



*PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM
OF LESOTHO TO THE UNITED NATIONS
KHOTSONG
204 East 39th Street
New York, NY 10016*

STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. MR. MOTLATSI RAMAFOLE
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT THE

**GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS**

IN THE FIRST COMMITTEE

**DURING THE SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. Chairman,

I congratulate you for assuming the Chairmanship of the First Committee for the 64th session. I also congratulate other Members of the Bureau on their election. My delegation assures you of its support during your tenure as Chairman of this Committee. My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

This year's Session of the First Committee is held when there is some hope that the landscape in the disarmament machinery is changing. Disarmament issues have received some illumination from various stakeholders during the year. However, problems still exist.

We continue to witness some set backs in this field. Sadly, this demonstrates a lack of common ground, and common purpose. These challenges not only threaten international peace and security, but also undermine the Treaties and Conventions aimed at bringing general and complete disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

My statement shall cover the following aspects of disarmament: The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, The Convention on Cluster Munitions, and Small Arms and Light Weapons.

In the recent past, the International community witnessed an upsurge in nuclear testing and missile launching by some of the nuclear weapon states. This is regrettable. Such defaulting Member States need to restore the confidence of the international community by complying with all the UN resolutions, and foster meaningful cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is not in dispute that every country has a sovereign right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Our quest for the entering into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) without any further delay should be pursued vigorously. A secure nuclear free world can only be realised through entry into force of this Treaty. Consequently, we call on the Annex II States to hasten their efforts to ratify the

Treaty. My delegation was encouraged by the deliberations at the just ended Conference on Facilitating Entry Into Force of the CTBT. We commend those Annex II States that have joined consensus in the Final Declaration that was adopted by the Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

By the same token, my delegation welcomes the timely convening of the Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. The obvious complementarities between the statements made by the Heads of State and Government in the said Summit, and the contents of the Final Declaration adopted by the C.T.B.T Conference do not need to be overemphasized.

Mr. Chairman,

The Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (N.P.T) remains crucial as a framework for maintaining and strengthening international peace and security. The progress achieved by the May 2009 Preparatory Committee Meeting for the 2010 Review Conference is encouraging. My delegation will join other members of the international community in ensuring that the Review Conference to be held in 2010 yields positive results. It is well settled that the three pillars of N.P.T, namely, disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy are mutually reinforcing. As such, they must be given equal and balanced treatment. We must not forget that the N.P.T is an instrument in terms of which the non-nuclear weapons States have foregone their nuclear weapons ambitions. Equally, it is our firm belief that the Nuclear Weapon States will fully respect their commitment to nuclear disarmament.

The desire to create the internationally recognized nuclear weapon free zones was buttressed by the coming into force of the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba), on the 15th July 2009. Through this Treaty, Africa has demonstrated her commitment to building a safer world for man kind. We call on those regions that have not yet done so, to follow suit and ensure a nuclear weapons free world.

Mr. Chairman,

The use of cluster munitions violates International Humanitarian Law, and indeed the Geneva Conventions relative to the protection of civilians during war. As a

fervent believer in Human Rights and supporter of all efforts aimed at protecting civilians, the Kingdom of Lesotho was among the ninety-three states that signed the Convention when it was first opened for signature in Oslo, on the 3rd December 2008.

Mr. Chairman,

The signing of the Convention by Lesotho was made with a clear understanding that it is a prerequisite to ratification. Lesotho intends to ratify the Convention at the earliest opportunity. My delegation fully supports the campaign for ratification and entry into force of this very important instrument. We further support all efforts aimed at promoting full and effective implementation, as well as the universalisation of the norms of this Convention.

We congratulate those States that deposited their instruments of ratification during the Treaty Event that was held in September, 2009. We call on other members who have not yet done so, to seize an opportunity to publicly deposit their instruments of ratification on the 21st October, 2009, at the side event that will be organized by the UNDP for the same purpose.

Mr. Chairman,

The devastation caused by small arms and light weapons in the developing world is a cause for concern to my delegation. As a small developing country, conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, are more of a threat than weapons of mass destruction to Lesotho. These are weapons that easily find their way into the hands of criminals. From the year 2006 to date, Lesotho has managed to destroy 5921 illegal small arms and light weapons. We must join hands in addressing the threat caused by illicit trade in these weapons. The 2001 UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspect, is key to promoting long term security and development in the developing countries. Lesotho shall actively participate in the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States on the Implementation of this Programme, in June 2010.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to conclude by underscoring the fact that multilateralism is indispensable to achieving international Peace and Security. Perhaps there is merit in the

argument that the Membership of the Conference On Disarmament (COD) needs to be revisited. It is not sufficiently representative of the international community in its current form. It therefore may not fulfill the requirements of multilateralism. It is only when we act as a collective that we will be able to make meaningful progress in the disarmament field. All Member States should submit themselves to the regulation of the universally agreed international instruments under the auspices of the UN.

I thank you.