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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Statement

By

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At

**The General Debate of the Sixth Committee of the United
Nations 61st Session General Assembly**

United Nations, New York
October 2006

Madame Chairperson,

Allow me to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the chair of the First Committee. I would also like to express our sincere appreciation to your predecessor for his commendable chairmanship of the Committee during the 60th session.

Madame Chair person,

My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which has succinctly reiterated the long-standing positions of the Movement on disarmament and international security at the 14th NAM Summit held in Havana from 14-16 September 2006; as well as with the statement of Nigeria on behalf of the African group, reflecting our common views on the issues involved.

Madame Chairperson,

As the maintenance of greater world peace and security underlies the very founding principles and purposes of the UN Charter, the significance of promoting multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation on a wider scale remains to be crucial.

As for my country, the continuous promotion of peace and stability both at home and within the sub-region, coupled with the devotion of every valuable resource towards multifaceted economic and social endeavors in the country, has not only placed Ethiopia firmly on the right direction of overall growth and development, but has also made it a pillar of peace and partnership within the Horn of Africa and beyond. Having successfully embarked upon the path of Peace, Democracy and Development, and having made substantial progress along this promising path over the past fifteen years, since the demise of the military regime that ruled the country, Ethiopia's most paramount challenge has been, and continues to be, the struggle against its sole principal enemy: Poverty and its related vices.

This is indeed the very reason why Ethiopia attaches paramount importance to the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation in all its forms. In terms of practical measures, Ethiopia has already signed, ratified or acceded to a number of international and regional instruments aimed at the promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation, and will continue to do so. More importantly, it has faithfully upheld their principles by way of strict adherence to its treaty obligations in the course of their implementation.

In this regard, suffice it to mention the following for the purpose of elucidating Ethiopia's firm position and commitment to do its utmost in playing its part thus far in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly in respect of those where it is most concerned.

Accordingly:

- Ethiopia has been fully implementing the United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light weapons in All Its Aspects (SALW), as well as the Nairobi Protocol on SALW, in close collaboration with all parties concerned. To this end, the Federal Police Commission has been charged with the task of serving as the national focal point for SALW. Measures have also been taken to revise legislations concerning arms and ammunitions so as to make them robust and all-rounded in light of international considerations and the extent of the problem. Preparations are underway to destroy various types of small arms and light weapons seized and collected from all over the country through searches and surprise checking. Furthermore, a national plan of action, aimed at enabling the country to successfully meet its obligations under SALW, is being currently developed; a central registration unit for small arms and light weapons is in the process of establishment at the Federal level; Personnel training and other related activities are being undertaken. These are all critical national tasks for which the assistance of developed countries as well as the concerned organs of the UN remains to be crucial, especially in the area of institutional capacity building.
- Likewise the implementation of the Convention on the Proliferation, the Use, Stockpiling and Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Land Mines and on Their Distribution is being given the utmost attention it deserves on the part of Ethiopia. It should also be recalled that Ethiopia was one of the countries that had actively participated in the drafting of the Ottawa Convention; strongly supported the 1996 United Nations resolution 58/33, and visibly participated at all the annual conferences, as well as permanent committee meetings on anti-personnel land mines since 2001.
- As one of the 24 Parties to the Ottawa Convention that are known to have a high number of mine victims and survivors, concrete measures are being taken on a sustainable basis to help the latter rehabilitate through a national plan of action, for which a more intensified international assistance is critically sought.
- It needs to be re-emphasized that Ethiopia does not produce any kind of anti-personnel land mines; nor has it ever imported them since 1991, i.e., after the downfall of the military dictatorship that ruled the country.

- Ethiopia is actively processing the ratification of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty by the National Parliament. It is also a State Party to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC); the Comprehensive Nuclear-test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC); the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; The Partial-Test-Ban Treaty (PTBT); the 1925 Geneva Protocol, as well as others, most of which it has already ratified.
- Furthermore, Ethiopia is moving ahead to subscribe to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation in line with its principled position on the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Madame Chairperson,

The issue of disarmament and non-proliferation would be far from complete unless treated in conjunction with the manifest dangers of terrorism menacing our contemporary era. Having gone through its own experience in the fight against terrorism, Ethiopia knows the vices of the scourge, and believes in tackling it by means of a strong and unified international and regional framework of collaboration. Thus, apart from embracing and practically implementing the various international instruments in this area, Ethiopia is also a party to the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. It has also forged strong alliances with various sub-regional, regional and international partners in the fight against terrorism, and will continue to do so in the future.

Madam Chairperson,

I would like to conclude by reaffirming Ethiopia's commitment to promote the broad agenda of disarmament and non-proliferation, both regionally and internationally, to ensure the effective maintenance of world peace and security. We also remain confident that the Committee would be able to make some tangible headway through productive deliberations in the course of the current session.

I thank you