

Check against delivery!

**STATEMENT
DELIVERED BY
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DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA TO
THE UN
AT
THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF
THE 72ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**09 October 2017,
New York**

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me join other delegations in congratulating you and members of the bureau for your election to guide the work of the Committee. I assure you of our full support and cooperation in the discharge of your responsibilities.

My delegation also wishes to associate itself with the statements made by Nigeria on behalf of the African Group and Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM):

Mr. Chairperson,

It is self-evident that the global peace and security situation has become increasingly worrying. While, on the one hand, there is a growing modernization and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, we see, on the other, new attempts to undermine the non-proliferation regime. All this, within the context of a global situation, which, as the Secretary-General says, is characterized by power dynamics which is very much in flux. At no time since the end of the cold war, has wisdom, diplomacy and the careful handling of security issues been as critical as today. This is, for instance, in our view, how the issue

of the DPRK should be viewed. The danger of use of nuclear weapons needs to be removed in a serious way.

Mr. Chairperson,

We would like to stress once more that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its three pillars still remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was adopted on 7 July 2017, is indeed an important milestone towards achieving the goal of a world without nuclear weapons and we believe it complements and reinforces the NPT.

Ethiopia underscores the importance of nuclear weapons free zones in enhancing global peace and security, particularly their contribution towards realizing the objective of nuclear disarmament. In this regard, we share the concerns expressed by several delegations towards the convening of a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction, and call on all stakeholders to proactively engage in this process in the spirit of mutual understanding. The establishment of a nuclear free Middle East is

essential for global peace and security and for the stability of the region.

The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (The Pelindaba Treaty) re-affirms the status of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and provides a shield for the African territory, including by preventing the stationing of nuclear explosive devices on the continent and prohibiting testing of those weapons among others. Ethiopia remains committed to the Treaty.

As we reiterate our strong support to the universalization and early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), we welcome the convening of the Tenth Ministerial Conference on CTBT, which was held in New York on 20 September 2017. We believe the CTBT provides the appropriate framework for halting further the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons. We call upon those states that have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT to do so as a matter of urgency. We especially call upon the states in annex II of the CTBT and whose ratifications are crucial for the treaty's entry into force.

We join other member-States in reaffirming the important work entrusted to the Conference on Disarmament as a multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and expresses our concern at the impasse that has prevented the Conference from fulfilling its mandate. The United Nation Disarmament Commission (UNDC) also serves as an important platform to achieve the objective of nuclear disarmament. In this regard, we welcome the conclusion of work on the agenda items “Recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons” at the 2017 substantive session of the UNDC; it is our hope that this success would be emulated on the agenda item on nuclear disarmament as the UNDC begins its next cycle.

We would like to reiterate once again that the total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and further reiterate our call for unconditional negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon states against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear weapons states, pending their total elimination.

Mr. Chairperson,

The illicit trade, transfer, manufacture and possession and circulation of small arms and light weapons as well as their excessive accumulation remains to be a source of great concern in many parts of the world. It is precisely for this reason that implementation of international and regional commitments and treaty-based obligations with respect to combating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons is very critical. In this respect, we remain committed to the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (UN PoA). We look forward to the Third Review Conference of the UN PoA in March 2018.

I thank you!