



**INTERVENTION BY
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE DR. MOTSOAHAE THOMAS
THABANE, PRIME MINISTER OF
THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
DELIVERED AT
THE UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
(HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT)
26 SEPTEMBER, 2013**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

1. Thank you for giving me the floor. I align myself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Iran and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Africa Group, respectively.
2. The United Nations (UN) was formed on the ashes of the two World Wars. Its main purpose was, and is still is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which has twice in our lifetime brought untold sorrow to humanity. Ever since its formation, the UN has been working tirelessly to build a peaceful, secure and prosperous world with disarmament has been at the center of its activities.
3. However, the goal of a peaceful world – a world in which humanity can live without fear of extinction as a result of the use of nuclear weapons, continues to further recede from sight. Despite the universally embraced norm against possession and use of nuclear weapons, some countries still possess these weapons in large quantities. Others routinely modernize their arsenals, or engaged in proliferation activities.

Mr. President,

4. Possession of nuclear weapons does not only flout the spirit for the UN Charter, but it also exacerbates international disputes and conflict. Unless these weapons are totally eliminated, the world will

never be at peace with itself. The road to global nuclear disarmament begins with the total commitment by all of us to the full and effective implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Nuclear Weapon States must live to their commitments under this Treaty. Equally, we urge States not party to the NPT to join the Treaty as a clear testimony of their commitment to pursuing a path of peace and building a safer world.

Mr. President,

5. The importance of nuclear weapons free zones in contributing to the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is well known. In this regard, we wish to emphasise that our support for the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons (MEZFNWs) shall not wane. The MEZFNWs is central to the NPT regime as it is to global peace. The deadline may not have been met for the convening of a conference on the MEZFNWs in 2012, but the goal remains to be achieved. Lesotho shall support all efforts of ensuring that this goal becomes a reality.

Mr. President,

Humanity derives no comfort from the paralysis in the United Nations Disarmament Machinery, particularly in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). We will fail in our primary duty of advancing the security interests of our peoples, if the status quo in the CD remained perpetually. We call for

renewed momentum and political will in that body to move the nuclear disarmament agenda forward. It is through the pursuit of real multilateralism that the aspirations of a peaceful, prosperous and safe world for the future generations may be achieved.

Mr. President,

Nuclear disarmament is an imperative of our time. It must always remain high on our agenda. The impediments in our path towards that goal are not insurmountable. This historical meeting gives us an opportunity to renew our collective commitment to a nuclear weapons free world – a world that is safe for future generations, sustained by the shared values of universal peace and prosperity. Together with all stakeholders including civil society, we can make the world a better place for all. Let us emerge out of this meeting with a renewed commitment to the nuclear disarmament goal.

I THANK YOU