



STATEMENT BY
HONOURABLE MATS'EPO RAMAKOAE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
DELIVERED AT THE HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING TO
COMMEMORATE AND PROMOTE THE INTERNATIONAL DAY
FOR THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

28 SEPTEMBER 2021

NEW YORK

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVER

Mr. President,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make a contribution on this important issue of banning nuclear weapons. Lesotho welcomes the convening of this High-Level Meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Member States will recall that during UN Day celebration in 2020, the conditions for entry-into-force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) were met following the deposit of the 50th ratification of the treaty and subsequently entered into force in January 2021. This marked yet another important milestone in the efforts towards promoting universalization and full implementation of the TPNW.

The entry-into-force of the treaty was the pinnacle of worldwide movement to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. This represented a significant commitment towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which should remain high on the United Nations disarmament agenda. It is gratifying that Lesotho was among the first 50 Member States to sign and ratify the treaty.

Mr. President,

The United Nations (UN) cannot afford the luxury of complacency in its mandate for the maintenance of world peace and security. Most importantly, let us not forget that our organization was born from the ashes of a devastating world war. Indeed, the primary purpose of the UN was and continues to be to eliminate future wars and to create sustainable international security. Whereas the regime of the UN Charter has so far done its part to prevent a third world war, the international community still faces security challenges beyond humanity's imagination. Every year we witness the emergence of new hotspots and designer wars as some big and powerful states resort more and more to the use of force, thus creating a more unstable and dangerous world.

Mr. President

We are still facing challenges in our commitment to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. The existing massive stockpile of nuclear weapons, as well as modernization of such weapons, cast a shadow of doubt on our prospects for attaining a nuclear weapons free world in the immediate future. Nuclear weapons create a false sense of security. Their possession breeds mistrust and heightens tensions between states. For as long as they exist, the risk of their use remains. The enormous loss of life and catastrophic destruction to the environment that could be caused by detonation of nuclear weapons is known to all.

The 76th Session presents us with an opportunity to make further progress on our efforts to build a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. While working towards the goal of banning nuclear weapons and eventually abolishing, we must emphasize that full compliance with the provisions of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is critical. Accession to the NPT by countries that remain outside the Treaty should not be postponed any longer.

Mr. President,

Allow me to conclude by pointing out that the annual commemoration of the International Day for the Total Elimination of nuclear weapons since 2014 and the entry-into-force of the TPNW, is a clear manifestation of the increasing global efforts by governments, international organizations and civil society to focus attention on nuclear disarmament. We should re-double our efforts during the current session and beyond in ensuring that we rid the world of these horrendous weapons.

We look forward to the First Meeting of States Parties (1MSP) to the TPNW that will be held in New York 2022. As we prepare for this meeting, we must do so with a unity of purpose. The opportunity presented by that meeting should not be lost. The citizenry of this world is keenly interested in how we map the way forward and consolidate our efforts in addressing the challenges that we face. We have common risks and common opportunities. Let us work together if we are to achieve the progress we hope for and need.

I THANK YOU!!!