



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Namibia to the
United Nations

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**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. NEVILLE GERTZE
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST
COMMITTEE AT THE 72ND SESSION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, ON 06 OCTOBER 2017**

NEW YORK,

1. I wish to congratulate you Mr. Chairman on your election as Chair of the First Committee for the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly and assure you of my delegation's full support. I also wish to congratulate other members of the Bureau on their election. My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Non-Alignment Movement and the African Group.

Mr. Chairman,

2. The three pillars of the NPT namely, peaceful uses, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are essential instruments to strengthening international peace and security. Namibia wishes to stress that nuclear disarmament should remain a priority on the Agenda of the First Committee. We once again renew our strong call upon the nuclear-weapon States to fully comply with their legal obligations and unequivocal undertakings to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons without further delay, in a transparent, irreversible and internationally verifiable manner.
3. 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.
4. Improving or modernizing the existing nuclear weapons, including developing new types, contradicts the objective of achieving nuclear disarmament.
5. Like many other State Parties to the NPT, Namibia regrets the failure of the 9th NPT Review Conference to reach consensus on a final outcome document despite the efforts made by many delegations.
6. Namibia remains a committed signatory to the Pelindaba Treaty 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.

7. In the same vein, Namibia joins those who are calling for the establishment of a nuclear weapon-free-zone in the Middle East, and expresses concern over the fact that commitments and obligations of the Action Plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference regarding the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, have not been implemented.
8. 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.
9. Accordingly, we welcome the convening of the 10th Ministerial Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT on 20 September 2017 in New York. We urge the remaining Annex II countries to sign and ratify the CTBT.

Mr. Chairman,

10. We welcome the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which was passed on 07 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.
11. We further reiterate the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law. Any use of nuclear weapons is a violation of the UN Charter and a crime against humanity. The total elimination of nuclear weapons and the assurance that they will never be produced again, is the only unqualified assurance against the catastrophic humanitarian consequences arising from the use of such weapons.

Mr. Chairman

12. 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).
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. We reaffirm that nuclear disarmament is highest priority, and 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.
16. Namibia welcomes the successful conclusion of the nuclear negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the E3/EU+3, which resulted in the finalization of the Joint Plan of Action (JCPOA) on 14th July 2015. In this regard, we take note of report by the Director-General of the IAEA to the Board of Governors that the Agency can verify that the Islamic Republic of Iran is complying

with the JCPOA. We call upon the other parties to this agreement to honour their responsibility by abiding to the JCPOA.

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.

I thank you