Republic of Malawi

STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED AT THE SECOND CONFERENCE ON THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS,

14TH FEBRUARY, 2014; NAYARIT, MEXICO

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Lilongwe 3

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Thank you Chair,

Since I am taking the floor for the first time, let me join all the previous Speakers in congratulating the Government of the United Mexican States, for hosting this very important Conference. I should also express my gratitude to the organisers for the warm welcome and the hospitality.

The Government of Malawi acknowledges the effort that the Mexican Government makes in the Nuclear disarmament campaign. Putting up this great Conference is a manifestation of its great commitment to international peace and security. We recognize the effort being made by other global players, especially the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), International Law Policy Institute (ILPI), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), in the campaign against nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Malawi realizes the fact that it is the duty, and responsibility of States and Governments, to take up the humanitarian discourse, and start the negotiations for a multilateral legally binding instrument that will ban the production, testing, use and stockpiling of nuclear weapons. After listening to those testimonies from the survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bomb attacks, and the stories from the third generation, Marshall Island and Kazakhstan, it would be myopic to argue that the evidence is not yet ripe for a multilateral legal instrument against nuclear weapons.

We understand that the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, has increasingly been recognised as a fundamental and global concern that must be at the core of all deliberations on nuclear disarmament and nuclear
non-proliferation. All the presentations and the plenary discussions, in this Conference, have affirmed that no State or international body could address the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear weapon detonation or provide adequate assistance to victims. It is clear that the catastrophic effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed. Malawi believes that the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again, is through their total elimination. Pride and prestige, that come as a result of possessing nuclear weapons, cannot be put ahead of the survival of the human race.

It is beyond arguments, that the humanitarian consequences of any nuclear weapon detonation are so catastrophic and that their very use goes beyond the realm of international humanitarian law.

Malawi has always rendered political support for the disarmament of nuclear weapons. We have supported the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) by participating in past Conferences, aimed at promoting the entry into force, of the Treaty, and by voting for all resolutions aimed at nuclear disarmament in the First Committee of the General Assembly. As part of its efforts to see the eradication of nuclear weapons, Malawi also hosted a national workshop on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), in 2006.

Malawi wishes to affirm its interest in and commitment to the humanitarian discourse against nuclear weapons, and the prospect for a ban. Malawi shall support all efforts towards realizing a global ban on nuclear weapons, and indeed all weapons of mass destruction.
We are cognizant of the support by such states as Norway and Mexico, which have hosted the First and second Conference, respectively, and we now welcome the pledge by Austria, to host the next Conference, before the end of this year. We believe these Conferences are cementing the conviction among states represented in here today, that nuclear weapons must indeed be banned once and for all.

As a non-nuclear weapon state, we are so proud to be a signatory to the African Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty (the Pelindaba Treaty), which is our regional approach to strengthen global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament norms and consolidate international efforts towards peace and security.

Malawi recognizes that the danger posed by nuclear weapons is real and the time to act is now. This Conference has taken us a long way that we cannot retreat, we look forward to an outcome that gives hope for a world free of nuclear weapons. We look forward to a world where nuclear technology can only be used for peaceful purposes and not as a tool of war.

Thank you for your attention.