STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR MODEST J. MERO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA,

GENERAL ASSEMBLY SEVENTY-FIRST SESSION

"DURING THE OPENING OF THE UN CONFERENCE TO NEGOTIATE A LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT TO PROHIBIT NUCLEAR WEAPONS LEADING TOWARDS THEIR TOTAL ELIMINATION"

NEW YORK, 27th MARCH, 2017
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AMBASSADOR MODEST J. MERU
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC
OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
DURING THE OPENING OF THE UN CONFERENCE TO NEGOTIATE
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Madame President,
Allow me to join the preceding speakers in extending congratulations to you and other
Bureau Members on your well deserved election and assure you of our full support and
cooperation in this Conference which is intended to negotiate a legally binding
instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.

At the outset, let me restate that, the United Republic of Tanzania is against these
lethal weapons of all generations, whose presence and advancement continue to pose
indiscriminate threat to peace and security of all humankind and this is why in 2016 we
voted in favour the resolution on “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament
negotiations” in both First Committee as well as General Assembly.

Whereas, the development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes for curing
deadly non-communicable diseases such as cancer, applications in preservation of fresh
food against post-harvest loss, irradiation for water and sanitation, eradication of
Tsetse and fruit flies and for power generation is an inalienable right and has been the
best innovation of the century. However, its use in weapon systems remains the worst
nightmare to all of us. Furthermore, we believe that their stock-pilling in silos where
human error and accidents are unpredictable, we are convinced that it present a great
security risk to the entire humanity.
In this regard, we support all efforts by the international community that are geared towards a total, irreversible and verifiable disarmament of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We are a party to the NPT and committed to the implementation of the Plan of Action that was adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. However, the failure to agree on outcome document at the 2015 Review Conference in New York is enough evidence that nuclear disarmament regime has serious problem that need be resolved.

**Madam President,**

The United Republic of Tanzania is also a party to the Treaty of Pelindaba which establishes the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. We were delighted by the entry into force of the Treaty in July 2009 and are looking forward to the ratification of the Protocols to the Treaty by the remaining members of the United Nations Security Council. We urge all Nuclear Weapon States to provide unconditional and legally binding security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances, including in the context of the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone instrument. We are also concerned on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and continue to call on States, particularly the Nuclear Weapon States to consider the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of these weapons on human health among others.

**Madam President,**

The United Republic of Tanzania is not a member of the Conference on Disarmament but shares the frustration of many states for its failure to achieve its goals. Despite the frustration, we must find a functional way out. Negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention; on fissile material cut-off treaty; peaceful uses of the outer space; negative securities and many others must take place without further delay. In this regard, it is ripe that we also consider the expansion of the machinery to give it a better multilateral appearance.

**Madam President,**
Nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and development of nuclear technology for peaceful uses must go in tandem with nuclear safety and security. We must do whatever it takes to ensure that non-state actors, particularly terrorists, pirates and mercenaries do not get hold of these dangerous substances as they do with conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons that devastate most of our communities on daily basis. The implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 of 2004 is of paramount importance. The supervision of the IAEA is pivotal; and cooperation between States in this area is crucial in averting unilateral innovations, that genuinely raises suspicion from some of us.

Madam President,

Besides the challenges which this Conference faces, my delegation wishes to conclude by reminding Member States that, United Nations is against the perils of war, diseases and poverty. Hence it is our duty to eliminate nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. We must do that progressively and with the goal to achieve their total and irreversible elimination. Tanzania stands ready to do its part.

I thank you.