Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania
to the United Nations

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR MODEST J. MERO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF
TANZANIA, AT THE UNITED NATIONS
DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE ON
GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT NEW YORK,

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NEW YORK

307 East 53rd Street, Room 500
New York, NY 10022 Tel. No. 212-697-3612 Fax No. 212-697-3618
Mr. Chairman,

I wish to join previous speakers in commending you and other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election to lead this important First Committee. Let me reaffirm our full support and cooperation from my delegation as you discharge your important responsibilities.

My delegation aligns to the statements delivered by Zambia and Indonesia, on behalf of African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement respectively, and wish to compliment them with the following remarks in our national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

74th Session of UNGA is taking place while the world is still facing a catastrophic global peace and security dilemma to the human race and environment posed by the perpetual existence, modernization and manufacturing of Nuclear Weapons. The United Republic of Tanzania commends the continued efforts of the United Nations since 1964 on elimination of nuclear weapons. My country has been a supporter of these efforts and we believe that total elimination and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons remains a crucial element to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

As you may recall, UNGA plenary session which was convened on 26th September 2019, provided us with an opportunity to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of the Nuclear Weapons. In the meantime, this meeting, serves as a reminder to all of us on the importance of Nuclear Disarmament, the Nuclear Weapon States and their allies continue to rely heavily on nuclear weapons in their security doctrines and invest billions of dollars in upgrading and modernizing their arsenals.

Mr. Chairman

As we are marking the seven decades since the first ever deadly atomic attack in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it is the right time for the world at large to have a common position that ensure a total elimination of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. In view of the fact that the scope and magnitude of the humanitarian consequences caused by nuclear weapon detonations are catastrophic and more complex, no doubt that ‘there would always be no winners in nuclear warfare’. In this regard, the United Republic of Tanzania would like to join hands with other member states to call the Nuclear Weapon States to fully comply with their legal obligations and unequivocal undertakings to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons unconditionally, in a transparent, irreversible and internationally verifiable manner as guided by NPT. Thus, it is important that all Non-Nuclear Weapon States be provided with universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and legal binding assurances by all Nuclear Weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any pretext.
Mr. Chairman,

At this point, I wish to reaffirm that Tanzanian is fully committed to support and complement all UN efforts in compliance with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons towards total elimination of nuclear weapons. Against this background, the United Republic of Tanzania in 2017, along with other 122 countries adopted the historic Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was officially signed on 26th September 2019 of which its ratification process is underway.

While we all regret that the 9th NPT Review Conference was unable to come up with the final outcome document, despite the concerted efforts of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States the United Republic of Tanzania welcomes the 2020 Review Conference on Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It is our profound wish that the conference will be successful and instrumental in providing us with an opportunity to assess progress so far made and address all outstanding substantive and procedural NPT issues.

Mr. Chairman

In underscoring our commitment to the prohibition of nuclear weapons, the United Republic of Tanzania encourages the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and we urge the International Atomic Energy Agency to continue providing necessary scientific and technical support to member states. The peaceful use of nuclear has brought tremendous benefits to the Tanzanian society today. The Tanzania Atomic Energy Commission continues to play a significant role in the field of peaceful uses of atomic energy, nuclear technology, radiation protection, nuclear safety and waste management. With the partnership of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), our non-lethal nuclear capacity has been largely improved in various areas including agriculture, mining industries and energy.

Mr. Chairman,

The proliferation of conventional weapons such as Small arms and Light Weapons (SALW), land mines and cluster munitions is deemed as the most immediate security challenge to individuals, societies and States worldwide, fueling civil wars, organized criminal violence, insurgency and terrorist activities posing great obstacles to sustainable security and development. Since United Republic of Tanzania being the signatory of various international legal instruments, we reiterates our full commitment to support the international community efforts to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit Trade in Small arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects in compliance with the existing legal instruments including the 2013 Arms Trade Treaty (ATT); The 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions and 1997 Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines.

Mr. Chairman,

Tanzania is also part of the Regional legal instruments and mechanisms to address the scourge of Small Arms and Light Weapon, including the 2001 Bamako Declaration on African common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of SALW; the 2001 SADC Declaration on firearms, Ammunition and other related materials ; the 2000 Nairobi Declaration
on the Problems of the Proliferation of the illicit SALW and Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa; the 2004 Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of SALW in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering states; and the 2011 African Union Strategy to control illicit trade in SALW.

Mr. Chairman,

In implementing all protocols, programme of action and declarations on Small arms and light weapons to which Tanzania is a Party, all activities to prevent, combat and eradicate the proliferation of these weapons are well coordinated and implemented through the established National Focal Point Office under the lead of the Tanzanian Police Force. However, despite the initiatives taken by the Government, Tanzania continue to face challenges in controlling the illicit spread of Small arms and Light weapons due to the spillover effect of the internal armed conflicts in the Great lakes Sahara and Sub Sahara region.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation believes that, there is link between disarmament and development. In this regard much as we are set to project and witness a TOTAL SILENCE OF GUNS by year 2020, we need to review our national priorities with a view of focusing resources on achievements of sustainable development under the auspices of new 2030 Agenda adopted in 2015 and indeed reducing military expenditure. Likewise, it is in this context that we wish to call upon the nuclear weapons States to divert their resources to sustainable development from further modernization, upgrading, refurbishment, or extending the lives of their nuclear weapons and related facilities.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion allow me to underscore that the multilateral diplomacy and solid political will of Member States are important in achieving the general and complete disarmament. I wish to reaffirm full commitment and support of the United Republic of Tanzania in cooperation with the international community in making the entire world free from nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction a reality and urges member states to step up efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons

I thank you