Statement of The Kingdom of Bahrain
At The 1st Committee of the General Assembly
On Disarmament and International Security Items

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First Secretary
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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to extend to you my most sincere congratulations upon your unanimous election as chairman of the First Committee. We are fully confident that you will lead our work ably and effectively thanks to your rich experience and great diplomatic skills. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

It gives me pleasure to express my appreciation for all the efforts made in the fields of peace, security and disarmament particularly those made by the Department of Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat. I cannot fail to express my thanks to the Under Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs for his lucid and objective introductory statement.

Mr. Chairman,

The efforts aimed at the reduction of the danger of weapons of mass destruction continue to be a major concern for humanity as a whole, in view of the deadly threat those weapons pose to the world. It is our hope that the countries that possess such weapons would proceed to lay down serious plans, backed by a united political will, in order to make the world a more secure and stable place. In this context, the Kingdom of Bahrain welcomes Cuba’s accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We consider this decision a step towards the establishment of a world free from weapons of mass destruction.

Gravely concerned at the stockpiles of weapons that could annihilate the whole world, we fully support all efforts made to conclude equal and balanced agreements to reduce nuclear arsenals as a step towards their total elimination. A short time ago, the world held its breath, as the specter of war in South Asia cast its shadow, for fear of the use of weapons of mass destruction in their confrontation. This would have a devastating effect on the region. This impels us all to give serious consideration to the need for the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction particularly if we take into account that the global military expenditure has exceeded US $839 Billion. A major source of concern in that regard is the fact that the steps taken for the elimination of weapons of mass
destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, remain agonizingly slow. 30,000 such weapons remain in the world today. The past year has scarcely witnessed any international cooperation in this field. In addition, the negotiations on nuclear disarmament, the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty and the prevention of an arms race in Outer space have all been deadlocked in the Conference on Disarmament. Moreover, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has not yet entered into force.

Mr. Chairman,

As a part of the Middle East region, my country attaches great importance to the situation there. Israel persists in its refusal to heed all the resolutions and the calls for rendering the Middle East into a zone free from weapons of mass destruction. It continues to reject absolutely any efforts made for that end. It is the only state in the region that refuses to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguard regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency. This intransigence cannot be in the interest of the region as a whole. The amount of weapons of mass destruction possessed by Israel far exceeds its so-called defensive needs. Israel employs all sorts of conventional weapons against unarmed civilians. It does so under the pretext of combating what it calls terrorism which is what we call legitimate self-defense and a legitimate struggle against military occupation.

It is our hope that this impartial World Organization would put an end to the war crimes perpetrated against the Palestinian people who are struggling for the restoration of their rights. We hope that our organization would apply its resolutions equally to all states, without double standards. We call for the implementation of paragraph 14 of Security Council Resolution 687 (1991). That paragraph calls for the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Mr. Chairman,

My country welcomes all the efforts made for the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Chemical Weapons and their Destruction. Despite the fact that a protocol on the verification of biological weapons has not yet been concluded, my country hopes that the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and
Stockpiling of Biological Weapons, would agree on a formula to review the Convention at their upcoming meeting in November 2002. We wish that meeting all success.

My delegation also welcomes all the steps that could lead to progress in the implementation of the Program of Action adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in 2001. We particularly welcome the regional initiatives that aim at the elimination of that trafficking which fans the flames of wars and conflicts. When it is eliminated, all efforts could be devoted to the development process in the war-torn countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Last year the whole world witnessed the horrors of terrorism. While renewing the expression of our heartfelt condolences to the US government and its friendly people, we express our fervent hope that the terrorists will never have an opportunity to acquire weapons of mass destruction. If that should happen, God forbid, we would all be at the mercy of those who have no regard for life or humanity. At the same time, we stress the importance of studying and addressing the root causes of terrorism with a view to its total elimination.

Finally, we pray that the leaders of the world would demonstrate their united will to eliminate weapons of mass destruction and create a world based on security, justice, equality and peace for all. That way, a safe and secure life would be ensured for us and for succeeding generations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman