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STATEMENT BY

**THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF UGANDA TO THE
UNITED NATIONS, H.E. DR. RUHAKANA RUGUNDA**

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE,

64TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, October 9, 2009

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Mr. Chairperson,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau, on behalf of the Uganda delegation, on your election to guide the work of this Committee. You can count on our full support and cooperation.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by Sudan on behalf of the G77 and China, Nepal on behalf of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. Chairman,

This Committee plays a very important role in the pursuit of solutions to challenges confronting the world's collective security today. The end of the cold war significantly reduced global polarization, but we continue to face the dangers and effects of nuclear proliferation and violent conflict.

Our efforts to build a better world should be inspired by a shared vision and commitment to justice, equity, progress and peace. These efforts should also focus on promoting nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, reducing conflict and deepening mutual understanding and respect.

Uganda is a proponent of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction pose a serious threat to world peace and security more than ever before. We are convinced that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the cornerstone of international efforts in containing the threat of nuclear weapons and providing a framework for nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

As long as some countries have nuclear weapons, there will be others who aspire to get them as a deterrent measure. This, no doubt, leads to an arms race that increases the potential of proliferation.

It is critical to focus on all the three pillars of the NPT namely non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear energy. Non-nuclear states should be able to harness nuclear technology for a wide range of peaceful uses. We are convinced that the use of nuclear technologies in developing countries, especially in Africa, can help overcome the current energy crisis thereby contributing to the continent's economic and social development.

Mr. Chairman,

The Security Council Summit held on September 24, 2009 opened a new chapter in the Council's efforts to address nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The unanimous adoption of resolution 1887 (2009) was a significant step in this direction.

Many decades of talks on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament have gone by without satisfactory results. It is imperative that the process of engagement by nuclear states is accelerated to achieve complete disarmament. My delegation calls for political will and commitment from nuclear weapon states to show leadership on this matter.

Uganda therefore welcomes and supports the convening of the 2010 Global Summit on Nuclear security. The entry into force of the African Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba) on July 15, 2009 attests to Africa's resolve on this matter.

We fully support Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in as far as it aims at banning all nuclear explosions in all environments, for military or civilian purposes.

Mr. Chairman,

Although conventional weapons do not have the same potency for destruction as nuclear weapons, we have seen in many parts of the world the horror and destruction they have caused. The impact of the use of small arms in places like Somalia, as weapons of choice in insurgency and acts of piracy, destabilize the region and international peace and security. There is an urgent need to reinvigorate efforts to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

We are also concerned about dumping of toxic waste off the coasts of some African countries, with disastrous consequences to the environment. There is, however, a real danger of such toxic waste falling into the hands of terrorists.

There is need for the international community to use the tools at its disposal to eradicate the harmful practice of dumping toxic waste.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, the challenge for the international community is to act in unity and ensure full compliance on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament and to deal with all those situations that threaten international peace and security.

My delegation is ready to work constructively in this Committee. We look forward to its effective contribution to specific outcomes of the 64th session of the General Assembly towards the achievement of our common goals of global peace and security.

Thank you.