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STATEMENT

BY

H.E. MR. NEVILLE GERTZE

AMBASSADOR & PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

BEFORE

**THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE
73TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

ON

GENERAL DEBATE

12 OCTOBER 2018

NEW YORK
(Check Against Delivery)

Mr. Chairperson,

1. Allow me to congratulate you on the assumption to the Chair of this Committee and to assure you of the full cooperation of our delegation during the 73rd Session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairperson,

2. Namibia believes in the non-selective implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as key to disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this regard, we reiterate our strong commitment to multilateralism as the bedrock of global governance and therefore, look forward to the envisaged 2020 NPT Review Conference.
3. Namibia supports the noble position adopted by the International Court of Justice in its 1996 Advisory Opinion, which inter alia states “that the use, or threat to use nuclear weapons is contrary to the rules of international law on armed conflicts and, violates the principles and rules of international humanitarian law”. In this context, we join the call for the de-legitimization of nuclear weapons in their entirety.
4. The Secretary-General perfectly expressed our view when, in commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons; he reminded us that nuclear weapons hold an existential threat to humanity, and that “The only world that is safe from the use of nuclear weapons is a world that is completely free of the nuclear weapons themselves.” We must stand together against the myth of nuclear weapons as an insurance of peace. This goes completely against the spirit of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mr. Chairperson,

5. The threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use, or threat to use, has been shown over the past year to remain valid. Indeed threats of the use of weapons of mass destruction including nuclear and chemical weapons highlight our concerns over complexities around global disarmament and international security.
6. Efforts at nuclear non-proliferation must, therefore, run parallel to nuclear disarmament. And in this regard, Namibia wishes to underscore the urgent need

for the improvement of women's participation at all levels in the debates and decision-making processes relative to international security and disarmament.

7. Suffice it to say, the adoption in 2000 of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which Namibia had the privilege to lead makes the foregoing incumbent on all Member States. Hence, our call again on all Member States to promote the presence of women on the global peace and security agenda, including that of the disarmament machinery.

Mr. Chairperson,

8. The establishment of Nuclear-Weapon-Free zones (NWFZs) created by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba, the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty as well as, Mongolia's Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Status, are positive steps and important measures towards strengthening global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.
9. Moving forward, Namibia fully supports the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Namibia commends the launch of the Secretary-General's all-inclusive Disarmament Agenda in May this year as a step in the right direction.
10. The rule and law, democracy and international solidarity, support Namibia's ratification of the Cluster Munitions Convention in December 2008 and June 2018, respectively, as well as our implementation of our National Plan of Action on Preventing, Combating and Eradicating the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects. As the youngest State Party to this Convention, Namibia looks forward to the convening of the envisaged 9th Conference of States to the CMC in 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.
11. Having become a State Party to the Arms Trade Treaty in September 2014 Namibia has actively participated in the relevant deliberations, including the recently concluded 4th Conference of States Parties, in Tokyo in August 2018. We expect to ratify this instrument in the near future.

Mr. Chairperson,

12. Outer space activities impact the common interests of humankind, so that the inalienable, legitimate sovereign rights of all States in the exploration and use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes should be recognized. We reject

any act denying, or violating the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all mankind.

13. As a major uranium-producing nation, Namibia actively participates in IAEA activities for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear material for the treatment of cancer, agricultural production and energy generation.

14. Namibia reiterates the inalienable right of developing countries to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. We are concerned, however, about undue restrictions on exports to developing countries of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

15. Hence, our conviction that the production and possession of nuclear materials other than for peaceful uses, is not a sustainable guarantee for security. Namibia urges all Nuclear Weapon States to take a lead role in the reduction, and eventual total nuclear disarmament. It is our view, that almost two decades into the 21st Century, the issue of the universalization of nuclear disarmament remains as valid as ever.

16. We urge all parties to the JCPOA to remain steadfast in their commitment to the Agreement.

I thank for your kind attention.