

REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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STATEMENT BY

**H.E. AMBASSADOR CHARLES T. NTWAAGAE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**DURING THE
GENERAL DEBATE OF THE
FIRST COMMITTEE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 70TH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

13 OCTOBER 2015, NEW YORK

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Mr. Chairman,

1. Allow me, at the outset, to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the First Committee for the 70th Session of the General Assembly. My delegation assures you and the Bureau of our full support in guiding the deliberations of the Committee during this session.
2. In the same vein, my delegation takes this opportunity to thank your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Courtenay Rattray of Jamaica for his effective leadership of the First Committee during the 69th session of the General Assembly.
3. My delegation aligns itself with statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

4. I wish to begin by re-affirming the importance that Botswana attaches to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations particularly with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security.
5. Botswana remains gravely concerned about the serious threats to international peace and security in many parts of the world, which arguably present the greatest challenge to human development. We are witnessing an alarming rise in instability, insecurity and violent conflict, causing untold devastation and human suffering.
6. The continuous loss of innocent lives and escalating humanitarian crises have reached catastrophic levels, making it imperative for the international community to take urgent and decisive action.
7. The choice of theme for this year's General Assembly "**The United Nations at 70 - A New Commitment to Action**" is quite

fitting in that it compels us to pause and reflect on the past and make new commitments for a better future.

8. In line with this commitment, world leaders, a few days ago – adopted the Post 2015 Development Agenda which represents a global vision for the sustained prosperity of humankind. The common sentiment is that peace, safety and stability are prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

9. The existence of nuclear weapons, terrorism, the illicit trade and circulation of small arms and light weapons are some of the challenges which continue to pose a threat to peace and security, stability and development.
10. The fact that nuclear weapons still exist, brings into question the commitment by Nuclear Weapon States to achieve complete disarmament. The potential catastrophic humanitarian impact of the use of these weapons of terror should be a motivation for us to eliminate them once and for all.
11. The three Conferences held on this topic, in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna, all came to the conclusion that no State or International organization has the capacity to address or provide short nor long term assistance and protection needed in case of a nuclear weapon explosion.
12. It is for this reason that my delegation wishes to reiterate the point that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use.
13. Deeply troubling in this regard is the increasing involvement of non-state actors and radical extremists in most of the conflict situations around the world. Activities by these entities introduce additional layers of difficulty to conflict management and further

complicate the complexities of responses to conflict in areas of unrest.

14. The month long 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which took place in April – May this year, failed to agree on the draft outcome document. Probably this is the time to seriously consider developing new international standards, including a legally binding instrument, to prohibit their possession.

Mr. Chairman,

15. Regarding Conventional weapons, Botswana remains deeply concerned about the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of small arms and light weapons. Their accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world is a cause for serious concern because they have lasting consequences on the innocent, especially women and girls.
16. In a world where borders are porous and nations evermore inter-dependant, threats to security in any region have consequences for us all. The only difference is the degree of the impact.
17. It is against this background that we fully support efforts towards the implementation of the Programme of Action to Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects as well as the International Tracing Instrument (ITI). We however, fully appreciate that due to resource limitations and differing capacities of States, realization of the goals of the Programme of Action remain a challenge.
18. In addition to the above reasons, the Second Open Ended Meeting of Governmental Experts (MGE2) on the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (UNPoA) that took place in New York from 1 to 5 June 2015, underscored the fact that new developments in small arms and

light weapons manufacturing, technology and designs including the use of polymer components and modular weapons systems have significant implications for marking, record keeping and tracing while also posing a series of challenges on the implementation of the UNPoA and ITI.

19. It therefore remains imperative that implementation of the PoA and ITI is strengthened and other new methods considered, if need be.
20. In conclusion, **Mr. Chairman**, my delegation wishes to re-affirm its continued support to efforts of the international community aimed at fighting challenges related to peace and security.
21. Finally, we wish all members of the Committee fruitful deliberations.

I thank you for your kind attention.
