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STATEMENT

BY

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

During the
Security Council Open Debate on the
“Global Effort to Prevent the Proliferation of
Weapons of Mass Destruction by Non-State
Actors”

28 June 2017

NEW YORK

Mr. President,

1. First of all, I want to express my appreciation to you for convening this Open Debate on the question of non-proliferation. This debate promotes transparency and inclusivity. Let me also congratulate the Delegation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for the successful work in presiding over the business of the Security Council during the month of June. I also thank the President of the General Assembly for his briefing.
2. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Representative of the Permanent Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.
3. On many occasions, the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, has expressed that the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction is a threat to international peace and security. This was proven when the Security Council sent out a strong message in 2004 by adopting resolution 1540 (2004), which offers a response to the growing risk that Weapons of Mass Destruction could fall into the hands of and be used by non-state actors and terrorist groups.

4. Resolution 1540 provides an opportunity to deepen cooperation among the countries of the world in order to access technology and the required capacity to give a response to the threat posed by terrorist groups and other illegal armed groups.
5. The physical protection of nuclear materials and installations and adequate guarantees for peaceful uses of nuclear material and technology are fundamental to creating a favorable environment for developing nuclear energy that benefits humanity.

Mr. President,

6. Namibia understands the relevance of the application of resolution 1540 (2004) as, firstly, to assure the rights of all Member States to peaceful use of nuclear energy for development and advancement of technology; and secondly, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical or biological as well as their means of delivery and related technologies.
7. In this regard, we reiterate the sovereign right of Member States to the development of advanced technologies such as nuclear, chemical, biological and pharmaceutical to achieve industrial development.

8. Namibia continues to participate in the activities of the international community in the field of disarmament with a view to achieve a world free of weapons of mass destruction and the complete prohibition of their acquisition, development, stockpiling, transferring and modernization.
9. It is our belief that cooperation between Member States and relevant regional and international organizations will strengthen national capacities, to help preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including their acquisition by non-State actors and terrorist groups.

Mr. President

10. Namibia, being a State Party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons (CWC), welcomes the operation of this Convention, the only comprehensive multilateral treaty banning the whole group of WMD, while also providing for a verification system and promoting the use of chemicals for peaceful purposes. Namibia believes that the main focus of the CWC should remain the complete elimination of all categories of chemical weapons.

11. Similarly, Namibia considers the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) as representing an important component of the international legal architecture related to Weapons of Mass Destruction, while noting with concern that the lack of a verification system continues to pose a challenge to the effectiveness of this Convention.

Mr. President

12. All pillars of the NPT should be treated in a balanced approach. The failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference has raised serious questions about the future of the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

13. The reaffirmation of deterrence doctrines, modernization plans and long-term investments in nuclear weapons programs only serve to undermine the legitimacy of the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. These trends pose serious challenges to disarmament initiatives.

14. To conclude, Mr. President, my delegation welcomes the successful conclusion of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) for the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (SSOD IV). We underscore the importance of convening the SSOD IV, as it would offer an opportunity to review the most critical aspects of the disarmament machinery and to mobilize the international community and public opinion in favour of the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. It would also enhance the total control and reduction of conventional weapons which can be easily acquired by non-state actors.
15. We also welcome the ongoing Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons leading to their total elimination. We note with appreciation the successful outcome of the first session of Conference and look forward to another successful outcome of the second session of the Conference.

I thank you