Statement

By

The Representative of the Federal Democratic

Republic

Of

Ethiopia

To the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,

At the General Debate of the First Committee

New York
United Nations Headquarters
12 October 2012
Mr. Chairman,

Let me join previous speakers by congratulating you and other members of the Bureau upon your election and express my appreciation to you for the manner in which you have been guiding our deliberations. I pledge full support of my delegation for the successful conclusion of the work of the Committee. I also take this opportunity to thank Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament affairs, for her opening remarks.

Ethiopia associates itself with the statements made by Nigeria on behalf of the African Group and Iran on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement on the agenda item under consideration.

Mr. Chairman,

Today, Nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms pose serious threats to international peace and security. The threats these weapons represent are multifaceted, complex and require effective and urgent responses by all States. Curbing the escalation of nuclear arms race and reducing the stockpile of other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) through the full implementation of the existing conventions and treaties are of paramount importance. In this regard, states need to respect and implement the provisions of international treaties and conventions that they are party to.

My delegation wishes to reiterate its unwavering support for the universalization and early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, and in this regard we call upon those states that have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT to do so as a matter of urgency. Africa has become a nuclear-weapon-free zone since July 2009 when the Treaty of Pelindaba entered into force. This is a concrete contribution of Africa to the global effort to control and halt the spread of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

The African nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty seeks to ensure that nuclear weapons are not developed, produced, stockpiled, tested, acquired or stationed in Africa, including its island
states. The treaty further more, prohibits research on nuclear weapons, dumping of radioactive waste, and armed attacks on nuclear installations in the African zone by Treaty parties. However, the Treaty supports use of nuclear energy and nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes.

As regards the establishment of nuclear weapons free zones, we believe that they can make significant contributions, not only to achieving regional and international security but also to strengthening the course of action for total nuclear disarmament. In this connection, the Treaty on the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone remains a fundamental legal basis for creating a zone of peace and cooperation in the continent and helps to serve as an effective confidence building measure for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts at global level. In this regard, Ethiopia welcomes the successful progress made towards disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, particularly the entry into force of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) last year, the successful NPT Review Conference in 2010, and this year's first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT review.

Mr. Chairman,

Ethiopia has already showed her unwavering determination to fight against terrorism arising from any fundamentalist groups and anti-peace elements, supported and sponsored by outside states and non-state actors in our region. This is one of the major factors that convinced Ethiopia to work very closely at regional and international levels, so as to withstand and curb the threat of terrorism and illicit trafficking of all kinds of weapons. In this respect, we believe that the efforts to ratify the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism are very crucial.

Mr. Chairman,

Ethiopia attaches great importance to Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. That is why we remain committed to the goals of a nuclear-weapons free zone world-wide. We are convinced that it is the responsibility of all peace loving nations to ensure that the danger such weapons pose to humanity should be eliminated from the face of
the earth. Ethiopia, recognizing its responsibility, has undertaken appropriate measures to ensure that radiation protection and nuclear regulatory control are conducted in accordance with the applicable domestic and international laws.

The illegal transfer of conventional weapons of all kinds is a source of serious concern to my country. Therefore, the need to take concrete actions to conclude a legally binding and effective treaty on the illicit trade and transfer of the weapons, in particular the risk of weapons transfer to the non-state actor is indeed urgent. In this regard, member States are bound to respect the United Nation Security Council Resolution 1540(2004) which obliges all states to refrain from providing any form of support to non-state actors that attempted to develop, acquire, manufacture, posses, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery.

Mr. Chairman,

Ethiopia, like other many other developing countries, has continued to suffer from the adverse effects of illicit conventional weapons, in particular from the spread and transfer of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Indeed, proliferation of uncontrolled conventional weapons has aggravated unstable and fragile peace situations in developing countries by fueling armed conflicts and civil strives. In our sub-region, the efforts of regional states and IGAD to preserve peace and security as well as to ensure development and prosperity for the people of the region have constantly been undermined by these weapons. Ethiopia stresses the implementation of the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in all Its Aspects (PoA), which it considers to be the main framework for addressing the issue of the illicit trade of these weapons. We also wish to stress that international assistance and cooperation is an essential input for implementation of the programme.

We also believe that the early conclusion of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a critical component in the efforts to prevent and substantially halt the proliferation and uncontrolled trade of conventional weapons. We would like to underline the need for a balanced, non-discriminatory, universal, effective and equitable ATT.
In the meantime, the Ottawa Convention or the Mine Ban Treaty on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction is the international agreement that bans antipersonnel landmines. This convention, in our view, instrumental to deal with the sufferings, which theses mines continue to cause to humanity. We support the effective implementation of the Anti-personnel Land Mines Convention to which Ethiopia is a party.

And as mentioned by many delegates who speak before me, the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, we underline the necessity to start negotiations, as soon as possible, within the framework of Conference on Disarmament (CD) for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time frame.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, we wish to call up on all concerned states to concretely demonstrate the necessary political will by fulfilling their commitment towards putting an end to Nuclear weapons arms race and to significantly reduce other weapons of mass destruction and dangerous conventional arms to achieve the desired goal and complete disarmament. Ethiopia, on its part, remains committed to continue to participate fully and constructively in all issues of disarmament to realize a better, more secured and peaceful world.

I Thank You.