PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

H. E. DR. SYLVESTER EKUNDAYO ROWE
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION

TO THE

2005 CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE

TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)

FRIDAY, 27th MAY 2005

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Head of the delegation of Sierra Leone
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Mr. President,

Let me first of all express our admiration for the exemplary leadership you demonstrated throughout the difficult NPT review process during the past four weeks. We also commend all the officers of the Conference, especially the chairs of the Main Committees and subsidiary bodies. Mr. President, as far as my delegation is concerned, you can raise your head up high with pride that you did your job.

The Sierra Leone delegation would like to associate itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Malaysia this morning on behalf of the States Parties Members of the Non-Aligned Movement. In spirit of multilateralism NAM, in our view, conceded far more than was necessary under the circumstances, far more in ensure that the Conference produced, not a perfect document, nor a scroll of repetitive declarations, but a realistic, balanced and forward-looking strategy to advance the safety of us all.

As we heard from the statements this morning and in this closing session, each State Party has assessed and will assess this Conference from the perspective of its own national, regional and sub-regional perspectives. Fair enough. However, given the gravity of the threat of nuclear weapons, it is absolutely necessary for us to assess our work over the past four weeks from the global perspective. That is to say, from the perspective of the consequences of what we produced, or did not produce – the repercussions for our own survival of our survival.

This Conference, whatever its outcome, has underscored the indisputable fact that (i) the NPT is a multilateral treaty, and (ii) that it is not only about proliferation of nuclear weapons (the number of States that possess these weapons) notwithstanding the seriousness of this aspect of the Treaty. It is also about disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and that the benefits derived from its principal aims and objectives are for mankind as a whole.

My delegation believes that until all States, in particular those who possess these weapons, work assiduously towards both complete disarmament and non-proliferation, and until we give both the attention and seriousness they deserve, no one should be surprised if future review conferences of the NPT end in the same manner as this 2005 Conference.
Perhaps, we should consider renaming the NPT the "Treaty on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons."

Mr. President, Sierra Leone did not speak in the general debate, but we listened to or read every statement by other States Parties. We also listened to the plea of representatives of civil society who, obviously do not have the credentials or rank of statehood, but who albeit made a distinctive contribution to our work in this review conference. My delegation also heard the voice of the people, potential victims of nuclear weapons, through the dozens of publications, studies, announcements about panels and discussions on various aspects of nuclear disarmament. The so-called side events articulated the concern of the millions of people in whose name we the accredited delegates spoke within these chambers. We, representatives of Governments or States Parties could not escape the subtle but resolute pleas of civil society and individuals, including one expressed in verse by a survivor of Hiroshima.

These, Mr. President, in my delegation's view are among the highlights of the 2005 Review Conference. Accordingly, we would like to pay tribute to civil society and individuals, who in their own way reminded us delegates, incessantly throughout the past four weeks, not just what this conference was all about, but more importantly, about our moral obligation to rid mankind of the threat of nuclear weapons.

In closing, my delegation hopes that the outcome of this NPT Review Conference will serve as a 'lesson-learned' for the forthcoming sessions of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC).

I thank you Mr. President