FIRST COMMITTEE STATEMENT

BY

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AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON

AGENDA ITEM NO 97 (b): NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

NEW YORK
21 OCTOBER 2015
Mr. President,

Zambia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Representatives of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group in furtherance of nuclear disarmament.

Zambia has always been a strong and committed advocate of general and complete disarmament. During the statements issued in the last discussions of the General Debate of this Committee, what came out strongly from Member States is the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and the importance of putting an end to their testing.

Mr. President,

The act of reducing or eliminating nuclear weapons with an end state of a nuclear free world in which all forms of nuclear weapons would be dismantled or eliminated should be embarked upon by all. It is an established fact that proliferation of nuclear weapons would seriously compound the risk of nuclear war, with catastrophe consequences with potential to annihilate humanity. Necessary safeguards should therefore be put in place to ensure continued peace and international security through total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Zambian delegation therefore calls upon all nuclear disarmament stakeholders including the civil society to step up their initiatives on nuclear disarmament through complete disarmament initiatives.

Mr. President,

My delegation is alive to the fact that there are over 16,000 nuclear warheads spread across nine nuclear armed states. Admittedly there are lesser nuclear weapons today than during the cold war era. There is however great need for a complete disarmament. Nuclear armed states should be fully committed to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. It is also paramount that Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) come up with specific timelines for major reduction of their nuclear armaments. Zambia welcomes the Nuclear Weapons States’ pledges of being transparent in line with the 2010 NPT Review Conference where emphasis was placed on multilateral disarmament diplomacy and NWS promised to accelerate on steps leading to nuclear disarmament. My delegation is also in full support of the
New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New Start) between some members of the NWS.

For nuclear disarmament to take root, all NWS including those not party to NPT, should immediately and aggressively pursue and comply with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). NWS should further meet their obligations as pledged during the 2014 NPT Prepcom for universalization of complete disarmament.

Mr. President,

In line with the 2010 NPT Review Conference, my delegation supports the establishment of Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones (NWFZ) and appeal to all states that have not ratified their respective Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone treaties and their relevant protocols to do so. We further appeal for the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone in the Middle East.

Zambia remains committed to the African-Nuclear Weapon-Free-Zone (Pelindaba) Treaty which we ratified on 18 August 2010. Africa is currently the largest world Nuclear-Weapons-Free-Zone and we urge all African states that have not ratified the Pelindaba Treaty to do so.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, Zambia reaffirms its total commitment to Nuclear Disarmament and further calls upon the NWS to refrain from dumping radioactive and toxic waste on the African continent. Current indications are that Africa is one of the largest dumping destinations in the world. Such acts have very serious consequences on human life, environment and the climate. We all must do our part to reverse the trend.

I thank you.