



Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania
to the United Nations

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STATEMENT BY

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TO THE

UNITED NATIONS 70TH SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

ON GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

NEW YORK, 9TH OCTOBER 2015

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO
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Mr. Chairman,

We join the previous speakers in congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election. I wish to assure you my delegation's full support and cooperation as you discharge your important responsibilities.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Nigeria and Indonesia, on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively, and wish to complement them with the following remarks in our national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

This General Debate provides us a unique opportunity to reflect on the work we collectively undertook, in the past seven decades of UN's existence, in the areas of disarmament and international security.

It also affords us an opportunity to recommit to the noble aspiration of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, knowing too well that, despite averting a major world war, we have witnessed ^{in our} too conflicts that have inflicted wanton suffering to millions of people around the world.

The pledge to save succeeding generations from the scourges of war needs to be fulfilled as is the pledge to achieve, total, irreversible and internationally verifiable disarmament of nuclear weapons. These are essential requirements for achieving the lofty objectives of the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman,

It is a matter of great concern that instead of decrementing, to achieve their total elimination, as envisaged in the NPT, Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) and other possessors of nuclear weapons are modernizing, upgrading and refurbishing their arsenals.

Far worse is the fact that instead of deterring, the existence of nuclear weapons has only galvanized Non-nuclear Weapons States (NNWS) to acquire them. This situation has resulted in undesirable arms race that presents an existential threat to all mankind. Though seven decades have elapsed, the horrors and humanitarian consequences of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear blasts are still fresh in our minds. Never again shall we allow mankind to witness such horrors.

It is imperative therefore that elimination of nuclear weapons and related technologies must remain a high priority, as that is the only guarantee of their non-use and/or threat of use. Similarly, we must exert all efforts towards finding a comprehensive way of eliminating these weapons, including by agreeing on a legally binding international instrument for their prohibition. Pending their total elimination, it is only fair to request NWS to provide unconditional negative security assurances (NSA) to non-possessors.

The efforts being made at regional level, including through the establishment of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones are a step in the right direction. We firmly believe that there should be no further delays in commencing talks aimed at establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. Certainly, this will be a useful contribution to regional and world peace and security.

We must also spare no effort in preventing non-state actors from acquiring and using all weapons of mass destruction. Implementation of the relevant international instruments, particularly resolution 1540 of the United Nations Security Council is key in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

We wish to underscore that IAEA safeguards are the fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. They play an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT and help to create an environment conducive for nuclear cooperation. We deem it absolutely important that the safeguards should be implemented without affecting the inalienable right of and benefits to States Parties provided in Article IV of the Treaty, including the right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy.

We welcome, IAEA's important role in ensuring nuclear safety and security. While this work is important in averting nuclear disasters as witnessed in Chernobyl and Fukushima Daiichi, it should never be used as an excuse to deny States Parties' rights to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

Me. Chairman,

While addressing the threats posed by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, we must not forget that today, it is the conventional weapons, especially the small arms and light weapons which are causing havoc and mass suffering to the people across the world. As H.E. Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General once remarked: "The death toll from small arms dwarfs that of all other weapons systems – and in most years greatly exceeds the toll of the atomic bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki." He continued thus "In terms of the carnage they cause, small arms could well be described as 'weapons of mass destruction'."

We could not agree more with this observation. Indeed, small arms and light weapons and their ammunitions are flooding many countries and continents; falling into wrong hands; exacerbating

conflicts; undermining development; disrupting social services, including education and health; and curtailing peoples' enjoyment of human rights.

This is why we have been supportive of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. We are also signatories to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) the only legally binding instrument for regulating the trade in arms between countries. It is incumbent upon us to combat illicit trade in arms and ammunitions and prevent their diversion to unauthorized persons or groups. We must continue to promote measures aimed at ensuring proper marking and traceability of arms and ammunitions. And we must foster cooperation for achieving this objective. Tanzania is undertaking these measures and is grateful for the assistance received, including through the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA).

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, permit me to underscore the inextricable link between disarmament, peace and security and development. We cannot possibly achieve the transformative sustainable development goals if we maintain the excessive military spending, which is estimated at USD 1.7 trillion per annum. While armaments and ammunitions gather dust and corrode in warehouses – or are being exchanged for diamond and gold somewhere, billions of people remain trapped in extreme poverty, hundreds of thousands children die of hunger and acute malnutrition and continue to lack basic social services.

Neither guns nor bullets will bring about a life of dignity for all humanity as aspired in the 2030 Agenda. Neither nuclear weapons nor other weapons of mass destruction will guarantee world peace and security. And, neither words nor declarations or resolutions will bring us closer to the goal of general and complete disarmament. Only determined actions, clear objectives and solid political will – will get us there. Let us therefore summon the necessary strength and courage and commit to action. Tanzania will play its part.

I thank you.