STATEMENT
BY
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AT

THE GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

65th SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, 11 October, 2010
Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to join the distinguished delegates who spoke before me in congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee during the 65th session. I also wish to seize this opportunity to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. My sincere appreciation goes to your predecessor, Ambassador Canelle of Uruguay, who successfully guided the work of this Committee during the 64th session. Allow me once again to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Sergio Duarte, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for his introductory statement.

My delegation fully associates itself with the Statements delivered by the delegation of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and by the delegation Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

In the year 2010, as always issues related to international security, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction had been high on the international agenda. As the challenges of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation continue to constitute the greatest threat to international peace and security, other weapons of mass destruction, including, Chemical and Biological Weapons as well as the Conventional Weapons are also posing a great threat to the international security. The proliferation of and easy access to Small Arms and Light Weapons are not only sources of concern to peace and security, but also to the social and economic development of many countries. It is for this reason that Eritrea attaches great importance and sees no better instrument than the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects since its adoption in 2001. Taking this into consideration, my delegation welcomes the successful outcome of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States on the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons held in July 2010.

My delegation is pleased to reiterate that my country, Eritrea, is deeply committed to international efforts aimed at arms control and non-proliferation of any weapons of mass destruction and their means of
delivery. Accordingly, Eritrea is a State Party to many of the conventions on arms control.

My delegation notes with great interest the positive signs of the past months and hopes concrete progress will be made towards nuclear disarmament. It is encouraging, among others to see, a renewed determination to realize a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-World, the adoption of a program of work to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament by consensus, the successful conclusion of the New START agreement, the NPT Review Conference and the Summit on Nuclear Security. My delegation is convinced that the remarkable progress made on “Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations” convened by the Secretary General on 24 September 2010, would enable the International Community to make a move forward to a renewed determination of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free world.

There is now near-universal agreement that the International Community can meet the challenges, including traditional and new threats to peace, security and stability only through multilateralism. A strengthened, revitalized and reformed UN is an indispensable instrument in humanity’s quest for disarmament, the destruction of weapons of mass destruction, the termination of the threat posed to developing countries by Small Arms and light weapons and to bring to an end the scourge of terrorism and similar phenomena. A momentum, although not at the desired pace, is building up and the International Community must be ready to take advantage of the opportunities that arise to ensure that they bear fruit.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by adding my delegation’s voice that the renewed commitment towards disarmament must be pursued in good faith and brought to its logical conclusion so that much of the funds currently going towards military spending could be redirected to development efforts.

Thank you.