact that the use of nuclear energy for electricity production is expanding and the Agency is therefore adjusting to the new and emerging demand for nuclear power plants. We are also pleased to note the various proposals and working papers on promoting and making peaceful nuclear technology available to all. We hope that this review process will adequately deal with this subject.

Madam Chair, I thank you.