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Statement by
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on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at the General Debate on All Disarmament and International Security Agenda Items of the First Committee

New York, 5 October 2009
Mr. Chairman,

1. I am very privileged to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

2. At the outset, our Group's congratulations to you on assuming the Chair of the First Committee. We are confident that under your able leadership, and with the efforts of the Bureau, whose members we also felicitate on their election, the Committee would be able to achieve positive results.

3. The NAM would like to assure its full support and cooperation to you, Mr. Chairman and your Bureau, in your stewardship for indeed the very critical tasks before the Committee.

4. We underscore that multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the UN Charter, provide the only sustainable method of addressing disarmament and international security issues. We also underscore the Movement's principled position concerning the use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity of any State. Although there have been some positive signals and developments, the world is still confronted by unresolved challenges. The Movement therefore calls for renewed efforts to resolve the current impasse in achieving nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects.

5. The NAM reaffirms its principled positions on nuclear disarmament, and stresses that the efforts aimed at non-proliferation should be in parallel to the simultaneous efforts aimed at disarmament. Our Group reiterates the need for all States to fulfill their respective obligations and undertakings in relation to arms control and disarmament, and to prevent the proliferation in all aspects of nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction. The NAM reiterates that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process is the general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

6. We underline that progress in nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects is essential to strengthening the international peace and security. We appeal to all States to pursue and intensify multilateral negotiations, as agreed by the consensus in the Final Document of the SSOD-I, to achieve nuclear disarmament under effective international control, and to strengthen the international disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation regimes.

7. As mentioned in the Final Document of the 15th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement in Egypt on 16 July 2009, the NAM emphasises its principled positions on nuclear disarmament, which remain its highest priority, and on the related issue of nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects. Our Group reiterates its deep concern on
the lack of concrete progress by the Nuclear Weapon States in implementing their unequivocal undertaking according to the NPT, and as reaffirmed through the decisions and resolution adopted by the Review and Extension Conference of 1995, and in accordance with the 13 practical steps agreed at the 2000 Review Conference, in order to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Under article VI of the NPT, they are clearly committed to nuclear disarmament. We also express our serious concern on the improvement in the existing nuclear weapons and their systems, and the development of new nuclear weapons. This contravenes the assurances provided by Nuclear Weapon States at the conclusion of the CTBT.

8. The NAM notes the entry into force of the 2002 Moscow Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States, and views the recent negotiations to be concluded by December 2009 between the two States on reducing their respective nuclear warheads as a positive signal. But the Movement stresses that the reductions in deployments and in operational status cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The START 1 is due to expire at the end of 2009, and we urge the United States and Russian Federation to conclude their negotiations on the matter urgently, in order to achieve further deep cuts in their nuclear weapons. The NAM calls on them to apply the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability to further reduce their nuclear arsenals; both warheads and delivery systems.

9. We take note of the Summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament convened by the Security Council on 24 September 2009. Our group is committed to the realisation of the objective of the world free of nuclear weapons at the earliest. The NAM has always been consistent in promoting this objective, which should be brought about by a balanced commitment on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The NAM has communicated its positions to the Council in this regard.

10. The NAM reiterates that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Therefore, pending the total elimination of such weapons, efforts for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally-binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon-States should be pursued as a matter of priority.

11. We also restate our call for an international conference to identify ways and means of eliminating nuclear dangers at the earliest possible date, with the objective of arriving at an agreement on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time.
12. The NAM reaffirms the need to respect the inalienable right to engage in the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. Our Group notes with concern that undue restrictions on exports to developing countries of material, equipment and technology, for peaceful purposes persist. We stress on the responsibility of developed countries to support the legitimate requirements of developing countries for nuclear energy. The NAM expresses its full confidence in the impartiality and professionalism of the IAEA while conducting its work in accordance with its Statue and strongly rejects attempts by any State to politicize the work of the IAEA, including its technical co-operation programme, in violation of the IAEA Statute.

13. The Movement continues to consider the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones created by Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba, Central Asia and Mongolia’s nuclear weapon free status as positive steps and important measures towards attaining the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We welcome the entry into force of the Treaty on the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia on 21 March 2009, as well as the entry into force of the African nuclear-weapon-free zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) on 15 July 2009. Our Group would welcome the efforts aimed at establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in all regions of the world freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. We call for cooperation and broad consultation in order to achieve agreements in this respect. The Group notes the convening of the second meeting of the nuclear-weapon-free zones to be held in New York immediately before the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and calls upon all relevant member states to support the holding of this Conference.

14. The NAM reaffirms its support for the establishment in the Middle East of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, in accordance with the Security Council resolution 487 (1981), and paragraph 14 of the Security Council resolution 687 (1991), and the relevant UNGA resolutions adopted by consensus. Pending the establishment of such a zone, the NAM demands Israel to accede to the NPT without delay, and to place promptly all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards. We note the adoption of two resolutions, GC53 Res 16 on Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East, and GC53 Res 17 on Israeli nuclear capabilities at the 53rd IAEA General Conference, and urge the continued consideration of this issue pending the implementation of both resolutions.

Mr. Chairman,

15. The NAM views the First Committee as a central and an essential subsidiary body of the General Assembly to address the important issues in the area of disarmament and international security. The role of this
Committee is all the more critical due to the difficult and complex situation in the field.

