

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR AUGUSTINE MAHIGA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE ON DISARMAMENT IN THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 62ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY OCTOBER 9TH 2007

Mr. Chairman,

Let me join others who spoke before me in congratulating you on your assumption of the Chair of the First Committee of the 62nd General Assembly. We also congratulate the elected members of the Bureau and express our confidence that your collective leadership and rich vast experience will undoubtedly contribute immensely towards the success of the meeting and bring new impetus to our disarmament efforts. I wish also to congratulate Ambassador Duarte, the recently elected High Representative to Disarmament Affairs and wish him all success and also your predecessor, Ambassador Mona Juul, for a job well done. My delegation reiterates our appreciation to the team of your Secretariat for the smooth running and management of our deliberations in the Committee.

I wish to associate myself with the statement made by the delegation of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

This year's First Committee meeting comes after three weeks of discussions in the Open Ended Working Group to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possibility of establishing a preparatory committee for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. My delegation is in support of the decision, albeit without discussing concrete proposals on the objectives and agenda of the special session forwarded by the Non-Aligned Movement during the three weeks of discussions which ended on 31st August, 2007. My delegation is equally willing to discuss any other proposal which may be brought forward by any other member state to that effect.

We are mindful of the fact that consensus has not been achieved on the agenda, objectives and the possibility of establishing the preparatory committee for the fourth session of the general assembly devoted to disarmament. Nonetheless, my delegation is convinced that through objective discussion among member states, consensus will evolve and common objectives and areas of convergence can be realized. This will entail calling for consideration of the objectives, agenda and establishment of a preparatory committee for SSOD-IV in the near future. In the same vein, my delegation still believes that the General Assembly will continue actively considering at its 62nd session the establishment of a preparatory committee of the SSOD –IV and possibly reconvene

the Open Ended Working Group on the objectives and agenda of the fourth session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation considers the issues of disarmament to be critical to global peace, security and development and believes general and complete disarmament is the cornerstone of international peace and security. Tanzania is counting on the First Committee as an essential part of this August body to address all issues pertaining to disarmament and international peace and security. Tanzania equally considers the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission as sole multilateral negotiating and deliberative bodies within the United Nations. Good intent, political will and flexibility are needed in agreeing on the way forward in disarmament agenda items.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation witnessed the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference due to lack of agreement to include multilateral and non proliferation in the UN World Summit and the failure to come up with the final document. However, my delegation is impressed with the modesty with which the 2010 NPT review cycle started in Geneva this year with state parties engaging in productive discussions, steps which are prerequisites for strengthening the future preparatory conferences and subsequent Review Conferences. This progress is encouraging despite the continued existence of large stocks of nuclear weapons and the growing tendency of some member states to acquire more lethal and sophisticated weapons. My delegation is apprehensive of the competition and sophistication in nuclear arsenals stockpiled by nuclear weapon states and the ever present dangers posed by such weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

While my delegation is advocating and encouraging support for non proliferation and disarmament of nuclear weapons, we also support research and production of nuclear energy for peaceful uses among developing countries in a non selective and non discriminatory manner under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency and strict observance of the 13 practical steps of the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation was disappointed by the fatal failure of the 2006 UN Review Conference on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Tanzania continues to be apprehensive of illicit transfer, manufacture, circulation, accumulation and stockpiling of small arms and light weapons in different parts of the world where they have proved to be weapons of mass killings in protracted violent conflicts and low intensity civil strife. Tanzania is supportive of any steps taken, including the Arms Trade Treaty, to enhance international

cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons as envisaged in the United Nations Program on the same of 2001.

Tanzania is supportive of the NPT and has demonstrated its commitment in that direction by signing and ratifying the Pelindaba Treaty that established the African Nuclear-Weapon Free Zone. Tanzania has ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and signed the International Atomic Energy Agency's Additional Protocol to conform to the Treaty. Tanzania signed to confirm our commitment to non-proliferation and our aversion to nuclear weapons. In the same vein, Tanzania is concerned by the emerging signs of mistrust and competition among big nuclear powers reminiscent of the situation during the cold war. We urge for the restoration of confidence building measures which prevailed in the wake of the cold war. Equally, Tanzania calls upon those countries which have not yet joined the NPT regime to cooperate with the rest of state parties to strengthen the regime.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to conclude not only by recalling Tanzania's support to the Secretary General's appeal for freedom from fear, but also Tanzania's appeal to the international community that international peace and security can only be realized when the world is free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, chemical and biological weapons. The First Committee of the 62nd General Assembly offers a most appropriate forum to generate collective political will and mutual confidence among member states of the United Nations to relegate nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction to the dust bin of history.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.