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STATEMENT

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THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

TO

THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH
SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK
WEDNESDAY, 2ND OCTOBER 2002
Mr. Chairman,

I join the other delegations who have spoken before me, to congratulate you on your deserved election as Chairman of this very important Committee. I also wish to extend my appreciation to your Predecessor, Ambassador Andre Erdos of Hungary, for chairing our Committee during the 56th Session of the General Assembly. I also welcome the other member of the bureau, to whom I equally extend my delegation's full cooperation. A special welcome goes to the Representatives of Switzerland and Timor-Leste who join us as the 190th and 191st Member States of the United Nations.

It has been one year since we last met under the shadow of the tragic 11th September events. That horror exposed our common vulnerability to new threats to internationals peace and security. At this session, our Committee is therefore expected to promote and strengthen multilateralism as a core principle in our common efforts to prevent threats as that from threatening international peace and security. Multilateralism will enable the international community to create conditions of peace and security, which are important pre-requisites for socio-economic development which most of the countries represented here badly need.

Mr. Chairman,

The First Committee is the forum in the United Nations that can contribute to the creation of the needed positive international atmosphere by the manner in which it approached the challenges facing humanity today. It is the view of my delegation that strengthened Multilateralism will enhance the role of the United Nations in global affairs. This is a point emphasized by the heads of state and government in the Millennium Declaration two years ago. The countries we represent look to a results-based disarmament programme that will give hope to the future of our children, to whom we owe a stable and prosperous world.

Mr. Chairman,

The Committee's goals at this session should be to use multilateralism to strengthen global norms to collectively eliminate threats to peace and stability. Together we can eliminate the deadliest weapons of mass destruction, that terrorists can use. The promotion of controls on the development, production and
proliferation of weapons of mass destruction can bring hope to the world. Further more disarmament efforts can advance conflict prevention and the peaceful resolutions of disputes.

Mr. Chairman,

The past year has witnessed the global pre-occupation with the fight against international terrorism. My country has been and stands ready to cooperate with other countries, at the regional and international levels in this fight. However, these efforts will only be meaningful if they effectively prevent terrorist groups from gaining access to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. It is necessary in this regard to ensure that the multilateral institutions redouble efforts to achieve socio-economic development in many parts of the world as a way of addressing one of the many causes of conflict.

My delegation is concerned that nuclear weapons continue to dominate the strategic consideration of important states, members of the United Nations. Zambia on its party is committed to the total elimination of all nuclear weapons. Any military doctrine based on nuclear weapons is incompatible with the integrity and promotion of the international non-proliferation regime, that my country has been committed to in the last thirty-five years.

In return, Zambia expects the five nuclear-weapon states to take immediate steps to achieve the complete elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Unfortunately, there continues to be alarming signs of the continued development of new generations of nuclear weapons. This new phenomena if urgently reversed will further undermine past achievements by the international community in this important area. I wish to welcome the new treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation reached on 12th May 2002, on the reduction of strategic offensive forces. Zambia hopes the world will witness many such bilateral initiatives.

My delegation would like to appeal to all those states which have not yet done so, to become state parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and the related comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. It is only then, will the ultimate goals of establishing nuclear weapon-free zones in all the five
continents, have meaning. Against this background, my delegation wishes to welcome the decision of Cuba to acceded to the NPT and to ratify the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. My Government hopes other countries will follow the example of Cuba and become party to non-proliferation regime.

Zambia wishes to request the conference on Disarmament to redouble efforts to achieve the conclusion of a fissile material cut of Treaty (FMCT). Eliminating the obstacles in the way for the establishment of an Ad-Hoc Committee to negotiate a convention on Nuclear Disarmament is an issue that should be given top priority by the Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation remains deeply concerned that there has been slow achievements in conventional disarmament. As this committee is aware, conventional armaments, especially small arms and light weapons, are the most used weapons in many conflicts. It is against that that my Government continues to support and participate in the united Nations Register of Conventional Arms. However, due to the continued decline in the performance of the national economy, my country has not been able to acquire new arms. None-the less, the government continues to support disarmament of conventional arms because these arms are responsible for the destruction of life and property in many conflicts, especially in Africa. In this regard Zambia continues to support international efforts to promote transparency and confidence-building measures both at the regional and international levels.

In this regard, Zambia is committed to and supports the full implementation of the Programme of Action (POA) adopted by the 2001 United Nations Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. It is the view of my government that if all states, particularly the producers, honoured their obligations, the threat from this type of weapons, would be eliminated in the very near future. It is Zambia's hope that all States represented in this august assembly will fulfill their respective obligations under the Programme of Action adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In addition Zambia calls on the Conference on Disarmament to speed up negotiations for the Conclusion of the Fire arms Protocol to the UN Convention
against Transnational Organised Crime.

Mr. Chairman,

The other important international convention of significance to my
government is the Mine-Ban Convention. Zambia is committed to the attainment of
a truly universal ban of anti-personnel land mines for all time. It is our conviction
that all states will have the political will to achieve the universal acceptance of the
Convention. My Country is particularly pleased to note that the Fourth Meeting of
the States Parties was successfully held from the 16th to 21st September, 2001 in
Geneva. My delegation commends the efforts by the governments of United States
of America, Canada and the People's Republic of China, and France to support
international de-mining efforts. My government looks forward to continued
cooperation with these countries in the coming year.

Mr. Chairman,

There is urgent need for the United Nations to devote more attention to the
issue of Missiles proliferation, as well as the related subject of Missiles technology.
My delegation would like this Committee to carefully consider the report of the
panel of governmental experts on the subject that will be presented to the General
Assembly. It is appropriate that the issue of Missiles and Missiles technology
should be considered in a multilateral forum such as the United Nations to ensure
maximum success. The code of conduct that is being worked out should be
supported by all countries in order to strengthen international peace and security.
Inspite of the difficulties, we should not give up efforts to urgently find a solution to
the differences we have on the issue of missiles, for our future lives in our
collective success in this and other fields of disarmament. Success in disarmament
will strengthen international peace and security. That in turn, will create the
necessary conditions for social and economic development, enabling us to
concentrate resources and time in the fight against international terrorism, poverty,
hunger and disease.

I thank you.