



Statement by

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Mission of the Republic of Malawi to the United Nations**

at

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Thank You Mr. Chairman for giving me the floor

I have the honour to speak on behalf of my country Malawi. Let me take this opportunity to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Your Excellency, Ambassador **Ion Jinga** of Romania on your election as the Chairman of the 73rd session of the Disarmament and International Security (first Committee) and members of your entire bureau. Let me assure you and your bureau of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

Malawi aligns itself with the statements made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and Morocco on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. Chairman

Any use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. Even in the event of a single nuclear detonation, humanitarian agencies would be powerless to provide effective relief to the sick and injured. The only guarantee of our security against the threat of nuclear weapons is their complete elimination. That is why Malawi is among the countries that signed the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2017. The treaty places nuclear weapons on the same legal footing as the other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), deemed unacceptable for their indiscriminate and inhumane effects such as biological and chemical weapons. The treaty fills a significant gap that previously existed in international law.

As many countries are signing and ratifying the treaty, it is a clear indication that the majority of the world no longer accepts nuclear weapons and do not consider them legitimate weapons, creating the foundation of a new norm of international behaviour. If nuclear weapons continue to be portrayed as a legitimate and a useful means to provide security, more States might aim to develop such weapons. Malawi is fully committed to the treaty and is looking forward to ratifying it with an intention to become a state party to the Treaty as soon as possible. As a country we join other countries that condemn as illegitimate any ongoing activities that are prohibited under this Treaty, such as threats to use

nuclear weapons, testing of nuclear weapons, and the development and modernization of nuclear arsenals.

Mr. Chairman

Malawi condemns the use of chemical weapons. The use of chemical weapons is universally considered to be contrary to the laws against humanity and the dictates of public conscience. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) prohibits the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer, or use of these weapons. Chemical weapons, which are inherently indiscriminate, are any toxic chemical or its precursor that can cause death, injury, temporary incapacitation or sensory irritation through its chemical action, and includes related munitions and delivery systems. Chlorine, mustard gas, and sarin are among the most used weaponized chemicals. The continued use of chemical weapons has eroded the norm against using these weapons. As a country, we support the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)'s renewed mandate to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons and we endorse the UN Secretary-General's recommendations on chemical weapons.

Mr. Chairman

Malawi also condemns the use of Biological weapons as a means of ending human life. Biological weapons use bacteria, viruses, or toxins—that are combined with a delivery mechanism to inflict harm. Biological weapons can be disseminated through inhalation, ingestion, or skin absorption. Malawi wishes to reaffirm and strengthen its commitment to the Biological Weapon Convention (BWC) and report on measures taken to implement provisions from the Convention. At national level, we are reviewing national measures and policies to make changes or implement new ones to strengthen compliance with the BWC.

In terms of adoption and implementation of non-proliferation treaties, Malawi is a party to and fully implements all the requirements of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). Malawi places importance on implementing

all provisions of such multilateral treaties including those covering nuclear disarmament. Malawi has also set up a Technical Committee to adopt national rules and regulations to ensure compliance with its commitments under the key multilateral non-proliferation treaties. Malawi is also committed to multilateral cooperation within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, in order to achieve common objectives in the area of non-proliferation and to promote international co-operation for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Chairman

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) persist as the weapons of choice in many acts of armed violence. According to the Small Arms Survey— in 2016, the most recent year for which data are available— 560,000 people died as the result of armed violence, of these deaths, an estimated 18 per cent were the direct result of conflict. In order to develop a comprehensive approach to reducing deaths caused by SALW, we need to focus on armed violence as a whole, rather than limiting our efforts to addressing only conflict violence.

Malawi is not highly affected by illicit proliferation and use of Small Arms and Light Weapons compared to our neighboring countries. However our people still suffer significantly from the illicit use of small arms and light weapons both within their homes and business premises. This is evidenced by an apparent increase in recovery of illegal firearms. Community policing continues to play a big role in facilitating recovery of illegal firearms. Currently about 12,000 Malawians legally own firearms.

Malawi signed the United Nations Programme of Action (UNPoA) to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit use of small arms and light weapons in 2001 when the Programme came into force. To this end Malawi has since 2006 submitted annual reports to United Nations Office on Drug and Alcohol (UNODA) on progress that is being made in the implementation of the programme. Additionally, Malawi has

since 2006 participated in the biennial conference to report on progress made in the implementation of the UNPOA.

Mr. Chairman

Malawi has clear interest in working with international partners to promote the responsible and peaceful use of the outer space. This is because Malawi appreciates that the development of space technology holds immense potential to benefit both developed and developing countries and remains pivotal to the achievement of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. Like many Least Developing Countries, Malawi relies on assured access to space based systems and its applications to support its economic prosperity and maintain public safety.

Malawi further notes with concern the threats being posed on the outer space and its applications, owing to the rapid advancement in space technology, and the ever increasing human activities in the usage of outer space. The build-up of debris or “space junk” orbiting around the earth, to a greater extent caused by unregulated and mismanaged space technology, poses a potential danger to sensitive space equipment, more importantly the International Space Station. We also express our concern over the prospects of arms race in space. The militarization of outer space is not compatible with the international agreements on outer space usage, let alone, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We condemn any anti-satellite tests and the development of weapons to be placed in orbit or any system to be used to target space-based assets. We support negotiations of a treaty preventing an arms race in outer space and for interim transparency and confidence-building measures toward that end and seek to find common ground between legal and political or rules-based approaches to enhancing the security of outer space.

I thank you for your attention.