Statement

by

H.E. Dr. Kosal SEA
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of the Kingdom of Cambodia
to the United Nations

at

the General Debate of the First Committee
of the Sixty-Sixth Session of the United Nations
General Assembly

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(Please check against delivery)
Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin by joining previous speakers to congratulate you upon your election as the Chairman of the First Committee of the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly. I am fully confident that under your able leadership, the Committee would be able to conclude its deliberations successfully. My congratulations also go to all members of the Bureau.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by my colleague from Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and as well as the statement made by the distinguished representative of Myanmar on behalf of all members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Mr. Chairman,

**Weapons of Mass Destruction**

The progress made by the international community in the field of arms control and disarmament over recent years has been obvious. But my delegation is of the view that a lot of efforts should be put in this field if we wish to reach our goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Cambodia welcomed the entry into force of the New START Treaty, signed last year by the United States and the Russian Federation, which contributes to reducing risk of a nuclear conflict. Inspite of this progress, there are still concerns over the existence of large nuclear weapons stockpiles which pose a serious threat to humanity.

Mindful of the fact that the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty has not yet entered into force, Cambodia joins the increasing calls by the international community and all States Parties to the Treaty, to those nations which have not yet joined this treaty to do so as soon as possible, as we all have the responsibility to ensure that our planet is safe and secure for all.

Cambodia also strongly believes that the establishment of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones remains a cornerstone in building a favorable climate for nuclear non-proliferation. In this connection, the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone which was open for signature in Bangkok in 1995 and entered into force in 1997 remains a fundamental legal basis for creating a zone of peace.
and cooperation without nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia. It not only serves as peace instrument in our region, but also continues to play its pivotal role as an effective confidence building for the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

Conventional Weapons

The Royal Government of Cambodia attaches great importance in addressing the question of conventional weapons as they continue to threaten peace and stability. The use of illegal weapons, undoubtedly, has a long-term impact on human life and impedes national social-economic development efforts.

Being a State Party to the Ottawa Convention, Cambodia continues to exert its efforts to clear the anti-personnel mines and other remnants and unexploded ordnances (UXOs) left behind by wars, which have continued to kill and injure innocent lives and cause major obstacles to the day-to-day life of the Cambodian people. We are very grateful to the assistance provided by the international community toward this demining action in our country.

To promote international cooperation on demining activities and to further raise awareness of mine danger, Cambodia will host the 11th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Production in Phnom Penh, next month.

Conference on Disarmament

Cambodia re-emphasizes the importance of the continuation of the work of the Conference of Disarmament so that the disarmament negotiations can move forward. Although there is much disappointment and frustration over the long overdue stagnation of the Conference on Disarmament, we hope that a realistic approach to the discussions would be reopened once again and an agreement reached so that the Conference could carry out its mandate in the interest of all UN Member States.
Mr. Chairman,

Participation of Cambodia in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security

Mobilizing enough resources for effective peace-keeping operations in regions with conflicts remains a big challenge for our world organization. There was a time, when my country used to receive UN Peace keepers in the 1990s. Thus, the Royal Government of Cambodia fully understands the importance of sufficient assistance, materially and technically, and its own effort to achieve sustainable peace. Through the implementation of the Win-Win Policy of Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen in 1998, Cambodia has transformed itself from a war-torn country to a country with full peace and sustainable development; and further to a country that could make significant contribution toward international peace and security. Over the years, Cambodia has dispatched hundreds of its troops to serve in different UN peace-keeping missions, such as UNMIS, UNIFIL and MINURCAT. At present, Cambodia is making preparations to dispatch more Cambodian peacekeepers to other countries.

In conclusion, it is the responsibility of all nations through a concerted approach and full cooperation to disarm nuclear weapons, to control conventional weapons, and to root out the UXOs and other war remnants in order to make the world more secure and safer for all.

Thank you.