



STATEMENT BY

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**AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
ZIMBABWE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

DURING THE

**GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 64TH
SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me extend my delegation's sincere congratulations to you on your unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee. We also equally congratulate the other members of the Bureau for their election to their respective posts. My delegation has utmost confidence that under your able leadership and guidance, the Committee would be able to successfully conclude the agenda before it. We also commend the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ambassador Sergio Duarte for his leadership and vision in guiding the Department of Disarmament Affairs and pushing for the resolution of challenges in the field of disarmament and international security.

Zimbabwe associates itself with the statements made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and Nigeria on behalf of the Africa Group.

Mr. Chairman,

Zimbabwe is a signatory to several regional and international disarmament and international security instruments and is committed to fully comply with their requirements. One such instrument is the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and we continue to regard it as the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation regime. In this regard, we stress the urgent need for the universality of the NPT and call upon states that have not yet joined the treaty to do so without delay. Zimbabwe equally shares the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is encouraged by the positive atmosphere prevailing in the field of disarmament and international security.

Among the key positive developments include the success of the Third Preparatory Committee Meeting for the 2010 NPT Review Conference; the renewed commitments by leaders of nuclear weapons states to work towards a nuclear weapon – free world; the adoption of the programme of work by the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the holding of a UN Security Council Summit on 24 September 2009 on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and its unanimous adoption of resolution 1887. We encourage Member States to fully exploit the prevailing positive atmosphere in order to resolve the security challenges that have dogged the international community for the past decades.

Mr. Chairman,

The Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament held on 24 September 2009 was a laudable step in efforts to create a nuclear weapon free world. However, we are of the view that efforts to create a nuclear weapon free world should not focus exclusively on strengthening non-proliferation measures while ignoring actions on nuclear disarmament. My delegation shares the view that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute means of creating a world free of nuclear weapons. In order to achieve nuclear disarmament, we call upon all states to fully comply with their obligations under the NPT. It is imperative that nuclear weapon states commit themselves to the implementation of the 13 practical steps on nuclear disarmament that were agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, we support the call for the negotiation and conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally-binding instrument on security assurance to non-nuclear weapon states.

Mr. Chairman,

Zimbabwe supports the goals of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and we are encouraged by the invigorated efforts

to bring its entry into force. We welcome President Obama's commitment to seek US ratification of the CTBT and hope that its ratification will inspire the other Annex 2 states to sign and ratify the treaty. The entry into force of the CTBT will be an important contribution towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation welcomes the entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba and the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Central Asia this year. It is our firm belief that NWFZs are an effective contribution to efforts to strengthen regional peace and security. The entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba constitutes an important achievement by Africa in its contribution towards the promotion and strengthening of regional and international peace and security. In this regard, we call upon the nuclear weapons states that have not yet ratified the relevant Annexes of the Pelindaba Treaty to do so and also urge them to respect its provisions. My delegation joins others in calling for the early establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East in compliance with the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

Mr. Chairman,

While we welcome the adoption of a programme of work by the CD, it is regrettable that it has not been able to reach consensus on the procedural steps to commence its substantive work. We join others who have appealed to all Member States to show flexibility and political will to achieve tangible results during the Conference's forthcoming cycle of deliberations. My delegation hopes that the CD will also build on the current positive atmosphere in the field of disarmament and international security and commence its substantive work at the beginning of its 2010 session. Furthermore, Zimbabwe reaffirms the CD as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and the United

Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) as the sole specialized, deliberative body within the UN multilateral disarmament machinery and fully supports the work of these disarmament bodies. However, we are of the view that for the renewed momentum in the field of disarmament and international security to best achieve commendable results to the international community, efforts must be made to reform and strengthen the disarmament machinery.

Mr. Chairman,

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) are treaties that are key pillars of international instruments to combat the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Zimbabwe supports their universality and full implementation by Member States. We therefore call upon states that are not party to these two treaties to sign and ratify them without delay.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation reiterates that the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in many parts of the world, especially in Africa poses a serious threat to peace, security and economic development. It is imperative that the international community mobilize financial and technical assistance to support African countries to implement the UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. Zimbabwe looks forward to participate at the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS4) on the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Zimbabwe signed and ratified the Ottawa Convention and is fully committed to complying with its various articles. The Second Review Conference of States Parties to the Anti - Personal Mine Ban Convention to be held from 30 November to 4 December 2009 in Cartagena, Colombia presents the international community with an opportunity to revitalize and reinvigorate its commitment to the treaty and also to come up with concrete measures on creating a world free of anti – personal mines. My country's mine clearance programmes are severely hindered by serious financial constraints. It is therefore our hope that the Conference will prioritize action on the provision of financial, technical and material resources to landmine clearance programmes in affected countries in order to create a world free of landmines. Zimbabwe will actively participate in the Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation reaffirms the basic and inalienable right of all State Parties to the NPT to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination as enshrined in Article IV of the NPT. It is important that States choices and decisions in the field of peaceful use of nuclear technology must be respected. In view of the critical energy challenges facing developing countries, especially those in Africa, the development of nuclear energy plays an important contribution to their sustainable economic development. It is my delegation's view that Africa should be allowed to benefit from nuclear energy without any constraints or obstacles being put on its way. In this regard, we urge the IAEA to continue promoting technical cooperation with Africa and other developing countries in the field of nuclear energy.

Mr. Chairman,

Zimbabwe is of the view that if the renewed commitment towards disarmament is pursued by all nations in good faith and to its logical conclusion, this will go a long way in promoting social and economic development in many countries in the world. This is because much of the funds currently going towards military spending will be channeled towards addressing such challenges as food insecurity, poverty, climate change, diseases outbreaks, energy and financial crisis. The current global military spending, if channeled towards economic development programmes in developing countries, will go a long way to assisting them in their developmental efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, as we prepare for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, lets us all demonstrate utmost political will and collective efforts to achieve its success. In our view, a successful Review Conference should among other things, agree on a set of means and measures to strengthen the treaty's three pillars of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We pledge our utmost support to help the Conference reach meaningful conclusions.

I thank you.
