Statement by His Excellency Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations, at the General Debate of the First Committee during the Sixty-ninth Session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 15 October 2014

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me, first, to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the First Committee of the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly and, through you, the other members of the Committee’s Bureau for their respective elections. I am confident that, with your substantive acumen and distinguished diplomatic career, you will steer the Committee’s work to a fruitful conclusion. I assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation in the discharge of your important responsibilities to that end.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

International peace, security, disarmament and non-proliferation have always been at the top of the UN agenda and Nepal attaches great significance to the work of this Committee on these and other related important items. Nepal strongly supports general and complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical weapons in a time-bound manner. Nepal has been consistently advocating for the promotion of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, in order to contribute significantly towards maintaining international peace, security, and stability, and also towards freeing up the precious resources for much-needed social and economic development, particularly for the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.

The effects and impact of weapons of mass destruction know no national or regional boundaries and catastrophic consequences from large scale nuclear disasters pervade through all sectors, economies and countries. Any detonation of nuclear arsenal comes with catastrophic and long-term consequences in the life of human beings and the environment. No power is immune to the menace of such disasters. The world community, therefore, should continue to question the persisting existence of the stockpile of nuclear warheads and the system of their delivery as well as attempts at continued proliferation; and should rise to its responsibility of forging solid global commitment to the cause of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their time-bound elimination.

Nepal reiterates its conviction that only the total elimination of nuclear weapons can provide absolute guarantee against the use of it. Pending that, the provisions of the effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable negative security assurances should be guaranteed by nuclear-weapon States to the non-nuclear-weapon States. Nepal supports the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and underscores the importance of strong and reliable measures for nuclear safety and security. While emphasizing the importance of peaceful uses of outer space, Nepal firmly stands for prevention of arms race in the outer space.

Nepal condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere in the world. As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Nepal urges for elimination of all stockpiles of nuclear and chemical weapons as early as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal supports the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free-zones in the various regions as critical steps forward to give disarmament a genuine meaning and welcomes any efforts towards establishing weapons of mass destruction-free-zones in the Middle East.
Nepal attaches high importance to the multilateral negotiations in disarmament and non-proliferation with a view to promoting collective ownership, deliberations and responsibility for collective global action. The Conference on Disarmament (CD), a single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, must be revitalized without delay, both in its structure and working methods, and must be utilized to advance multilateral disarmament negotiations, including on the early conclusion of the Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), which Nepal firmly stands for.

Mr. Chairman,
The proliferation of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has taken the lives of millions and become a source of sustaining conflicts and exacerbating armed violence in various parts of the world. Its deep nexus with the transnational organized crimes cannot be overemphasized. In this connection, we welcome the fact that the recently held Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects in New York adopted a consensus outcome document highlighting the international community’s renewed commitment to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Nepal also hopes that the ratification of Arms Trade Treaty by 53 States last month and its subsequent coming into effect from December this year will go a long way in ensuring international regulatory control in the trade of conventional arms through a legally binding instrument.

Mr. Chairman,
Terrorism has become a curse to maintaining international peace and security. On this, the position of Nepal was clearly outlined by the Right Honourable Prime Minister Mr. Sushil Koirala at his statement in the General Assembly general debate last month, when he said, “Terrorism is an anathema to humanity. It is a serious threat to peace, security and development. Nepal unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We share the concerns over growing scourge of terrorism, extremism and religious fundamentalism.” Accordingly, we urge for effective implementation of the provisions of the UN global counter-terrorism measures, and also for an early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. We believe that terrorism can be better tackled under the aegis of the UN with a coordinated global response.

Mr. Chairman,
As the host to the United Nations Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UN-RCPD), Nepal believes that much more could be accomplished by revitalizing the ‘Kathmandu Process’ of facilitating dialogues and deliberations towards fostering understanding, cooperation, and confidence-building in the region and beyond, thus enabling the Centre to fulfill the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. The Centre continues to promote dialogue and confidence-building by organizing conferences and seminars on thematic issues, undertaking projects for capacity building, strengthening its outreach, and enhancing advocacy role to create a conducive environment in which to deal with the challenges in the fields of disarmament, arms control and nonproliferation.

While the Centre is making good efforts to promote regional discourses on the important agenda of peace and disarmament, it heavily relies on voluntary contributions for its programmes. Nepal is committed to strengthening the Centre as an effective UN entity, dedicated for international peace and security, and calls for enhanced level of support to the Centre from the international community, especially by the Member States from Asia Pacific region.

Like in the previous years, along with other co-sponsoring countries, Nepal will soon be tabling a resolution on ‘United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific’ at the current session of the Committee. We appreciate the continued support from all the delegations towards this end.

My delegation engages constructively regarding the issues of free flow of information, right to privacy, including on matter of governance and cyber security.

Mr. Chairman,
In conclusion, this Committee, being a true multilateral and inclusive deliberative forum, has an important responsibility to guide the course of disarmament, non-proliferation and international peace and security. My delegation is confident that, under your able leadership, this Committee will continue to devote its time and energy to broaden understanding, create consensus and build confidence amongst Member States with a view to making the world a safe, stable, peaceful and prosperous place for all to live in.

Thank you.