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STATEMENT

BY

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AMBASSADOR & PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

**DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST
COMMITTEE AT THE 74TH SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS,
NEW YORK,**

16 OCTOBER 2019

1. I wish to congratulate you Mr. Chairman on your election as Chair of the First Committee for the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly and assure you of my delegation's full support. I also congratulate other members of the Bureau on their election. My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia and Zambia on behalf of the Non-Alignment Movement and the African Group respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

2. We believe that the three pillars of the NPT namely, peaceful uses, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are essential instruments to strengthening international peace and security.
3. Nuclear disarmament should remain a priority on the Agenda of the First Committee. We therefore, once again renew our call for the Nuclear-weapon States to fully comply with their legal obligations and unequivocal undertakings to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons in a transparent, irreversible and in a verifiable manner.
4. It is essential that all non-nuclear-weapon states should be provided with universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and legally binding assurances, by all Nuclear Weapon States, against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances.
5. Improving or modernizing the existing nuclear weapons, including developing new types, contradicts the objective of achieving nuclear disarmament.
6. Like many other State Parties to the NPT, Namibia regrets the failure of the last NPT Review Conference to reach consensus on a final outcome document despite the efforts made by many delegations. It is our sincere hope that the 2020 NPT Review Conference will achieve desired results.

7. Namibia remains a committed State Party to the Treaty of Pelindaba which provides a shield for Africa by preventing the stationing of nuclear explosive devices on the continent and prohibiting testing of those destructive weapons in the continent.
8. In this connection, we join those who are calling for the establishment of a nuclear weapon-free-zone and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and, welcome the convening of the Conference to be held here in New York in November 2019.
9. With regard to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Namibia believes that it is important to achieve universality adherence which will result in the early entry into force of the CTBT. The CTBT is an instrument of halting further development or proliferation of nuclear weapons, thereby contributing to the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

10. We welcome the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which was passed in July 2017. Being mindful of the humanitarian consequences caused by the use of nuclear weapons, we believe that the full implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons by ensuring their total elimination. We reiterate the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The principal responsibility for nuclear safety rests with individual states. And therefore, the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State. Multilateral norms, guidelines or rules on nuclear security should be pursued within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

12. It is our conviction that measures and initiatives aimed at strengthening nuclear safety and nuclear security must not be used as a pretext to deny or restrict the inalienable rights of developing countries to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.
13. Namibia rejects, and calls for the immediate removal of any limitations and restrictions on exports to developing countries of nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes, consistent with the provisions of relevant multilateral treaties. In this regard, we wish to stress that the technical cooperation and assistance provided by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in meeting the needs of its Member States for material, equipment and technology for peaceful uses of nuclear energy shall not be subject to any conditions that are not compatible with IAEA Statute.
14. We remain concerned at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible testing, use or threat of use. The situation in the realm of nuclear disarmament continues to be characterized by impasse, as Nuclear-Weapon-States have not made progress in eliminating nuclear weapons.
15. Namibia as a champion of women, peace and security – reiterates the words of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs who charged us “to address the gendered impact of weapons, and to promote the full and equal participation of women in the field of disarmament. She further tasked us to apply a gender lens to their work and take a proactive stance in the coordination of gender-related languages across First Committee resolutions this year”.

Mr. Chairman,

16. International peace and security cannot go parallel with an arms race. Therefore, the Secretary General’s Agenda for Disarmament is critical for, saving humanity, saving lives and

safeguarding our common future. We cannot place one over the other, because in the final analysis, human lives are at stake. In this context, let us modernize technology not for weapons but for the betterment of human living conditions, as aspired in the concept of “Atoms for Peace”.

17. Finally, we wish to highlight that multilateral disarmament negotiations will only achieve tangible results if and when we can generate the necessary political will to support the process.

