STATEMENT

BY

HAROLD ADLAI AGYEMAN
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

DURING THE

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

28th September 2021
GA Hall, UN HQ,
New York
Mr. President,

At the outset let me convey to you my warmest felicitations on your assumption of the Presidency of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I wish you great success, and as conveyed by the President of Ghana to you during the General Debate, our delegation is committed to cooperating with you during your tenure.

Permit me to also extend to your predecessor, H.E. Mr. Volkan Bozkir, Ghana’s appreciation for his leadership of this Assembly during the exceptionally challenging period of the 75th Session. We wish him well in his future endeavours.

Mr. President,

My delegation welcomes the remarks made by the Secretary-General during this commemoration and fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and by Gabon on behalf of the African Group.

The continued lack of progress in the total elimination of nuclear weapons is a concern that sits uncomfortably and in contradiction to the aspiration for a modern civilised community of nations. Ghana therefore endorses the commemoration of the “International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons” and believes that the commemoration is critical to raising global awareness to the existential threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination. We, therefore, welcome the opportunity to participate in this year’s high-level event and to make an intervention in our national capacity.
Mr. President,

The existential threat posed by the accidental or deliberate use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction remains real. It is for this reason that Ghana remains concerned about the current deterioration in the international security environment and the alarming developments related to the lack of implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations.

Equally worrying are the ongoing extensive and expansive plans by Nuclear-Possessing-States to replace, modernize and maintain their nuclear warheads, missile and aircraft delivery systems, and nuclear weapon production facilities as well as capabilities. These plans are at variance with the longstanding aspiration and efforts of the international community to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

There is, therefore, an urgent need for general compliance with applicable international laws and disarmament conventions and treaties, including the Nuclear-Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Compliance is fundamental to our existence and necessary to safeguard the better world we seek to build for successive generations.

Mr. President,

The need for enhanced global cooperation and multilateral efforts to address the issues of human security and achieve international stability has never been more critical than now. The spread and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged many nations and laid bare the fragilities of international cooperation. Indeed, just as the pandemic has shown, it is next to impossible to achieve peace and security without adopting cooperative approaches to resolving the shared problems of mankind.
My delegation therefore welcomes the importance that the Secretary-General attaches to disarmament through his Agenda on Disarmament, which is a critical mechanism for repositioning disarmament and non-proliferation issues at the centre of United Nations activities. It is our fervent hope that the agenda will contribute to securing the world and future generations from the existential threat of nuclear arsenals and other weapons of mass destruction.

As a signatory State, Ghana welcomes the entry into force on 22nd January, 2021 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. National processes are currently underway in Ghana for the ratification of the Treaty and the subsequent deposit of our Instrument of Ratification.

We call on all Member States to commit to their respective Nuclear-Weapon Free Zones (NWFZ) as a contribution to the overall objective of a world without nuclear weapons. For this reason, efforts must be made to ensure that such zones are established in regions where they do not exist. We further underline the importance of the CTBT to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and urge all States that are yet to sign and ratify the Treaty, particularly the remaining eight (8) Annex II States, to do so without further delay.
In conclusion, Mr. President, Ghana is firmly convinced that the current nuclear arms race being spearheaded by some States is a meaningless endeavour, which if not collectively prevented, can only lead to an apocalyptic scenario that cannot be allowed to happen. Therefore, as we commemorate this Day, let us all reaffirm with one voice our commitment to ensure meaningful progress for the realization of a world free from nuclear weapons.

I thank you for your attention.