

# GHANA



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STATEMENT BY

**H.E. MRS. MARTHA A.A. POBEE**  
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
PERMANENT MISSION OF GHANA TO THE UN

AT THE  
THEMATIC DEBATE ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS

New York, October 16, 2017

**Mr. Chairman,**

My delegation aligns itself with statements delivered by Indonesia and Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the African Group respectively. Their statements adequately convey our position on the range of issues covered under this cluster and due to time constraints, I will limit my remarks to a few issues in national capacity.

My delegation would also like to warmly congratulate the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons (ICAN) for the Nobel Peace Prize award in recognition of their contribution to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). This achievement by ICAN is a testament of the valued contribution of civil society, academia and scientific experts to our objective of having a world free of nuclear weapons.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The most dangerous of all the known threats to global peace and security is, arguably, the proliferation and potential use of nuclear weapons, which are by nature inhumane and indiscriminate. The risks of a deliberate, mistaken or accidental detonation of a single nuclear weapon will wreak far-reaching and devastating consequences on humanity across geographical borders. Our concern over the existence of nuclear weapons is further heightened by the ever-present possibility of these weapons and related materials falling in the hands of terrorists and other unauthorized non-state actors. We, therefore, subscribe to the notion that the ultimate guarantee to international peace and security is by ensuring the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

In this context, Ghana welcomes the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2017, as a significant instrument in response to the growing awareness about the risks and catastrophic humanitarian consequences arising from the use of nuclear weapons. Ghana joined other member states to sign the Treaty on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 when it was opened for signature.

The Treaty prohibits the use, threat of use, possession, production, acquisition, testing, transfer and stationing of nuclear weapons. It is comprehensive and progressive instrument, which delegitimizes nuclear weapons and also makes provisions for Nuclear Weapons States to join and eliminate their weapons in an independently verifiable, irreversible and transparent manner. The Treaty further reinforces and complements the NPT as well as other norms set in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Following this landmark achievement, the TPNW has become an indispensable part of the general disarmament and non-proliferation discourse. We, however, consider it needless for one to depict the Treaty as divisive instrument, especially when the instrument has been crafted to complement and strengthen the NPT. It is similarly not necessary for Nuclear Weapon Possessing States to undermine the TPNW with their misperceptions and less positive criticisms. Indeed, no multilateral legal instrument can be said to be entirely perfect - not even the NPT, which is the cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We, therefore, reiterate our call on all states that have not yet signed the TPNW, including the nuclear weapons states, to sign without any further delay.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Ghana remains firmly committed to the NPT in all its aspects and considers nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to be mutually reinforcing. We believe that our overall objective of having a world free of nuclear weapons is shared and professed variously by member states, both state parties and non-state parties to the NPT.

We are, however concerned that the pursuance of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation is cloaked with security doctrines underpinned by nuclear weapons, and commitments blurred by lack of good faith and political will. It, therefore, behoves on all of us to give meaning to the various legal instruments we have subscribed to and act accordingly to ensure the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

To this end, we look forward to the convening of UN High Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament no later than 2018 in line with resolution 68/32, in order to evaluate progress and advance further the overall objective of total elimination of nuclear weapons. It is also our hope that the 2020 NPT Review Conference would be able to move beyond its setbacks in 2015 and take forward multilateral negotiation on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

**Mr. Chairman,**

We are concerned over the nuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, particularly the nuclear tests conducted by the DPRK in clear violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. Amid the growing geopolitical tensions, including threats by some states to use the very dangerous weapons we aspire to eliminate, we urge all relevant stakeholders to reduce the tension and resume dialogue to find diplomatic solution to the situation.

As earlier stated by my delegation during the General debate, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) are essential to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. In this connection, we welcome the consensus report of the Group of Governmental Experts on a treaty banning the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear and other Explosive devices, which in our view, serves as a good basis for future negotiations of a non-discriminatory, legally-binding and internationally verifiable FMCT in 2018, ideally, under the auspices of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). We also welcome the convening of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference of the CTBT held in New York on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2017, and renew our call on Annex II states that are yet to ratify the CTBT to fast track the process of ratification.

**Mr. Chairman,**

We acknowledge the significant contribution of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones, including the Pelindaba, Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and others to the overall objective of a world free of nuclear weapons and renew our call on all stakeholders, particularly states in the Middle East to continue to constructively engage in efforts to ensure that that region is also free of nuclear weapons.

**In conclusion,** even though the journey towards achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world appears painstakingly tortuous and distant far, we are optimistic that our continuous positive engagements through new and innovative approaches and implementation of all agreed measures and commitments will propel us collectively towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

I thank you for your kind attention.