



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY NECTON  
MHURA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI TO THE UNITED  
NATIONS AT THE 2016 GENERAL DABATE OF  
THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

*New York, 6 October 2016*

**Mr. Chairman**

Malawi extends warm congratulations to you Ambassador Sabri Boukadoum, Permanent representative of Algeria to the United Nations, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the 2016 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Malawi seizes this opportunity to congratulate other members of the Bureau on their election, and expresses appreciation to your predecessor Ambassador Van Oosterom from the Kingdom of Netherlands for his contribution and constructive ideas, as Chairman of the 2015 substantive session.

Malawi also expresses appreciation to the High-Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Kim Won-soo for his thoughtful remarks.

Malawi aligns itself with the statements delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement and Nigeria on behalf of the African group.

**Mr. Chairman**

The very first resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1946 called for “the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction.” Every year, the General Assembly adopts 40-50 resolutions on disarmament and non-proliferation by a majority vote or by consensus, turning the First Committee into a resolution-generating machine, from which repetitive, redundant resolutions are tabled and voted on year after year.

**Mr. Chairman**

While the First Committee offers many opportunities in principle, it often fails to make good use of its potential. There is a discord of perceptions between member states—the way one state perceives elements and challenges to its security often differ widely from the way other states perceive their own situations, or the global situation. Thus discussion in the First Committee is largely static. There is limited acknowledgment of other states' perspectives, and a lack of flexibility in re-examining one's own perspective.

**Mr. Chairman**

Some states have become entrenched in their positions, and do not listen to the arguments or suggestions of others. They reject the norms of the majority—who

have arrived at a common understanding through discussion, debate, and compromise—and oppose resolutions that would otherwise demonstrate consensus on many disarmament-related issues. In turn, these time-hardened positions have given rise to a number of static annual resolutions. For far too long, multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations have been at a standstill. We must not allow a small number of nations to continue building up and modernizing their nuclear arsenals, which threatens all humanity.

**Mr. Chairman**

The First Committee is supposed to provide space for each state to discuss their positions on disarmament-related matters, and to work together to come up with compromises or to propose language or tools to better understand and approach the issues. It should offer the opportunity for states to build consensus on the issues, to reach common understandings and principles and to agree on norms of behavior. Thus rather than ensuring “security” through the size of their arsenals, governments can discuss how to best to arrive at cooperative security arrangements that minimize spending on weapons, reduce arms production, trade, and stockpiles, and increase global security. This consensus can subsequently be used in other disarmament fora, such as the Conference on Disarmament, where disarmament treaties are negotiated.

**Mr. Chairman**

Africa remains a nuclear weapons free zone since the entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba of which Malawi is a signatory. We assure you that our country shall continue to observe and honour this status. We again seize this opportunity, to encourage remaining States yet to ratify this treaty, particularly the States contemplated in Protocol III, and to take necessary measures to ensure its speedy application.

**Mr. Chairman**

Nuclear weapons pose a present and existential threat to mankind and their use is a violation of the UN Charter, norms of human civilization and aggravated crime against humanity. We wish to call on nuclear weapons States to consider the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and to take

measures aimed at voluntary renunciation and dismantling of these weapons. Malawi welcomes the continued consideration of humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, including the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear weapons convened by Mexico on 13-14 February 2014 and the subsequent meetings. Malawi stands by its pledge in support of the Government of Austria on the pledge it made at the Vienna Conference on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. Malawi supports the widely endorsed proposal for legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, and will support any resolution tabled to establish the negotiating mandate for such instrument.

**Mr. Chairman**

In terms of adoption and implementation of non-proliferation treaties, Malawi is a party to and fully implements all the requirements of Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Chemical Weapon Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention (BTWC). Malawi places importance on implementing all provisions of such multilateral treaties including those covering nuclear disarmament. Malawi is also setting up a Technical Committee to adopt national rules and regulations to ensure compliance with its commitments under the key multilateral non-proliferation treaties. Malawi is committed to multilateral cooperation within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention, in order to achieve common objectives in the area of non-proliferation and to promote international co-operation for peaceful purposes and for adequate resources and assistance to be provided to developing countries. Malawi has developed appropriate ways to work with, and inform, industry and the public regarding their obligations under disarmament and non-proliferation laws on an on-going basis.

**Mr. Chairman**

In conclusion, Malawi will continue to support confidence building measures in the field of conventional weapons at all levels, as this would contribute to strengthening international peace and security. So long as nuclear weapons exist, there is a real danger they will be used again. A ban is urgently needed.

**I thank you.**