

**STATEMENT BY NIGERIA ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN
GROUP ON THE GENERAL DEBATE UNDER AGENDA ITEM 2**

5TH March 2010

Mr. President,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the African Group. The statement is essentially a reiteration of the key position of the Group during the interactive dialogue with the High Commissioner.

We wish commend the High Commissioner for her utmost commitment to the course of the promotion and protection of human rights and the transparency with which her Office discharges its work. We appreciate the High Commissioner's continued efforts to share with Member States on various occasions the issues that constitute the thematic reports of the Secretary-General as well as the High Commissioner.

Mr. President,

The African Group has taken keen interest on the efforts of the High Commissioner to address the lopsided composition of the staff of her Office, especially with regard to the implementation of the procedures and framework for improving geographical diversity as well as gender balance. While we commend the High Commissioner on her commitment to meeting the desired goals, we remain highly concerned over the disproportionate representation of staff in the OHCHR, especially at the top management level. We regret to state that these efforts are not sufficient to correct this ~~gapping~~ anomaly. We are hopeful that her sustained efforts will be enhanced adequately to meet the required targets as recommended in the JIU report.

Mr. President,

The African Group supports the strengthening of international cooperation in the promotion and protection of all human rights in all its ramifications. We firmly believe in the indivisibility, interdependence and mutually reinforcing nature of all human rights. Therefore, we consider it imperative for all human rights to be treated with the same emphasis, be they civil, political, economic, social or cultural; based on the principles of non-selectivity, impartiality and objectivity.

Consequently, it is essential that international cooperation in the field of human rights guarantees that States are supported in accordance with their needs to enable them assume responsibilities towards the realization of freedom, equality, justice and economic and social wellbeing for all those under their jurisdiction.

The valuable contributions of Madam High Commissioner and staff of the OHCHR have helped in no small measure in achieving the much-desired success in the Durban Review Conference. This is a testimony of their commitment in fighting against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The African Group particularly wishes for the High Commissioner to continue to take all required actions expected of her Office in facilitating the full implementation of the DDPA, the Outcome Document of the Durban Review Conference and to encourage states to take effective actions in this regard. We further expect that the OHCHR should lead the campaign against the rising trend of racism and racial discrimination in sports; and in this regard, collaborate with secretariats of major international sporting events, such as FIFA and the Olympics in developing a code of conduct for all sports men and women.

Mr. President,

The African Group believes in the relevance of National Human Rights Institutions which are set up to protect and monitor human rights in a given country, in accordance with the Paris Principles. In this regard we commend the OHCHR for the advisory services provided to these national institutions, particularly in Africa, to enhance their efficacy and responsiveness to the promotion and protection of human rights. We are hopeful that this collaboration will be sustained in the years to come.

I thank you.