

***“The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) as a Model of Multilateral Success: What it means for Africa, Today and Tomorrow”***

**-Public Lecture Delivered by Dr. Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)**

The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) hosted a public lecture titled, *“The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) as a Model of Multilateral Success: What it Means for Africa, Today and Tomorrow,”* on Thursday, 10 July 2025. It was delivered by Dr. Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of the CTBT, and chaired and co-chaired by erudite

Professor Femi Otubanjo, and the Acting Director of Research, Associate Professor Joshua Bolarinwa respectively.



The distinguished Director-General of the NIIA, Professor Eghosa Osaghae, delivered the opening remarks, emphasizing the importance of understanding the details surrounding the CTBT, especially as many people remain unaware of what the treaty entails. He reaffirmed Nigeria’s support for the global ban on nuclear testing, while also expressing the country’s interest in the peaceful use of nuclear technology, particularly in addressing national energy needs. He clarified that the public lecture was hosted by the Institute as part of its mandate in enlightening Nigerians and elucidating issues of international affairs.

Dr. Floyd, starting on a melancholic note, gave an illustration of the grave dangers of the misuse of nuclear armaments, with the incident of the explosion of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 by the US Army. He went further to provide an in-depth historical overview of the CTBT, explaining its origins, aims, and the successes it has recorded. He

discussed the global monitoring systems established by the CTBT, which are capable of detecting nuclear tests conducted anywhere in the world. He explained how the organization has leveraged artificial intelligence (AI) to strengthen its analytical capabilities.

He cited a case study of an earthquake in Northern Iran, which triggered online speculations about a possible nuclear test. However, CTBT analysts used real time data and AI tools to confirm that the event was a natural earthquake. Dr. Floyd highlighted this as an example of how misinformation and disinformation on social media could lead to public confusion, underscoring the need for evidence-based communication. Therefore, character, trust, and organizational efficiency could be used to wipe out misinformation/disinformation. He also informed that there are 321 censor stations all around the world, designed to pick nuclear signs and there are international monitoring systems too.



He stressed the importance of diplomacy and treaty making, stating that countries need to express their commitment fully to the treaty, and that nations cannot remain neutral; it is either they sign and abide by the treaty or they do not. While 187 countries have signed the treaty, 178 countries have ratified it. He encouraged continued cooperation among countries and reaffirmed his commitment to leaving the CTBT in strong operational standing before the end of his tenure. He remarked that in a nuclear war, there are no winners, only losers. He concluded that climate change and nuclear war are the existential threats of today, while stating that CTBT is a bright spot of hope, in all nations' interests.

The interactive session was both engaging and insightful, featuring thoughtful contributions from the audience. The Chair of the lecture, Professor Femi Otubanjo, who reflected on the danger of nuclear weapons in authoritarian states, also expressed Nigeria's position concerning nuclear issues. He noted that while Nigeria does not manufacture nuclear weapons, discussions about nuclear energy and disarmament remain relevant, especially in relation to climate change and



national development. Other contributions and queries bothered on the lecturer's stance on North Korea, nuclear ban enforcement, nuclear weapon development in Africa, and the difference between Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and CTBT.

In his response, Dr. Floyd distinguished between NPT and CTBT stating that the former has the absolute control over all nuclear acquisitions and guided by three pillars, namely: disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy and it became effective in 1970 before CTBT. IAEA is tasked with the responsibility of checking that nuclear acquisitions do not move from civilian to military use. On the enquiry about what is in CTBT for Africa, 52 out of 54 countries in Africa have ratified the treaty and they have access to nuclear technology for civilian purposes.



The lecture concluded with a group photograph, and a visit to the General LEO Irabor Early Warning Systems Centre, marking a successful and impactful intellectual exchange on the significance of the CTBT for Africa and the broader global community.

**Compiled by the NIIA Program Reporting Team.**