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STATEMENT

BY

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UNITED NATIONS AT GENEVA

DURING

THE

**GENERAL DEBATE**  
OF THE  
**FIRST COMMITTEE**  
ON  
**DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

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**Mr. Chairman,**

I am delighted to see you chairing this session of the First Committee. It is indeed an onerous task, nevertheless, I assure you of my delegation's full support.

Kenya aligns herself with the statements by Nigeria and Indonesia on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively.

**Mr. Chairman,**

There is very little to cheer about regarding nuclear disarmament and international security with the exception of the recent conference held in Oslo in March, 2013, on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons; a topic I will touch on a little later.

As Kenya stated at the General Debate last year, the 15-year impasse in multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament is a matter of grave concern for the majority of non-nuclear States and I believe also to all those in the world who value human security. We continue to be convinced and I reiterate, once again, that the lack of movement on nuclear disarmament is rooted in the external environment of the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

We know it is a matter of great discomfort for a few who routinely prefer to skirt around substantive issues outside the CD that impede the adoption and implementation of a programme of work rather than address them head on.

The crux of the matter is that there are those who always want to have a dominant position for the purpose of national security to the exclusion of the interests and concerns of others. Such policies ensure that issues related to nuclear disarmament are not resolved. My delegation is not very optimistic. We do not expect the *status quo* to change any time soon.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Over the last three years, there have been a number of high-level declaratory statements on non-proliferation, nuclear arms control and disarmament. Resolutions have even been adopted unanimously on some of the issues by the Security Council. However, when it comes to practical implementation, they have proved to be illusory and lack any traction. It seems there are those who wish to continue maintaining their own set of rules outside of international norms.

The rhetoric on nuclear arms reductions and pledges on general and complete disarmament are being pursued in lock-step with the development of the state-of-the-art nuclear, chemical, biological and other types of weapons of mass destruction.

These new weapons are more advanced, powerful and more dangerous than ever. They are continuously being deployed globally and menace humanity. They are capable of killing thousands more people than the chemical attack in Syria.

Proliferation continues and disarmament is not envisioned. The NPT's three pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful use, have been disregarded. Increasingly, policies prioritize preemptive use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states. They

are an integral part of the global strategy of military alliances. We understand a key priority of the military industry now is development of a system of space defence.

Against this background and at the pace events are moving, it is clear our efforts to advance our collective nuclear disarmament goals are receding.

**Mr. Chairman,**

It is 16 years since the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was concluded, however, a number of States have not ratified it. The recent events in Syria have served to highlight the need for the remaining States to come on board.

Kenya welcomes Syria's accession to the CWC. It is unfortunate that the corporate media blew the matter out of proportion by giving the false impression that it is only Syria that possesses such weapons and is a threat to the whole world. What my delegation finds disconcerting and should be a concern to all of us, is the focusing of the public's attention on a single issue to the exclusion of all else. Someone recently referred to the practice as "*mass distraction*".

**Mr. Chairman,**

Kenya welcomes the conference held in Oslo in March on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapon use. It was a significant event, especially when you take into account the fact that the disarmament machinery is virtually moribund.

Kenya believes that the world must be free of nuclear weapons. The humanitarian consequences of a detonation of a nuclear weapon would be catastrophic. The impact both in the immediate and long-term is unimaginable. There is no one country, or even a number of countries with the capacity to respond to such an incident.

You will all recall that contamination from a single failure at Chernobyl spread right across Europe. Efforts to keep the legal emissions at bay are still on 27 years later. More recently, at Fukushima, three meltdowns of reactor cores have been emitting radioactive material for two years. According to experts, nobody knows how to stop it. None of us knows what would have happened to Tokyo if the wind was blowing the other way.

The attendance by 127 countries, civil society groups and NGOs highlights the interests and concerns of the international community concerning the imminent danger posed by nuclear weapons. It is the conviction of Kenya that it is time States considered a legal ban on nuclear weapons, even if nuclear armed States refuse to participate.

Kenya believes the biggest problem is the way we all think as human beings. It will be necessary to educate the public so that they are fully aware of the reality of nuclear weapons. So long as we continue to practice Orwellian double-speak, we may end up blowing ourselves to extinction.

Albert Einstein aptly captured our current state of mind when he stated and I quote: "*The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our mode of*

***thinking and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe'***.

My delegation looks forward to the follow-up meeting on the impact of nuclear use to be held early next year in Mexico.

**Mr. Chairman,**

My delegation welcomes the overwhelming adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty on April 2, 2013 by the UN General Assembly. It comes at a very opportune time when, according to new data on international arms transfers published in April by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the volume of world-wide arms transfers in 2007-2011 was 24 per cent higher than in 2002-2006.

Although Kenya has not signed the Treaty, I am pleased to report that internal consultations to initiate signature are at an advanced stage in conformity with our new constitutional provision.

Finally, **Mr. Chairman**, proliferation of small arms and light weapons epitomizes the problems we have not only in Kenya but also our region. It is transfers of such weapons that have led to illicit arms falling in the hands of militant groups such as the Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab. The latter claimed responsibility for the terrorist siege that took place at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi late last month. We believe the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons should have a central role in the implementation of practical measures for combating the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

May I now take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for keeping faith with us and for your messages of support following the terrorist attack.

Thank you for your attention.