

STATEMENT
ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
BY
MAHMUD MOHAMMED LAWAL
PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AT THE
THE 11TH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR
WEAPONS (REVCON 2026)
MAIN COMMITTEE II

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group.

2. The Group aligns itself with the Statement of the Non-Aligned Movement delivered by the distinguished Representative of Indonesia and wishes to make the following remarks on this cluster-

3. The African Group re-affirms the central role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the consolidation of the NPT. Indeed, nuclear-weapon-free zones play an important role in preventing the proliferation – both vertical and horizontal – of nuclear weapons. The African Group is of the conviction that the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones enhances global and regional peace and security, strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributes towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament. It is, therefore, our firm conviction that the long-overdue establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as mandated by the 1995 Resolution, must be pursued with renewed and stronger determination and concrete steps, including through the work of the Subsidiary Body entrusted with this matter at the present Conference.

4. The Group reiterates its commitment to the Treaty on the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Africa (Treaty of Pelindaba) which re-affirms the proud status of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and as a shield for the African territory, including by preventing the stationing of nuclear explosive devices and prohibiting testing of those weapons in the entire space that constitutes the African continent.

5. The entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty, on 15 July 2009, is the realization of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted by the First Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the then Organization of African Unity (OAU), held in July 1964, in Cairo, Egypt. This Declaration was

borne out of Africa's deep concern with the effects resulting from the dissemination of nuclear weapons and in particular, the nuclear testing undertaken in the atmosphere and underground in Africa by a nuclear-weapon State in the early sixties.

Mr. Chair,

6. The African Group asserts that horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapon-sharing by States Parties constitutes a clear violation of non-proliferation obligations undertaken by those Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) under Article I and by those Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) under Article II of the Treaty, and could have serious consequences on the effectiveness, relevance and credibility of the Treaty.

7. The Group, therefore, urges these States parties to put an end to nuclear weapon-sharing with other States under any circumstances and any kind of security arrangements, including in the framework of military alliances including through nuclear sharing and extended and forward nuclear deterrence due to their inconformity with the Treaty. In this context, the Group underlines the special responsibility of NWS. The Group also expresses serious concern over the ongoing vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons through the continued nuclear arsenals modernization and arms race by NWS, the expansion of their stockpiles of nuclear weapons, and the improvement and development of new types of these weapons and their delivery systems by such countries, all of which are in clear contradiction with their legal obligations under the Treaty, and therefore need to come to an end.

Mr. Chair,

10. Achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remains a matter of the great importance to the African Group. The Group firmly believes that the CTBT constitutes an indispensable instrument for

halting the quantitative development of nuclear weapons, and that its early entry into force would represent a decisive contribution to the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. The Group underscores the particular responsibility borne by Nuclear Weapon States in this regard and calls upon all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the CTBT.

11. The Group underlines that the multilateral mechanism established by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is the most appropriate way to address verification and safeguards issues. At the same time, the Group emphasises that the work of the Agency with regard to safeguards and verification has to be conducted in accordance with the provisions of its statute and safeguards agreements while noting that the comprehensive safeguards agreements remain the universal standard of verification and the legal prerequisite under the NPT. The African Group strongly supports the objective of achieving the universality of the Treaty as well as the comprehensive safeguards agreements.

Mr. Chair,

12. In conclusion, the African Group reaffirms its unwavering commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons.

13. I thank you for your attention.