STATEMENT BY

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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND HEAD OF DELEGATION

DELIVERED AT THE

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE
PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2015 REVIEW
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE
NON PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor. I congratulate you on your election to steer the work of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. I also congratulate other members of the Bureau on their election. I assure you of my delegation’s full support.

I align myself with the statement delivered by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). However, allow me to add a few remarks on my national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

The objective to achieve a world without nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is the *raison d’être* for the formation of the United Nations. It is not surprising that one of the very first resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1946, called for “the total elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction”. With a view to giving impetus to the noble effort of ridding the world of these weapons, the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was adopted in 1968.
The NPT is the only legal regime for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, promoting cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and furthering the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament. Yet, more than four decades since its adoption, the NPT has not attained universality. Its implementation is beset by various setbacks. Thousands of nuclear weapons remain in stockpiles - threatening the extinction of humanity. There is still no international ban on nuclear weapons testing as the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty grapples to garner the requisite number of ratifications for its entry into force.

Mr. Chairman,

The mere existence of nuclear weapons presents a possibility of their accidental or intentional use, moreso as some of them remain in high alert. Regrettably, some Nuclear Weapon States have engaged in modernisation programmes of their nuclear weapons and arsenals. If anything, the number of States aspiring to possess nuclear weapons is steadily increasing, and indeed endangering the security of humankind more than ever before. The recent nuclear tests conducted in the Korean Peninsula are a clear sign that others are still under the illusion that possession of these weapons is a way of providing security and power. Nothing could be further from the truth. Nuclear weapons make the world even more unsafe, hence the call for their total eradication.
On a positive note, we are encouraged by the efforts of the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) to discharge their obligations under the NPT. In particular, the implementation of the new START Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation is a positive step in the right direction. However, much more still needs to be done. We urge all the NWS to restore our trust in them that they are determined to implement the 13 Practical Steps towards nuclear disarmament in a verifiable and irreversible manner. We look forward to their report in the 2014 PrepComm Session as well as the 2015 Review Conference. The obligation to prove that they are not determined to retain these weapons indefinitely squarely reposes on them.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Three years ago a successful Review Conference was held which culminated in the adoption of a consensus outcome document and a 64 comprehensive Plan of Action. That achievement brought about high expectations that decades of negotiations on the need for a safer and more secure world without nuclear weapons would soon bear fruition. Sadly, we all bear witness to the fact that implementation of the outcome document and the plan of action remains a challenge. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to meet the challenges that lie ahead if we were to avoid eroding the credibility of the NPT. With two more years left before the next Review Conference a lot can be achieved. We need to build on the momentum generated by the 2010 Review Conference and fully implement the Plan of Action as we prepare for the next Review Conference.
Lesotho stands ready to play its part in the implementation of the said Action Plan.

It would be remiss of us not to join others in expressing our disappointment at the failure to hold the International Conference on the Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons in 2012 for no clear justification. We should never forget that the establishment of nuclear weapons free zones is critical for sustaining progress towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is a confidence building measure that breeds trust. In this regard, we call on the Conveners to expedite the holding of the Conference, at least before the end of the current year.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT clearly acknowledges the right of all States Parties to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. There is no denying that peaceful uses of nuclear energy improve the lives of people all around the world. The contemporary challenges such as energy security and sustainable development can adequately be addressed by using nuclear technology. However, this right must be exercised in a safe and secure manner and with due regard to the Parties’ non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty.
The importance of international cooperation and assistance, as well as scaling up of assistance to developing countries in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy cannot be overemphasized. In the same breath cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is absolutely essential. We must all accept the IAEA safeguards to verify that nuclear activities serve only peaceful purposes. At the same time, we must respect the independence and expertise of the Agency and refrain from politicizing it or unduly interfering in its activities.

**Mr. Chairman,**

I wish to conclude by pointing out that all is not lost. There is still hope that our noble objective of ensuring that humanity lives in peace, freedom and without fear of extinction shall be achieved. We need to bridge the gulf between rhetoric and action, and fast track the implementation of the NPT. The current Session of the PrepComm presents an excellent opportunity for increased momentum towards fulfilling our commitments for nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the NPT. In the same breadth, let us join hands in calling the States not party to the NPT to consider joining the Treaty without further delay.

**I thank you**