16. While underlining the role of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, we note the adoption of the Programme of Work for the 2009 session by the CD on 29 May 2009 after years of stalemate. In this regard, the NAM reiterates the importance of nuclear disarmament as a top priority and calls upon the CD to establish Ad Hoc Committee to address this issue as a matter of urgency. It is worth highlighting here the importance of the unanimous conclusion of the ICJ that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith, and to bring to a conclusion, negotiations, leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

17. The NAM reaffirms the importance and the relevance of the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) as the sole specialised, deliberative body within the UN multilateral disarmament machinery. We continue to fully support the work of the UNDC and express regret that UNDC was unable to reach agreement on recommendations on its two agenda items during substantive sessions of its three-year cycle ending in April 2008 due to the lack of political will and inflexible positions of certain Nuclear Weapons States, despite NAM’s constructive role and concrete proposals throughout the deliberations, especially in the Working Group on “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons”.

18. The NAM stresses the importance of the General Assembly to continue its active consideration with a view to reaching consensus on the objectives, agenda and the establishment of a preparatory committee for the 4th Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-4), including by reconvening the Open-Ended Working Group to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possible establishment of the preparatory committee for SSOD-4. We would, at an appropriate time, request the convening of the open-ended working group.

Mr. Chairman,

19. The NAM States Parties to the NPT hope that the work done at the first, second, and third sessions of the Preparatory Committee could be used as the basis for the Review Conference. The States Parties to the NPT need to intensify their efforts toward ensuring success of the NPT Review Conference in 2010. The NAM States Parties reiterate the importance of establishing subsidiary bodies to the relevant main committees of the 2010 Review Conference of the NPT for deliberating on practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons; to consider and recommend proposals on the implementation of the
resolution on the Middle East adopted in the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT; and to consider security assurances.

20. The NAM underscores the significance of achieving universal adherence to the CTBT, including by all nuclear-weapon States, which, inter alia, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. We reiterate that if the objectives of the Treaty are to be fully realised, the continued commitment of all States signatories, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to nuclear disarmament would be essential.

21. The NAM States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) laud the inter-sessional work process, as agreed in the Final Document of the 2006 BWC Review Conference. We call for an effective and verifiable BWC, which is implemented in a comprehensive manner. The NAM States Parties to the BWC reiterate their conviction that the participation with fullest possible exchanges, including at the BTWC Experts and Annual Meeting in August and December 2009, along with enhanced international cooperation for effective implementation of Article X of BWC are the key elements for the implementation of the Convention as a whole, in a balanced and comprehensive manner. They recognise the particular importance of strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations for a legally binding protocol and universal adherence to the Convention.

22. The NAM States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) commend the outcome of the Second Review Conference of the CWC in April 2008, and emphasise the role of the CWC as a disarmament treaty. The NAM States Parties to the CWC reaffirm the importance of meeting the 2012 final destruction deadline in the Convention, and note with concern that one of the major possessor States Parties has indicated that it would not meet this deadline. We strongly urge possessor States Parties to continue taking all necessary measures to accelerate their destruction operations, and stress that any eventuality where the final deadline is not met should be addressed in a manner that does not undermine the Convention or lead to the rewriting or reinterpreting of the Convention's provisions. We also reaffirm the importance of international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the CWC, and call for the full implementation of the Convention in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

23. The NAM calls upon all States in the position to do so, to provide the necessary financial, technical and humanitarian assistance to landmine clearance operations, the social and economic rehabilitation of victims, as well as to ensure full access of affected countries to material equipment,
technology and financial resources for mine clearance. The NAM States Parties to the Anti-Personal Mine Ban Convention will further consider those priorities at the upcoming Second Review Conference to be held in Cartagena, Colombia, from 30 November to 4 December 2009.

24. The NAM expresses concern about the explosive remnants of the Second World War, particularly in the form of landmines, which continue to cause human and material damage and obstruct development plans in some Non-Aligned countries. We call on the States primarily responsible for laying these mines and leaving explosives outside their territories during Second World War, to cooperate with the affected countries and provide mine action support to affected countries, including with information exchange, maps indicating the locations of mines and explosives, technical assistance for mine clearance, defrayal of the costs of clearance and compensation for any losses caused by mines-laid.


26. We recognise the adverse humanitarian impact caused by the use of cluster munitions. The Movement stresses its principled position on the central role of the UN in the area of disarmament and arms control. We take note of the continued consideration of the issue of cluster munitions in the context of the CCW. The Group also takes note that the Convention on Cluster Munitions was opened for signature on 3 December 2008.

27. We are also deeply concerned about the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world. The NAM believes that the prevention of illicit trade in SALW is imperative for creating security conditions conducive to development. In this connection, we underscore the implementation of the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All Its Aspects (PoA), which we consider to be the main framework for addressing the issue of the illicit trade in these weapons. Our Group takes note of the third Biennial Meeting of States (BMS-3), which considered the national, regional and global implementation of the Program of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. We encourage all States to come up with initiatives, and to mobilise the resources and required expertise to assist to strengthen the full implementation of the PoA.

28. The NAM considers it extremely important that apart from the governments, the critical nature of relationship between disarmament, development and security is understood well by all relevant stakeholders.
Therefore, the Movement welcomes the adoption without a vote of General Assembly Resolution 63/52 titled Relationship between Disarmament and Development. The NAM is deeply concerned at the increasing global military expenditure, a substantial part of which could otherwise be spent on promoting international development and eradicating poverty. It is worth reminding ourselves the virtues of the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments.

29. Finally, Mr. Chairman, our Group would once again encourage and urge all States to demonstrate the required political will to tangibly move forward on accomplishing the agreed international agenda on disarmament and non-proliferation. NAM, for its part, will constructively participate in the deliberations and negotiations, among others by submitting six resolutions on multilateralism; observance of environmental norms; disarmament and development; regional centre for peace and disarmament; convening of the SSOD-4; and Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.