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STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. MR. NEVILLE GERTZE
AMBASSADOR & PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC NAMIBIA**

**DURING THE
HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON THE CULTURE OF
PEACE**

**NEW YORK
7 SEPTEMBER 2017**

1. I wish to thank you Mr. President of the General Assembly for convening this High Level Forum on how to promote the culture of peace.

Mr. President

2. On this important subject, Namibia believes that education is key. It is through education that children could be taught not to hate and leaders could be taught to act with wisdom and empathy. Every child has a right to attend school and to receive quality education. While Governments have a responsibility to lead, a culture of peace should be built and promoted by people. School teachers, religious and community leaders as well as civil society groups should join forces together to denounce violence and promote peace.
3. The youth of today deserves an education that does not glorify war but celebrate peace. An education that focuses on peace, non-violence and understanding. A culture of peace has many elements, including education and equality between women and men.
4. Namibia is proud to have cooperated with UNESCO to develop school books and preserve heritage. The cooperation has focused on cultural diversity. When we educate ourselves better about the traditions and culture of our neighbours, we will develop better understanding and appreciation for the unity that exists in diversity.

Mr. President,

5. There is need to give due recognition to the fact that women have a major role to play in promoting a culture of peace, since they are the first teachers. They should also be recognized for the role they play and their capability to bring about lasting reconciliation.

6. The Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security needs to be fully implemented, in order to realize the full presence of women in the peace processes and to ensure that decisions taken are effective and gender sensitive. Women and children are the biggest constituency in this world. They have long been targets of violence, whether at home or at work, in conflict and post conflict situations, hence they are best contributors to any campaign against violence.

Mr. President,

7. Peace must be understood not only in the sense of the absence of war, but also in the constructive sense of creating conditions for equality and social justice. There is need for effective partnerships between Governments and private sector. This will also enable state institutions to deliver services and goods to the people. Ordinary citizens should have easy access to finance and trade. There is no doubt that through economic empowerment we will improve the conditions of living of people, promote the attainment of their socio-economic aspirations and thereby improving conditions to bring about peace.
8. I wish to conclude by noting that global efforts towards peace and reconciliation can only succeed with a collective approach built on trust, dialogue and collaboration. Here I would like to highlight also that the media too has a crucial role to play through responsible reporting and in partnership with a number of actors, including Governments. Let me stress that we have to build an alliance amongst all, particularly with the proactive involvement and participation of civil society and young people. No social responsibility is greater and no task is thicker than that of securing peace on our planet.

I thank you