

REMARKS

BY

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**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT

**HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING TO
COMMEMORATE AND PROMOTE THE INTERNATIONAL DAY
FOR THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

2 October 2020
New York

Mr. President,

We welcome the convening of this High-Level Meeting to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on the sideline of the historic 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly. My delegation fully associates itself with the statement delivered by Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

75 years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we continue to face the danger of a nuclear catastrophe. We are witnessing that trust among the major powers is fast eroding. The multilateral norms and institutions built over the past several decades are also being ignored. There is renewed escalation of arms race, accelerated development of new weapon technologies, increasing militarization in many parts of the world. Our collective security is facing grave danger because of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. What is more troubling is the increasing threats posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the risk that they may end up in the wrong hands.

It is in this context that we are commemorating this event, which underscores the urgency of taking effective measures to identify ways of

achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons and attaining a safer world for all. In this regard, we cannot agree more with the Secretary-General on the need to reverse course and return to a common path to nuclear disarmament. That is why we support his agenda for disarmament to push for new and decisive action leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which remains the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and their proliferation to non-state actors.

Mr. President,

We recognize that a multilateral, universal and binding agreement prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would contribute to the elimination of the nuclear threat, leading to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, thereby strengthening international peace and security. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is a major achievement, which strengthens the existing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and ultimately pave the way for reaching a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapon, leading towards their total elimination. We have fully supported the treaty and we look forward to ratifying it to facilitate its entry into force.

In the meantime, we believe the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will still remain the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. We believe that attaining universality of the NPT is vital to the sustainability of the disarmament and proliferation regime and multilateral norms, as well as the rule of law at the international level. Furthermore, we strongly support the universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We believe the CTBT provides the appropriate framework for halting further the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

As a strong proponent of multilateralism, we reaffirm the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament and call for the commencement of negotiations on further effective nuclear disarmament measures to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons, including, in particular, on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapon.

As a member Country to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (The Pelindaba Treaty), we also remain committed to the Pelindaba

Treaty, which reaffirms the status of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The importance of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones in the consolidating the NPT and strengthening nuclear non-proliferation across all regions of the world cannot be over-emphasized. In this regard, we welcome the conveying of the first Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held in November 2019, and call on all stakeholders to proactively engage in the spirit of mutual understanding.

I wish to conclude, *Mr. President*, by affirming Ethiopia's unwavering commitment to continue fulfilling its international obligations. We will continue to work with all like-minded countries and partners to make all possible efforts to maintain and strengthen the non-proliferation and disarmament regime, towards achieving the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons.

I thank you.