

UGANDA-LED NAM WARNS OF RISING NUCLEAR THREAT

By Nelson Kiva

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), currently chaired by Uganda, has warned that the threat of nuclear conflict is increasing and called for renewed global commitment to nuclear disarmament.

Speaking at the 2026 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) at the United Nations headquarters in New York City on April 28, 2026, Uganda's Permanent Representative, Adonia Ayebare, delivered a 33-point message on behalf of NAM member states.

URGENT REMINDER

The conference coincided with the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. "This serves as an urgent reminder of the pressing need to eliminate nuclear weapons," Ayebare said, warning of renewed and increasingly dangerous threats to international stability and security.

NAM, which represents 120 developing countries, has long advocated nuclear disarmament and multilateral co-operation.

Uganda assumed the chairmanship of the Movement in January 2024, during the 19th NAM Summit in Kampala,

THREAT TO HUMANITY

Through Uganda's Permanent Representative, Adonia Ayebare, NAM reiterated that nuclear disarmament remains its highest priority. "We remain extremely concerned at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use," Ayebare said.

"The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against the use

or threat of use of nuclear weapons."

He added that efforts to curb proliferation must not be separated from disarmament obligations. "Non-proliferation derives its legitimacy from the larger objective of nuclear disarmament," he said.

Ayebare emphasised that global agreements must be "universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory."

positioning it at the centre of global South diplomacy on key international issues, including nuclear policy.

REPEATED FAILURES

At the New York conference, Ayebare congratulated conference president Do Hung Viet and pledged NAM's support, before raising concerns over growing instability among non-nuclear states.

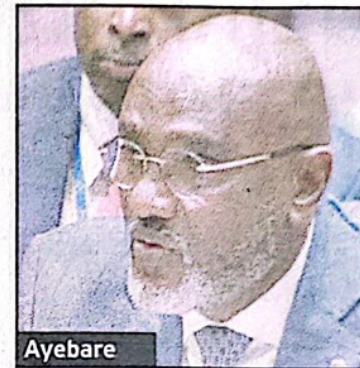
"We witnessed the second consecutive failure of the Review Conference to agree on a consensual outcome document," he said, referring to the 2022 meeting. "This is without precedent since the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995."

Ayebare warned that repeated failures risk undermining the credibility of the NPT, widely regarded as the cornerstone of global nuclear governance.

"Given the crucial role of the NPT in international security, all efforts must be made to ensure a meaningful and ambitious outcome," he said.

A key concern for NAM is what it sees as an imbalance between disarmament commitments and the actions of nuclear-armed states.

"The realisation of the objectives of the Treaty depends on full, non-discriminatory, balanced and effective implementation of all the obligations across its three pillars," Ayebare



said, referring to disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy.

RENEWED ARMS RACE

The Movement also raised alarm over what it described as a renewed arms race, citing the modernisation of nuclear arsenals and development of new weapons technologies.

"The Group reiterates its deep concern over the greatest threat to peace and security posed by modernisation of nuclear forces and development of more effective and newer nuclear warheads. This is in fact a new nuclear arms race and a clear violation of Article VI of the Treaty," the top Ugandan diplomat at the UN said.

NAM also expressed concern about the possible resumption of nuclear weapons testing.

"Any resumption of nuclear weapon testing would constitute a serious threat to international peace and security. It would represent a serious regression in international efforts toward nuclear disarmament and risk igniting a new nuclear arms race," he warned.

Ayebare also pointed to the expiry of the New START Treaty between the United States and Russia earlier this year. "We regret the expiry of the Treaty without agreeing on a successor," he said, warning that ongoing modernisation programmes could reverse earlier reductions in nuclear stockpiles.

PEACEFUL PURPOSED NUCLEAR

Despite its strong emphasis on disarmament, the Movement reaffirmed the right of all states to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. "Each state has the inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy without discrimination," he said.

NAM also warned against attacks on civilian nuclear facilities.

"Any attack or threat of attack against peaceful nuclear facilities poses a great danger to human lives and the environment," Ayebare said.