



**N I G E R I A**

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of**  
**Nigeria**

**AT**

**THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE HUMAN**  
**RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**ON**

**THE DURBAN DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

**GENEVA, 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2008**

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**Mr. President,**

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish to align myself with the statement made by Egypt on behalf of the African Group.

Seven years since the World Conference on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance was held in Durban, South Africa, the unsavory effects of the scourges of the various issues identified are still with us. At the end of that historic conference, difficult though the proceedings were, we unanimously adopted a Declaration and Programme of Action to give effect to our collective resolve to tackle the problems of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Regrettably, till date, not only has there been a seeming reluctance to implement the Durban commitments, but indeed there has also been a perceived design to scuttle and reverse the gains of Durban. This must not be. Nigeria is strongly of the opinion that the forthcoming Durban Review Conference presents both the opportunity and the momentum to redress the pains and hurt of the past as well as the present forms of discrimination in all its varied and vicious forms.

**Mr. President,**

Nigeria attaches great importance to the work of all the processes in pursuance of our commitment to Durban Declaration and the Programme of Action (DDPA), with a view to eliminate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. We are particularly appreciative of the valuable work done by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Declaration and Program of Action towards translating the commitments into concrete action under your able guidance.

We have no hesitation, however, in admitting that the pace of implementation of the Durban Declaration and the Plan of Action has remained slow in the last few years. In our view, the enhancement of the process requires, in addition to reiteration of commitments, practical steps and measures, for achieving the goals enshrined in the Declaration and

Program of Work. We hope that substantial outcome will be reached by the Durban Review Conference in 2009.

**Mr. President,**

Nigeria believes that serious gaps exist in the existing international instruments to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance should be bridged through a number of measures, including (i) provision of support and technical assistance to states, as appropriate and (ii) close cooperation between national human rights institutions and relevant stakeholders.

We are also confident that effective cooperation between Governments, NGOs and civil society-based organizations in the identification of good practices could help curtail both incitement and dissemination of hatred. Identification of focal points by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), national institutions and close liaison between the two would remove the attendant bottlenecks in the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action and accelerate follow up to the CERD recommendations.

We note with satisfaction that the forthcoming Durban Review Conference has, in its objectives, identified the contemporary manifestations of racism and racial discrimination and would suggest practical solutions. We strongly believe that existing national action plans should be strengthened by complementary international standards. Existing issues need to be addressed while keeping in mind the socio-cultural sensitivities of different regions. We hope to see real progress made by the five experts as envisaged in Council Resolution 1/5 of 30 June 2006.

The elaboration of complementary standards is vital to addressing the gaps in the existing normative framework to deal with racism in a comprehensive manner. We should work for the elaboration of human rights instruments in the areas where such instruments do not exist.

I thank you.