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KENYA

STATEMENT

BY

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**DURING THE 969TH PLERNARY OF THE
CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

**GENEVA
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It is a great pleasure to address this august body, the Conference on Disarmament (CD), as we embark on a new year, 2005.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you for the assumption of the Presidency of the Conference at the beginning of the 2005 session.

Having had the occasion and privilege to work with you on many disarmament issues within and outside the framework of the CD, I have every confidence in your abilities to steer the work of the Conference. Your vast experience, your foresight and your relentless quest for practical solutions to problems leave me in no doubt that the Conference will make commendable progress during your Presidency.

May I also congratulate your predecessor, Amb. U Mya Than of Myanmar who ably presided over the Conference during the year 2004, for the independence, energy and resourcefulness that he invested in the work of the Conference.

You can be assured of the full support and cooperation of the Kenya delegation in carrying out your arduous task.

Mr. President,

I have taken the floor to make a few remarks on the Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World which we had the honour and privilege to host in Nairobi, from 29 November to 3 December 2004.

I am particularly grateful to all my colleagues who attended the Conference. I hope you all enjoyed our hospitality and the humble facilities that the Government and people of Kenya put at your disposal.

I am particularly grateful to Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, President of the Summit and his Bureau for the tireless efforts they made to ensure that the Conference was a resounding success.

The Nairobi Summit will no doubt go down in the annals of history as a landmark Conference in the path towards the total elimination of the menace of landmines and unparalleled assistance to mine victims.

For the first time since 1997, the international community gathered at a high political level to examine the humanitarian problems caused by anti-personnel mines and the steps being taken to address them. The Summit was attended by five Heads of State and/or Government, 6 Vice-Presidents or Deputy Heads of Government and 20 Ministers. In all 135 states participated in the Nairobi Summit of which there were 110 states parties and 22 observer states.

The Summit featured the largest ever gathering of representatives of non-governmental organizations with interest in the global landmine problem. Over 350 representatives of NGOs from dozens of countries participated in the Summit.

The Summit made a significant step in the direction of universalization. On the first day of the Summit, Ethiopia announced that it had ratified the Convention thus becoming the 144th State to join the Convention. May I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government and people of Ethiopia for that noble decision.

Positive signs of growing acceptance of the Convention came from other states that are still outside the Convention, including China, Indonesia and Somalia.

Allow me in this regard to quote from the statement by the leader of the delegation of China at the Summit:-

"Both China and States Parties to the Ottawa Convention share the same objective. China closely follows the Ottawa process and has been enhancing exchanges and cooperation with the States Parties to the ConventionWe stand ready to further expand our cooperation with the states parties to the Convention, in order to contribute to the early elimination of landmine problems".

We welcome these positive gestures and encourage China and other non-states Parties to take concrete steps to join the Convention so that we can achieve the objective of universality.

Mr. President, it is noteworthy that the Review Conference adopted the Nairobi Plan of Action 2005 – 2009 aimed at ending the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines where the States Parties made the following commitments, among others:-

- The pursuit of universal adherence to the Convention will remain an important object of cooperation among States Parties;
- To ensure the expeditious and timely destruction of all stockpiled anti-personnel mines under their jurisdiction or control;
- To successfully meet deadlines for clearing mined areas. This will be the most significant challenge to be addressed during this period and will require intensive efforts by mine-affected States Parties and those in a position to assist them;

- Consistent with the Convention's vital promise to mine victims, the States parties will enhance care, rehabilitation and reintegration efforts;
- They underscored that fulfilling their obligations will require substantial political, financial and material commitments;
- They also emphasized that transparency and effective information exchange will be crucial to fulfilling their obligations;
- To continue to be guided by the knowledge that individually and collectively they are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Convention; and,

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The Nairobi Summit sent a strong and resolute message to those who are still outside the treaty that the international community can no longer tolerate these weapons which kill and maim innocent civilians. The Summit pledged to do more in the areas of victim assistance to ensure that they realize improvement in their lives through medical care, physical rehabilitation and socio-economic integration.

Mr. President

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Croatia for offering to host the next meeting of States Parties from 28 November to 2 December, 2005.

It is my hope that the momentum of Nairobi will be maintained as we move towards Croatia.

In conclusion, allow me to recall the words of Kenya's Minister for Foreign Affairs in his closing remarks at the Conference on December 3, 2004. He said, and I quote:-

"It is our collective responsibility to walk the road map from Nairobi steadily by putting the Nairobi Plan of Action into practice. Let us speak less and act more in the days ahead".

Thank you Mr. President.