



**Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United  
Nations  
New York**

---

*Check against Delivery*

**Statement by Ms Elsa Haile, Director of Regional and International Organizations Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea at the First Committee of the 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly General Debate**

**New York, 7 October 2016**

Mr. Chairman;

At the outset, I like to thank the Chair and our Committee for the one minute silence to pay respect to the late Ambassador Girma Asmerom, Permanent Representative of the State of Eritrea who passed away two days ago. Indeed he is a great loss to his family and Eritrea as well as to the UN Community.

Mr. Chair,

I wish to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your elections to steer the work of this important Committee. I want to assure you of my delegation's full support.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statements made by the distinguished representative of Nigeria and the distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement respectively.

Economic growth and inclusive development are at the center of Eritrea's foreign and national security policy which promotes regional peace and cooperation. Eritrea is of the belief that to ensure and maintain international peace and security requires stable and inclusive global economic and social development and full respect of the UN Charter, international law as well as treaty obligation.

Mr. Chairman,

To foster peace and safeguard security on a national, regional and global level in a highly integrated and interdependent world is a shared responsibility. As violent extremism, transnational crimes and massive population movements continue to evolve and threaten global peace and security robust partnerships are necessary to secure our borders. In order to counter these transgressions, stronger multilaterally negotiated, transparent, comprehensive

and non-discriminatory instruments must stand at the forefront of cooperation. In this regard, Eritrea reiterates its commitment to the work of disarmament and international security as disarmament can only be achieved on a multilateral basis. Only through collective political will can we achieve our shared goal of a nuclear-free world.

Mr. Chairman,

The global community and in particular, the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region continue to fall victim from the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons. With the expansion of ISIL and the volume of weapons diverted through illicit trade is fueling instability, transnational crimes and terrorism to an alarming level.

In this connection, the sovereignty of states to protect their borders is their inalienable right and duty. Therefore, unjustified arms embargo that obstructs states' defense capabilities is a threat to regional and international peace and security. Eritrea believes in order to combat this phenomenon and prevent opportunities for extremists and terrorists to acquire these weapons, require enabling states to enhance their capacities to protect their sovereign territories.

In addition, strengthening institutional capacities at the regional and sub-regional levels would make significant strides in addressing the global plague of illicit small arms and light weapons. Eritrea will continue to closely work with the sisterly countries to advance the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa and the work of the Regional Center on Small Arms (RECSA) to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons from the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to humankind and to the survival of civilization. Eritrea believes the only assurance against the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. Eritrea also believes that legally binding negative assurance, establishment of nuclear free zones as well as the universalization and early entry into force of Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) are critical steps towards general and complete nuclear disarmament. Eritrea regrets the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt an outcome document; however, Eritrea reiterates support for all the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, disarmament is the only viable tool for a more secure planet. Eritrea believes international and regional security can only be realized through pacific settlements of disputes, adherence to rule of law and global economic cooperation. In this regard, we must go beyond regulation and disarmament to address factors that contribute to and exacerbate conflicts such as: underdevelopment, insecurity, weak states and external intervention and occupation.

Thank you!