

STATEMENT
ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
BY
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GENERAL DEBATE
THE 11TH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO
TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR
WEAPONS (2026 REVCON)

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Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group, and the Group aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

2. The African Group wishes to extend its sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the Presidency of this Review Conference and assures you of our full support and cooperation as we deliberate on the critical issues before us. The African Group also acknowledges the important preparatory work accomplished under the leadership of the Chairpersons of the three sessions of the Preparatory Committee, namely the Republic of Finland, the Republic of Kazakhstan and of course the Sisterly Republic of Ghana. We further commend the composition of the Bureau of the Review Conference, including the Main Committees and subsidiary bodies, and stand ready to engage constructively and in good faith under their able guidance.

3. The African Group deeply regrets the failure of the two preceding Review Conferences to adopt a consensus final document, a pattern that has gravely impacted the confidence in the Treaty's review mechanism and must not be repeated at this Conference. Against a backdrop of deteriorating global security conditions, heightened nuclear risks and growing geopolitical tensions, the Group calls upon all States Parties — and in particular the nuclear-weapon States — to muster the requisite political will to ensure that this Review Conference delivers a substantive, balanced and forward-looking outcome. The threat posed to humanity by the continued reliance on nuclear weapons is not abstract: it is real, present and growing.

Mr. President,

4. The African Group supports the principle of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as the utmost and essential prerequisite for maintaining international peace and security. The Group stresses that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear

weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone for the global regime of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The Group remains consistent in its position in calling for the balanced implementation of all the three pillars of the NPT. However, the African Group remains cognizant of the lack of progress in the implementation of obligations and commitments under the pillar on nuclear disarmament. The Group, therefore, wishes to urge all States, especially the nuclear-weapon States (NWS) to fully and effectively implement their respective obligations and commitments pursuant to the NPT especially as it relates to Article VI of the NPT and the outcomes of its review conferences without any further delay. 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.

5. The continued existence and possession of nuclear weapons under the outdated and fallible concepts of deterrence and strategic stability do not guarantee security but serve as an affirmation of the risks of their potential danger. 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 halt their further modernization, upgrading, refurbishment, or extending the lives of their nuclear weapons and related facilities, while reducing the role and status of nuclear weapons in the military and security doctrines and policies of Nuclear Weapon States. The Group reiterates its deep concern with the continued and evolving nuclear weapons sharing arrangements and extended deterrence. The Group strongly calls for an immediate end to this trend which is in a clear violation of the Treaty.

6. In the same vein, it is essential that all non-nuclear-weapon States (NNWS) must be provided with universal, unconditional, irrevocable non-discriminatory and legally binding negative security assurance, by all nuclear weapon states, against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. The Group

therefore welcomes and underscores the importance of resolution 80/49, as an integral part of the multilateral disarmament effort.

Mr. President,

7. Eight 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. In this context, the African Group expresses its deep concern on the re-emergence of nuclear threats and the possibility of the actual use or testing of nuclear weapons, bearing in mind the unprecedented rising international tensions and growing polarization and geopolitical rivalry. We expect all states to 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 as well as with outcome of SSOD-1 that assigned effective measures on nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war as the highest priority.

8. The Group, therefore, reiterates the need for all Member States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law. Any use of nuclear weapons is a violation of international law including under the UN Charter, international humanitarian law, and a crime against humanity. The total elimination of nuclear weapons and the assurance that they will never be possessed or produced again is the only solid and reliable assurance against the catastrophic humanitarian, environmental, health and climatic consequences arising from the use of such weapons.

9. It is in this spirit that the African Group welcomes the historical adoption of the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), on 7 July 2017. The African Group stresses that the TPNW does not undermine the NPT but rather complements and strengthens the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The Group calls upon all States, especially the nuclear-weapon States and

the states that have not yet acceded to the TPNW, to join by signing and ratifying the Treaty at an early date.

