



*PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM
OF LESOTHO TO THE UNITED NATIONS
815 Second Avenue
8th Floor
New York, NY 10017*

STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. MR. KELEBONE A. MAOPE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
AGENDA ITEMS (87 TO 104)**

**IN THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE
FIRST COMMITTEE**

DURING THE

**SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. Chairman,

I thank you for giving me the floor. I congratulate you and other members of the bureau on your election. I assure you of my delegation's full support. I wish to align myself with the statements delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement and the African Group respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

The resolve to form the United Nations was propelled by a determination to create a world of peace and prosperity. Whereas the regime of the UN Charter has so far done its part to prevent a third world war, thus fulfilling one of the noble aspirations of our great forebears who converged in San Francisco in 1945, the world, however, still faces security challenges beyond humanity's imagination. Warfare has changed dramatically over the last few decades. Loosely organized terrorist groups, such as ISIS, continue to declare war on states and innocent civilians.

What is most disheartening, Mr. Chairman, is that terrorist groups and other non-state actors massacre people and wreak immense destruction, not with their bare hands, but using weapons that they don't produce or manufacture. How these weapons end up in the hands of non-state actors is a topic that is not often discussed. It is time to critically address that matter if we are to make progress in the disarmament field. The ongoing merciless killings of innocent people in the Middle East and elsewhere are a stark reminder that we need to act collectively to discharge the moral responsibility that rests on us to ensure our people a safe, secure and free world.

Mr. Chairman,

Our commitment to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has not been translated into concrete action. The existing massive stockpile of nuclear weapons, as well as modernization of such weapons, cast a shadow of doubt on our prospects for attaining a nuclear weapons free world in the immediate future. Nuclear weapons create a false sense of security. Their possession breeds mistrust and heightens tensions between states. For as long as they exist, the risk of their use remains. The enormous loss of life and catastrophic destruction to the environment that could be caused by detonation of nuclear weapons is known to all.

The 69th Session presents us with an opportunity to further make progress on our efforts to build a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, the historic commemoration of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September 2014 is a manifestation of the increasing global efforts by governments, international organisations and civil society to focus attention on nuclear disarmament. We should re-double our efforts during the current Session and beyond in ensuring that we rid the world of these horrendous weapons. It is in this context that we welcome the Outcomes of the Oslo and Nayarit Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. We look forward to the third conference that will be held in Austria later this year. We are optimistic that these conferences will generate the necessary momentum to push for a legal instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons.

While working towards the goal of banning nuclear weapons and eventually abolishing them, we must emphasise that full compliance with the provisions of the Treaty on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is critical. Accession to the NPT by countries that remain outside the scope of the Treaty should not be postponed any longer. By the same token, we call for the immediate holding of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons in accordance with the 2010 NPT Review Conference Outcome.

Furthermore, we reiterate that all states are entitled to and must enjoy their right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy as articulated by the NPT. However, this right must be exercised in a safe and secure environment and with due regard to the Parties' non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty. Cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is absolutely essential. We must all accept the IAEA safeguards to verify that nuclear activities serve only peaceful purposes. At the same time, we must respect the independence and expertise of the Agency and refrain from politicizing it or unduly interfering in its activities.

As we prepare for the 2015 Review Conference of the NPT, we must do so with a unity of purpose. The opportunity presented by that conference should not be lost. Our deliberations at the conference should be guided by the spirit of frankness and mutual understanding without the acrimony that often characterizes our inter-governmental deliberations.

Mr. Chairman,

18 years since its adoption, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not entered into force. There is no doubt that the entry into force of the CTBT will halt proliferation of nuclear weapons and their modernisation. We call for universalization of the Treaty, in particular ratification by the remaining Annex II States. While we welcome pronouncements by some states that they are committed to ratifying the CTBT, we, however, wish to emphasise that such pronouncements will be meaningless unless they are accompanied by concrete action towards ratification.

Humanity derives no comfort from the impasse in the UN Disarmament Machinery, particularly the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). The time has come for progress to be made by these bodies. We call on the CD to agree on a balanced programme of work and implement it. Equally important is the need to review the membership of the CD in order to make it more representative.

In the same vein, failure by the UNDC to reach consensus during the past few cycles is a great cause for concern to my delegation. We hope that Member States will rise above their individual interest and emerge with a consensual outcome in 2015 when a new cycle begins.

Mr. Chairman,

Conventional weapons continue to bring untold sorrow to us in the developing world. About a decade ago, we embarked on a path aimed at reducing humanitarian suffering by bringing the global conventional arms trade under control. We demonstrated a collective resolve to achieve that goal by overwhelmingly adopting the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in April 2013. Today, it is gratifying to note that the ATT will enter into force on 24 December, 2014 following the attainment of the required number of ratifications. The entry into force of the ATT will not be an end in itself. A fair, balanced, yet robust implementation of the ATT will be critical in order to transform the international arms trade and achieve the goals of the Treaty.

Despite the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (UNPoA), small arms and light weapons continue to claim scores of lives of people on a daily basis in Africa and elsewhere. Lack of predictable funding for

the implementation of the Programme is a big impediment. Lesotho reiterates its call to give more attention to international cooperation in implementing the Programme and for establishing a fund for such implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to conclude by pointing out that the citizenry of this world is keenly interested in how we collectively map the way forward, reduce the divergence of our views and approaches that we harbor on varying issues, and consolidate our efforts in addressing the challenges that we face. We have common risks and common opportunities. Let us work together, if we are to achieve the progress we hope for and need.

I THANK YOU