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Statement

by

Mr. Ngoun Sokveng
First Secretary of the Permanent Mission
of the Kingdom of Cambodia to the United Nations

at the General Debate of the First Committee of
67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 11 October 2012
Mr. Chairman,

Please allow me, on behalf of the Cambodian delegation, to extend to you our sincere congratulations upon your election as the Chairman of the First Committee of the 67th Session of the UN General Assembly. Our congratulations also go to all members of the Bureau. We have no doubt that under your competent leadership the Committee would be able to conclude its deliberations successfully. Please rest assured of the Cambodian delegation’s full support and cooperation.

Cambodian delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as the statement made by Myanmar on behalf of all members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear Weapons

Cambodia attaches great importance to Nuclear Disarmament and Non-proliferation as they remain a grave threat to the world peace and security. The catastrophe in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 is a horrific reminder of the destructive power of nuclear weapons and their potential to annihilate entire cities. With the existence of an estimated 23,000 nuclear weapons in the world, each exponentially more powerful than either bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the very existence of mankind is threatened. Therefore, the efforts towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons should be of top priorities in our forum as well as in the agenda of the international community.

While welcoming the successful conclusion of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, our delegation believe that the major achievement in this nuclear disarmament effort is the adoption of the Final Document by consensus at the 2010 NPT Review Conference with very positive recommendations.

Cambodia reiterates its strongest support for a global ban on nuclear test to achieve a safer and more secure world. We firmly believe that the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty must enter into force without further delay and strongly encourage those nations which have not yet joined this treaty to do so as soon as possible in order to put an end to the testing of nuclear weapons.

The terrible accident of the Fukushima last year reiterates the utmost important nuclear safety and security as high agenda priority in the international community. It also
demonstrates that nuclear accidents are of no borders, as such requiring international cooperation. For its part, Cambodia acceded to the Convention on Early Notification of Nuclear Accidents and to the Convention on Nuclear Safety in March 2012.

Mr. Chairman,

Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs)

The world must triple its efforts to address the SALWs because they continue to pose direct threats to the international peace and development. In our estimation, the classification “small and light” is misleading given its grave impact on civilians. Around the globe, SALWs kill innocent civilians daily, with an estimation of 500,000 civilian casualties per year, including women and children.

Only through enhanced cooperation at national, regional and global levels are we able to advance our cause to effectively fight and eradicate the illicit use and transfer of small arms and light weapons. In this connection, Cambodia welcomes the successful conclusion of United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALWs in All Its Aspects, where Members States adopted by consensus the outcome document highlighting the renewed commitment on this matter.

Cambodia is firmly committed to addressing the threats of SALWs by strengthening the enforcement of the Law of Management of Weapons, Explosives and Ammunitions in effect since 2005. With the strong cooperation between relevant agencies and its partners, Cambodia was able to confiscate and destroy thousands of illegal small arms and lights weapons. Civilians in Cambodia have no legal rights to possess guns. Cambodia has also been resolved to further forge close cooperation with ASEAN Members in combating transnational crime and other trans-boundary security challenges including arms smuggling.

Mr. Chairman,

Cambodia Participation in Maintenance of International Peace and Security

Ensuring global peace, security and stability is our responsibility. Our pledge to the UN Charter is clear: “We, the people of the United Nations, are determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, unite our strength to maintain international peace and security”. In this spirit, Cambodia has contributed hundreds of peace-keepers to the United Nations Peace-keeping Operations (UNPKO) in Africa and Asia. Currently in South Sudan, a
Cambodian military police and medical unit are assisting in operations. Moreover, in Lebanon, Cambodian peacekeepers are contributing to demining effort. We affirm the importance of these efforts and are ready to dispatch additional troops in other UNPKOs.

Cambodia hosted in Phnom Penh, last year a successful 11th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Production. For the promotion of international cooperation on demining action to put an end to the sufferings and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines and to address the challenge of removing these silence and indiscriminate killers throughout the world, Cambodia, as the president of the 11th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention, will, on behalf of Albania and Slovenia, the past and the future Presidents of the said meeting respectively, table a traditional draft resolution entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. My delegation hopes that this draft would, as in previous years, receive a strong support from state- and non-state parties to the said convention.

In conclusion, we are of the opinion that only by sticking, thinking and working together to enhance cooperation, can we achieve our shared objective of complete disarmament and attain our goal of a world more secure and safer for all.

Thank you Mr. Chairman