10. It is also the moment to raise our voices against the lack of good faith, commitment and progress by the nuclear-weapon States to dismantle these weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner and ensure that they are never produced, possessed or used again. In this regard, the Group calls on nuclear weapons States to adhere to the principle of no first use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances pending the total and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons.

11. The Group highlights the urgency of achieving meaningful and ambitious progress during the current review cycle on the matter related to transparency and accountability of the nuclear-weapons States, particularly through periodic, structured, standardized and detailed reporting by the nuclear weapon States to be considered and interactively discussed under the first pillar of the Treaty.

12. The Group is extremely concerned over assertions to resume nuclear weapon testing and affirms that testing of nuclear weapons undermines the NPT and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The African Group stresses the importance of achieving universal adherence to the CTBT, bearing in mind the special responsibilities of nuclear-weapon States in this regard and pursuant to Action 10 of the 2010 Action Plan including towards States that are not Parties to the NPT. The Group's view is that the CTBT offers of the framework for halting the further development, qualitative improvement and the proliferation of nuclear weapons, thereby contributing to the goal of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

13. The African Group reiterates its position that confidence building, and nuclear risk reduction measures are not a substitute to nuclear disarmament. The African Group expresses its serious concern with any attempt to integrate artificial intelligence applications to managing nuclear weapons and explosive devices.

Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, nuclear weapon States must maintain full and effective human control over nuclear weapons and their delivery systems.

Mr. President,

14. The African Group re-affirms the central role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in contributing to addressing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation across all regions of the world, pursuant to Article 7 of the Treaty. The Group therefore welcomes the significant contribution made by the Treaty of Pelindaba, Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and Mongolia's Nuclear-Weapon-Free- Status, enhancing global and regional peace and security, strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament.

15. In this context, the African Group remains committed to the Treaty of Pelindaba, among other things, the Treaty re-affirms the status of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and provides a shield for the African territory, including by preventing the stationing of nuclear explosive devices on the continent and prohibiting testing of those weapons on the entire space that constitutes the African continent.

16. The African Group restates its deep concern at the lack of progress towards the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which remains 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 without a vote. We also restate our concern over the failure to implement 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 as well as the respective responsibility of the 3 co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution.

17. In this context, the Group recognizes the positive and constructive developments at the conference on the establishment of the Middle East Free Zone, including the successful convening of its six sessions pursuant to UNGA decision 73/546, and welcomes their valuable outcomes. Moreover, the Group calls upon all Member States of the Conference and invited observers to actively participate in this conference and to constructively support its objectives.

18. In this regard, the African Group calls for the establishment of a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East pursuant to the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

Mr. President,

19. The Group reaffirms its position on the inalienable right of all NPT States parties to deploy nuclear energy for peaceful uses in line with a balanced approach in implementing the Treaty and its 3 pillars as well as the commitments adopted at the Review Conferences in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

20. At the same time, the African Group calls on all States parties to NPT to prohibit the transfer of all nuclear related equipment, information, material, facilities and know-how of nuclear technology to States that have not acceded to the Treaty and that do not implement a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

21. 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 by States parties with a view to preventing the diversion of nuclear material and technology from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices while facilitating the provision of technical assistance and international cooperation through maximizing the use of nuclear science and

technology for socio-economic development. The Group stresses the importance of achieving the universality of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements being the universal standard of verification and the legal prerequisite under the NPT.

22. In conclusion, Mr. President, the African Group reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We take note of the programme of work adopted for this Conference, including the sequencing of the Main Committees and the reconstitution of three subsidiary bodies, and stand ready to engage substantively and in a spirit of compromise across all three pillars of the Treaty. The African Group reaffirms the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and calls for the resumption of substantive work therein. We reiterate that multilateral disarmament negotiations will only yield tangible results when all States Parties, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, demonstrate genuine political will, flexibility and good faith. The international community cannot afford another missed opportunity. The time for meaningful and durable progress is now.

23. I thank you.