



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT THE

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE SESSION

OF THE 73RD UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Mr. Chairman,

The Delegation of Nigeria congratulates you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at this Session, and we also congratulate other members of the Bureau on their election. Our work will indeed benefit from your tremendous experience, expertise and commitment. We, therefore, assure you of our full support and cooperation. Let me also seize this opportunity to commend your predecessor, H.E. Ambassador Hussein Bahr Aluloom, for his leadership and laudable efforts.

2. My Delegation welcomes the remarks made by the President of the General Assembly and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. Nigeria aligns itself with the Statements of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group and wishes to make the following remarks.

Mr Chairman,

3. At the 72nd Session of the General Assembly, my Delegation joined other Member States to highlight the daunting challenges confronting our world. Sadly, little has so far changed to provide confidence and reduce the enormous challenges to global peace and security. This reality makes it more urgent that we re-double our efforts and stridently work for global peace and security.

4. In the context of threats to international peace and security, my Delegation continues to highlight the astronomical proportion of global defence budgets, including the enormous resources devoted to the maintenance and upgrading of nuclear arsenals by nuclear weapons states,

as well as unfettered access to a wide-ranging collection of conventional weapons by unauthorised non-state actors.

5. Today, the dangers and effects of uncontrolled access to conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, are witnessed all around us. From Africa to the Middle East, across Europe to the Americas and Asia, the carnage has become phenomenal and unprecedented, particularly the immense bloodshed foisted on innocent populations by terrorists and other criminal elements. We have witnessed cities and communities destroyed, including heavy losses of precious lives, property, toll on livelihoods and forced migration. In many cases, these atrocities are largely enabled by illicitly procured or transferred arms by non-state entities.

Mr Chairman,

6. The *raison d'être* for the overwhelming support and adoption of the landmark ATT resolution on 2nd April 2014 was the need to present a common front to robustly respond to the threat posed to international peace and security by the non-regulation of conventional weapons. In this regard, my Delegation welcomes the outcome of the Third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty held in August 2018, in Tokyo, Japan. We must do the needful, by standing with States Parties and other Signatories to this Treaty.

Mr Chairman,

7. Nuclear weapons still remain the ultimate agents of mass destruction and their total elimination should be the final objective of all disarmament

processes within the broad spectrum of goals being pursued by the United Nations. To this end, my Delegation recalls the adoption of the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which opened for signature on the 20th September 2017. The Delegation of Nigeria remains proud to have participated in the processes leading to its adoption, as well as being one of the first States to sign the treaty.

8. We are also mindful of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that could result from the deliberate or accidental use of nuclear weapons. To that end, my Delegation calls on all states, particularly nuclear weapons states, to take into consideration the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of these weapons on human health, the environment and vital economic resources among others, and to take necessary measures aimed at the dismantling and renunciation of these weapons.

Mr Chairman,

9. Nuclear test explosions not only send a tense signal to the global political environment, they also have devastating effects on our environment with the spread of radioactive materials to the atmosphere. We all owe a duty to protect the environment by respecting the moratorium against nuclear testing as we work assiduously to achieve the entry into force of the CTBT. In this regard, my Delegation welcomes the 10th edition of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which took place on 20th September 2017, and calls on those countries that have not signed or