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**STATEMENT BY DR. MARTIN I. UHOMOIBHI, LEADER OF
DELEGATION/AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF NIGERIA AT THE SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY
COMMITTEE FOR THE 2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE
STATES PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON NON-PROLIFERATION
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT),
GENEVA 28 APRIL- 9 MAY 2008**

Mr. Chairman,

I like to congratulate you, on behalf of the Nigerian delegation, on your election to the Chair for the 2nd Session of the Preparatory Committee Meeting. My delegation has great confidence in your ability to steer this meeting to a successful outcome. I should like to assure you of the full cooperation and support of my delegation in this endeavour.

2. The Nigerian delegation associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-aligned Movement States parties to the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The NPT was designed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, to advance the goal of nuclear disarmament and to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The grand bargain of nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and civil nuclear energy on which the NPT was constructed embodies the recognition that the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons by some states could undermine efforts to prevent their proliferation.

4. Despite enormous challenges, the NPT remains a vital instrument for the promotion of global peace and security. This meeting, therefore, affords us the opportunity to build a solid foundation for an efficient, effective and equitable system that will rid the world of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. A particularly important objective of this meeting, therefore, should be to explore ways to strengthen confidence in the integrity of the NPT. The best assurance that the treaty is serving the best interest of States Parties is to ensure strict compliance with its provisions.

5. At the moment, an increasing number of states have acquired the technology to produce fissile materials and nuclear explosive devices and their delivery system. This is the sad consequence of the continued possession of nuclear weapons and the elevation, instead of a diminution, of the role of nuclear weapons in the security policies of some states. Against this backdrop, it is becoming important for the early commencement, in the conference on Disarmament, of negotiations on a multilateral, non-discriminatory and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile materials. My delegation believes that such a measure would substantially help to advance the goal of nuclear non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Negotiating an FMCT is only but one of several measures to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament. It is no less important to reconcile states' right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy with the imperative of non-proliferation. Already, there are creative ideas on the table on this issue which deserves closer study. In the same vein, all states must affirm their commitment to the moratorium on nuclear testing and the early entry into force of the CTBT. In this regard, my delegation wishes to encourage states that are yet to ratify the CTBT, especially those whose ratification is necessary for its entry into force, to do so without further delay.

7. To prevent proliferation risks, there are other must-dos, principally by the nuclear weapons states. I focus on only two of these. At the last General Assembly, Chile, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and my country introduced resolution 62/36 titled "Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons system". Our five countries are of the view that maintaining nuclear weapons on high alert was a feature of the cold war, and moving all nuclear weapons from high alert status would lead to increased security for all. Either as a confidence building measure, or as a pragmatic approach to disarmament, de-alerting could provide the much-needed signal that the nuclear weapon states take their responsibilities seriously in the lead up to the 2010 Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

8. For years, non-nuclear weapons states have consistently called for the conclusion of a legally binding instrument, providing comprehensive and unconditional

security guarantees against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them. Security guarantees are not just the legitimate aspirations of non nuclear weapon states; they constitute an essential insurance against nuclear proliferation. My delegation believes that a balanced and non-discriminating NSA, if so provided, could serve to strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

9. I thank you.

