NIGERIA'S COUNTRY STATEMENT TO THE THIRD VIENNA CONFERENCE ON THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS 8-9, DECEMBER, 2014

DELIVERED BY

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Mr. Chairman,

Delegates,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

The delegation of Nigeria congratulates Austria for hosting the Third Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. We also wish to use this opportunity to assure you of our cooperation and support not only during the deliberations on this significant subject matter but on further future engagement that would assist in the accomplishment of a world free of Nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

2. This conference is expected to build on the work that has been undertaken in the recent past particularly the earlier two conferences held in Oslo and Nayarit. No doubt these two conferences have brought to fore the dangers and humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons. The continued existence of nuclear weapons is not only dangerous to the human society, its illegality is also quite arguable as it undermines international humanitarian law and threatens global peace and security. The
devastating effect of a nuclear weapon detonation either deliberate or by accident cannot be underestimated. This danger is more real now with the increase of terrorist activities across the globe. And, the effects cannot be constrained by national borders. This fact therefore underscores the reality that all regions of the world are vulnerable and stand huge risks of experiencing the destructive after effects of nuclear weapons. Nigeria and indeed the whole of Africa have not forgotten the experience of the devastating consequences of the immoral nuclear tests undertaken on African soil in the 1960s.

Mr. Chairman,

3. Nigeria is deeply concerned about the slow pace of progress 68 years after the first United Nations General Assembly Resolution adopted in 1946 to initiate the process to achieve a world free of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). In this regard, as a committed signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the African Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty (The Treaty of Pelindaba), Nigeria urges all nations of the world, particularly the Nuclear Weapon States (NWSs) to rededicate themselves and redouble their efforts and commitment towards disarmament, as nuclear weapons do not guarantee national security rather, they place global peace and security on a time bomb. We therefore urge all Nuclear Weapon States to desist from further stockpiling and upgrading of their nuclear arsenals and commit to the disarmament crusade with all sense of responsibility.

4. The presence in Vienna of over 150 countries represented by government and non-governmental agencies, is clear indication that the vast majority of states view nuclear weapons not only as instruments of deterrence, but a means to impending global catastrophe.

5. My delegation therefore calls on the remaining nations of the world to join in the collective pressure to rid the world of all forms of nuclear weapons and nuclear testing.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.