



# MYANMAR

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**Statement**

**by**

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**Ambassador**

**Representative of the Union of Myanmar**

**to the First Committee**

**at the General Debate of the First Committee**

**of the**

**61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

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Madam Chair,

The delegation of Myanmar congratulates you on your election as the Chairperson of the First Committee and looks forward to working closely with you to advance the cause of disarmament and arms control. Please rest assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation in the discharge of your important task.

My delegation joins others in welcoming the new Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament, Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka and wish him every success.

Myanmar associates itself with the statement of the representative of Indonesia, speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement in this Committee on 2 October.

Madam Chair,

In the past year, concerns regarding weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, continue to receive considerable attention by the international community. Notwithstanding this attention, there is a glaring lack of tangible results. This casts an ominous shadow over our work.

My delegation is deeply concerned by the failure of the 2005 Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference to conclude a substantive final document. The NPT has been the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime for the past 35 years and lack of progress on implementation of Article VI, particularly in light of the 2000 agreement on the 13 practical steps is disappointing. The inability of the 2005 World Summit to agree on text related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is another setback. It is also regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament this year again failed to adopt a programme of work and that efforts to establish a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament were not fruitful. The Disarmament Commission too was unable to agree on a substantive agenda to address the two preliminary agenda items pertaining to nuclear and conventional weapons.

Madam Chair,

The continued existence of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), particularly nuclear weapons, pose the greatest threat to mankind. In the circumstance, reports that new nuclear weapon systems were being developed and strategic doctrines which lowered the threshold for the use of those weapons were being considered is disturbing. Myanmar believes that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the threat or use of those weapons. Accordingly, for the past decade,

Myanmar has been tabling a comprehensive draft resolution calling upon the nuclear-weapon states to undertake the step-by-step reduction of the nuclear threat with a view to achieving the total elimination of those weapons. The disarmament measures undertaken should essentially be irreversible, verifiable and transparent in order to gain the confidence of the international community.

Myanmar will again table a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament at this session. It is my earnest hope that it will continue to receive the valuable support of the member states as in previous years.

Madam Chair,

We consider that pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons we should pursue efforts towards the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states.

We also believe that nuclear weapon-free zones established in various regions of the world contribute to strengthening global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone has been established since 1995 in our region. We welcome the recent signing of the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty by five Central Asian countries in Semipalatinsk.

Madam Chair,

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is vital for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the treaty's opening for signature. The treaty now enjoys near universal support as 176 countries have signed the treaty and 135 have ratified it.

In this connection the Declaration adopted at the 2005 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT held in New York and the launching of the Third Joint Ministerial Statement of Support for the CTBT in New York on 20 September 2006 are positive developments.

Madam Chair,

Prevention of an arms race in outer space is another important concern. The common interest of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes should be recognized.

It is therefore encouraging to note that the resolution on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space sponsored by Egypt and Sri Lanka and the resolution on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities sponsored by the Russian Federation in this Committee has the broad support of the member states.

Transparency and confidence-building measures concerning outer space must be promoted in the interest of maintaining international peace and security. There is a pressing need to negotiate and conclude, as soon as possible, a legally binding instrument to prevent the weaponization of outer space. In this regard we consider that the Conference on Disarmament has a primary role to play.

Madam Chair,

While we maintain focus on the question of WMD, we cannot afford to ignore the challenge posed by small arms and light weapons. These weapons continue to kill and maim tens of thousands the world over. The first Review Conference of the 2001 Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade on small arms and light weapons held in New York last June and July failed to live up to expectations as it could not agree on a Final Document. The text that came close to being adopted sought to initiate a new process aimed at giving governments the ability to keep track of ammunition sales. There remains an urgent need to address the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Madam Chair,

We are meeting at a time when disarmament fora have yielded scant results. Despite this we must persevere. In this regard, we share the Under-Secretary-General's view that, " There is too much to lose from the collapse of multilateral efforts in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Failure cannot be accepted as an option."

Thank you.