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STATEMENT

BY

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DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

AT THE

THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON AGENDA ITEM 67: ELIMINATION OF RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE
SUB ITEMS: A & B

NEW YORK, 04TH NOVEMBER, 2013
Mr. Chairman

Nigeria thanks the Secretary-General for his reports on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Nigeria aligns itself with the statement delivered by Fiji on behalf of G77 and China.

2. Racism is the most degrading treatment ever invented by man and inflicted on others of different types for their subjugation, exclusion, exploitation, humiliation and denigration. Fifty years ago in November 1963, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the precursor to the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) adopted in 1965.

3. In view of the continued persistence of this inhuman practice at this day and age in different forms and guises, it has become necessary to recall that one of the preambles of the Declaration holds that any doctrine of racial differentiation or superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and that there is no justification for racial discrimination, either in theory or in practice. This is as true now as it was 50 years ago.

4. The elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance remains a top priority for Nigeria. While the international community has made progress in drawing attention to the problem, considerable challenges still remain.

5. Nigeria is deeply concerned with the proliferation of extreme right-wing groups in some States. These groups explicitly strengthen racial hatred and intolerance. We are also disconcerted by the existence of political parties operating on ideologies which promote racism and xenophobia.
6. Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance should never be allowed to gain respectability and acceptance by condoning the activities of political parties that exploit national sentiments and unjustified latent fears to advance their nefarious agendas.

7. It is the obligation of the entire international community to express abhorrence at such practices and call to order States where these practices occur, as well as to insist that they do more to combat the activities of these groups and political parties as they engender hatred and disharmony between and among peoples.

8. Racist hate speech is another matter of concern to Nigeria. In a thematic discussion of the various dimensions of racist hate speech during its 81st Session, CERD considered, inter alia, racist hate speech and freedom of opinion and expression; racist hate speech in political life as well as racist hate speech in the media including the Internet.

9. Nigeria welcomes the attention that CERD is paying to this form of speech which is nothing but a blatant abuse of the right to free speech and expression. This is indeed one of the greatest contemporary challenges we face in the fight against racism. We condemn, in the strongest terms, any attempt to use the democratic principles of freedom of opinion and freedom of expression to justify racism, propagate racist ideologies and incite to racial hatred.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Racial profiling is an emerging trend which in our view exacerbates the problem of racism. It entrenches negative stereotypes and often leads to unequal and unfair treatment of victims by law enforcement officials and
others in positions of authority. We are particularly concerned that people of African descent are increasingly affected negatively by racial profiling. We strongly condemn all acts of racial profiling, whether officially sanctioned or not and we call upon States where such are happening to terminate these practices forthwith. They are not only based on pseudo scientific premises, but also on skewed perceptions of human behavioral patterns and inclinations.

11. Racism in sport should also warrant the attention of the international community as a matter of special concern. While we welcome the efforts of FIFA, UEFA, the IOC and other major sporting associations in the fight against racism in sport, we urge all States and other stakeholders to further collaborate and address this menace. Undoubtedly, more effort is still required in the area of public enlightenment to discourage racism in sport. Likewise, we stress the need for more stringent measures to serve as deterrents.

**Mr. Chairman,**

12. Racism and xenophobia have worsened the plight of refugees and migrants, especially so-called irregular migrants. Racially motivated attacks and other hostile actions instill fear and anxiety in refugees and migrants and push them further to the fringes of society. This in turn exposes them to greater social and economic exclusion, illegal exploitation and makes their integration difficult if not impossible.

13. The plight of migrants and refugees is further compounded by their lack of access to justice. Nigeria therefore, objects to xenophobic attacks against
migrants and refugees and calls on States where such situations exist to take adequate measures to prevent or punish them.

Mr. Chairman,

14. Efforts to address racism should not be left to governments alone. Indeed, fighting racism in a systematic manner is not a task that governments alone can accomplish without the support of the people. As a result, we recognize and applaud the crucial role of civil society groups in combating racism and xenophobia. It is important that Member States encourage these groups to remain engaged on this issue.

15. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we call on States to revise their domestic legislation, to repeal provisions that directly or indirectly have a discriminatory impact on disadvantaged population, and to adopt legislation that specifically ensure the right to equality and punish all acts of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

16. I thank you.