

STATEMENT
DELIVERED BY

MRS. BOLA ASAJU ON BEHALF OF
THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NIGERIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

DURING THE

EXPERT MECHANISM ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK,
APRIL 21 – 23, 2026

Mr. Chair,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

1. Nigeria commends the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for convening this important session and appreciates the continued work of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development.

2. The right to development, as reaffirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development, remains a fundamental and inalienable human right. States have the responsibility to create the necessary conditions for their citizens to attain the highest possible standard of living and live in dignity.

3. For Nigeria, this right is central to national development priorities. Its realization requires a holistic and people-centered approach that integrates economic growth, social inclusion, and respect for human rights. In this regard, Nigeria reaffirms its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a guiding framework for inclusive and sustainable progress.

4. The focus of this session is both timely and relevant. In particular, discussions on the draft international covenant on the right to development present an important opportunity to strengthen the global normative framework. This process must remain Member State-driven, reflect consensus, and respect the principles of sovereignty, national ownership, and non-politicization.

5. In line with this year's theme, "Population, technology and research in the context of sustainable development," Nigeria underscores its commitment to leveraging technology and research as key drivers of development. Continued investments are being made in digital innovation and human capital, particularly in

sectors such as health and education, to ensure inclusive outcomes.

6. While progress is being made at the national level, these efforts must be supported by a conducive international environment. Persistent challenges, including limited access to financing, technological disparities, and global economic uncertainties, continue to constrain development efforts.

7. Nigeria therefore calls for strengthened international cooperation, including enhanced development financing, capacity-building, fair trade practices, and the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms.

8. As deliberations on the draft covenant advance, Nigeria expresses the hope for a balanced and forward-looking outcome. Member States are encouraged to engage constructively and to refrain from introducing language that is not universally agreed within the United Nations system, in order to preserve consensus.

9. Nigeria remains committed to advancing the right to development and to working with all partners to ensure that its benefits are realized by all.

10. I thank you.