



Permanent Mission of Eritrea
to the United Nations

STATEMENT

BY

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**IN THE GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE**

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Mr.Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to join the distinguished delegates who spoke before me in congratulating you on your election as Chairperson of the First Committee during the 62nd session. I also wish to seize this opportunity to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I am certain that, with your vast experience and proven skills, you will be able to guide us to a successful conclusion of our deliberations. My sincere appreciation goes to your predecessor, Ambassador Mona Juul of Norway who led us to a successful conclusion in the 61st session. I would also like to extend my warm welcome to H.E. Ambassador Sergio Durate on his appointment as High Representative and head of the Office of Disarmament Affairs.

My delegation fully associates itself with the statements delivered by the delegation of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Allied Movement (NAM), and by the delegation of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. Chairman,

As always, issues related to international security, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, have been high on the international agenda. And as the preceding years, there have been mixed results during the past year as achievements have been countervailed by challenges. It was believed that the end of the Cold War and its replacement by a new international world order would create a new security environment. Indeed some progress was made in the right direction. Almost forty years have passed since the approval of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by the General Assembly. However, nuclear weapons are still the most dangerous kinds of weapons of mass destruction. The race for the possession of nuclear weapons now joined even by terrorist groups has continued unabated. And this raises serious concern that the international community continues to witness a difficult historical era in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

Peace and security are threatened not only by nuclear weapons. Other weapons of mass destruction, including, Chemical as well as Biological and Toxin Weapons, are also posing a great threat to international security especially after the emergence of new and advanced technologies, which are available in an ever-increasing way and readily facilitate the transport and proliferation of these weapons.

There is a growing consensus that the international community can meet the challenges of its time, including traditional and new threats to peace, security and stability only through multilateralism. Multilateralism is the sole viable way to achieve our common objectives in the fields of disarmament and the non-proliferation. It is therefore imperative to promote multilateralism and to ensure the primacy of the United Nations and its agencies such as the IAEA, which is mandated to verify compliance with the obligations under the Safeguards Agreement and the additional Protocol.

Mr. Chairman,

The peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the IAEA guidance and regulations must be possible for all countries, without discrimination. This is the inalienable right of all states and is fully guaranteed by NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is pleased to reiterate that my country, Eritrea, is deeply committed to international efforts aimed at arms control and non-proliferation of any weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Accordingly, Eritrea is a State Party to many of the conventions on arms control, including to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and Their Destruction; Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction; the Non-Proliferation-Treaty (NPT); and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Eritrea has signed the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba), and is also a subscribing state to the International Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. Furthermore, Eritrea is an active member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Mr. Chairman,

The proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in many regions of the developing world, particularly Africa has made them a real threat to peace, security and stability. It is for this reason that the implementation and follow-up mechanism of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects becomes significant. Eritrea recognizes the necessity of regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation to terminate the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. To this end, Eritrea

has consistently supported all initiatives and programs in the Horn of Africa. It has also held continued consultations with like-minded states in the region.

Mr. Chairman,

My country, which has experienced conflicts, is profoundly interested in the maintenance of international and regional peace and security, as well as the peaceful and legal settlement of disputes. My Government's full conviction in the importance of respecting the UN Charter and International Law is demonstrated by its readiness to implement the final and binding decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) without any preconditions or equivocations. Eritrea, likewise, has shown its unwavering commitments to regional peace, security and stability by fully engaging in the collective negotiation efforts to promote peace and stability in the Sudan and Somalia.

Mr. Chairman,

My country reaffirms its strong condemnation to terrorism in all its forms, and pledges its full cooperation in combating this phenomenon. In this regard, it has acceded to the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. Law enforcement authorities of the State of Eritrea are jointly working with their counterparts in countries of our sub-region and in the continent at large as well as cooperating with the ICPO/Interpol in the exchange of information on prevention and suppression of terrorism.

Before I conclude, my delegation wishes to express its hope and confidence that this Committee will be able to work purposefully, under your able leadership. I assure you, Mr. Chairman, of my delegation's fullest cooperation and support.

Thank you.