



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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STATEMENT

BY

H.E. MR. LAZAROUS KAPAMBWE
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT THE

GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

DURING THE

SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York
12th October 2018

Mr. Chairman,

As I ask to be aligned to the statements delivered by Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and that by Morocco on behalf of the African Group, I also take the opportunity to congratulate you and the Bureau on your respective elections.

As we have done every year, we are meeting to debate all disarmament and international security agenda items in the First Committee. The threat posed by nuclear weapons. Chemical weapons. Small arms and light weapons.

For sure, we will talk about the multitudes of people killed. The need to respect our obligations under the various treaties and conventions intended to restrict, ban, prohibit manufacture, testing, trade or proliferation of these weapons. Of course, my country, Zambia, supports and will continue to support all these treaties, and urges others to do likewise.

At the end of it all, we shall adopt resolutions and congratulate ourselves that so many of these resolutions will have been by consensus more than last year. Resolutions, whose only difference with those of last year is the number, the update on people killed since the last resolution and the meetings that were held during the interregnum. We will be asking the Secretary-General to make more reports for us for next year.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish we can be humble enough to accept that while we have made quantum leaps in the development of the science and technology of weapons and the art of killing, we have been moving steadily, inexorably, in reverse in the development of the things that should edify us, as human beings. Human civilization is stuck in reverse gear.

Our conscience does not protest when our countries produce, stock pile, or use these weapons, no matter how many we kill, as long as those we kill are identified by a different name of country, or flag, or geography, or colour, or religion, or language and any other artificial construct that we have created to divide us. We have no problem to kill in order to defend our way of life, from those we fear are converting what we have.

Our consciences do not protest when millions can die of starvation in another country, another part of the world, while we destroy mountains of food in our countries to keep prices high. When millions can die from preventable diseases, for lack of drugs, while these are piled high in storehouses and allowed to expire, so as to protect the copyrights and prices of pharmaceuticals.

When one per cent of the population owns 82 per cent of the world's wealth, when the high and mighty cannot protect the weak and vulnerable; when those who should know better, refuse to acknowledge that their ways are killing the environment; when we would rather produce with machines than give opportunity to a human being because we want to maximize profit – that is a world out of balance. That is a world that cannot be at peace with itself. That is a world in which we derive a false sense of security the more weapons we surround ourselves with, and the more lethal these weapons are.

Let us ask ourselves. What difference will our resolutions make? What are we doing to change the human condition that is at the core of global instability and needless conflict? War is neither a human condition nor imperative. We can change things. We can end war and turn weapons into ploughshares. Let us start with the man and the woman in the mirror!

I thank you.