



**STATEMENT BY  
H.E. MATETE 'NENA  
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO TO  
THE UNITED NATIONS  
DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST  
COMMITTEE**

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**Madam Chair,**

Allow me to begin by congratulating you as the first woman Permanent Representative to assume the Chairmanship of the First Committee. We assure you and other members of the bureau of our full support and cooperation. My delegation aligns itself with the statements by Chad on behalf of the African Group and Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

In today's troubled world, where conflicts persist and human rights violations abound, the imperative to build peace is more pressing than ever. It is humanity's greatest responsibility, belonging to us all – individually and collectively

**Madam Chair,**

This General Debate of the First Committee comes at an arduous time when the disarmament and non-proliferation regime is losing its grip. International security continues to deteriorate, as the world faces immense challenges to peace and security.

We continue to express concern over the current difficult and complex situation in the field of disarmament and international security and the heightened global geopolitical tensions, further necessitating the promotion and earliest achievement of nuclear disarmament goals.

Amidst intense conflicts across the globe, progress on disarmament remains a critical imperative. Rising geopolitical tensions remind us of the unacceptable risks posed by the existence of nuclear weapons.

In the recently adopted Pact for the Future, world leaders have recommitted to the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This declaration must be backed up by concrete action. We are living in uncertain times and the need to secure the global community has never been greater. The Total Elimination of nuclear weapons is pivotal to international peace and security as well as to global economic growth and development. Lesotho, therefore, seeks more profound and concrete measures in pursuit of the objective of nuclear weapons disarmament in a verifiable and irreversible manner within a clear timeframe. In this context,

we reiterate our commitment to the TPNW and will continue to support the principle of complete nuclear disarmament, as the utmost prerequisite for maintaining international peace and security.

We must reaffirm and strengthen the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, which is even more pronounced given the existing conditions in the world today. We are disappointed with the lack of substantive progress in implementing the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

As we prepare for the 3rd NPT PrepCom to be held in 2025, we urge all NPT States Parties to work together to achieve concrete outcomes and uphold the NPT's relevance as the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Another crucial disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation instrument is the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). With only nine outstanding ratifications remaining before the Treaty can enter into force.

We call on all remaining Member States, in particular the Annex 2 countries that have yet to sign and ratify the CTBT, to bring it into force.

The Kingdom of Lesotho re-affirms the central role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the consolidation of the NPT, as well as its significance in addressing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation across all regions of the world. It is our considered view that Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones enhance global peace and security

The objective to maintain international peace and security and to achieve a world without nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is the **raison d'être** for the formation of the United Nations. Sadly, the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction continues to shatter our hopes for a peaceful world. This is so despite the fact that, over the years the United Nations General Assembly has adopted numerous resolutions on the issue of arms control and disarmament including small arms. In the same vein, we are concerned that Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Weapons continue to pose a threat to global peace and security. The eroding international environment has had major implications for global arms control and disarmament architecture. We must, therefore, act

collectively to discharge the moral responsibility resting on us to ensure that people everywhere enjoy the right to peace and the sanctity of life.

**Madam Chair,**

On the subject of conventional arms, we continue to be fully committed to the full implementation of the humanitarian disarmament Conventions to which it is a State Party to, such as the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Autonomous Weapons Convention (CCW), the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention, and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, among others. Lesotho deems these Conventions to be key global instruments for our collective security and peace. We, therefore, reiterate that, restrictive measures on Autonomous Weapons, non-proliferation of Biological Weapons and the total ban of land mines and cluster munitions are essential for international peace, security and prosperity. Lesotho strongly condemns the use of cluster munitions anywhere, anytime; and by any actor, whether States or non-State actors.

Regarding Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS), Lesotho is of the firm belief that, these weapons raise ethical, legal, moral and technical questions, as well as international peace and security-related questions which should be thoroughly deliberated and examined in the context of conformity to international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We are of the view that Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems must remain under the direct, meaningful control and supervision of humans at all times.

Additionally, Lesotho is perturbed about Member States of the UN which continue to produce, stockpile and transfer land mines, and consequently, causing indiscriminate harm to hundreds and thousands of civilian populations. The burden placed by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war on individuals, communities, regions and States remains high and unacceptable.

**Madam Chair,**

In a world marred by soaring conflicts and acute humanitarian catastrophe compounded by misuse of arms, there is a pressing need for collective action. In this context, the Lesotho wishes to stress that the regulation, prohibition and restriction of the use of these types of weapons that could cause unnecessary suffering to combatants or have indiscriminate effects on civilians must remain the prime focus of the UN. We acknowledge that the absence of peace heightens the likelihood of human rights violations. We, therefore, emphasize the crucial linkage between non-proliferation of weapons, and the realization of human rights, for everyone.

**Madam Chair,**

Lesotho remains deeply concerned over the illicit trade, transfer, manufacture, possession and circulation of small arms and light weapons, their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world, particularly on the continent of Africa.

Against this backdrop, we welcome the adoption without a vote of the outcome document of the Fourth UN Conference to Review Progress in the

Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPoA) in New York in June this year.

We also take note of the developments in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) where it was able to adopt a decision which established five Subsidiary Bodies.

**Madam Chair,**

Lesotho reaffirms its commitment to the peaceful uses of outer space. We underscore that all activities in the exploration and use of outer space must be carried out in accordance with the UN Charter and international law. We also emphasize the importance of maintaining an open and inclusive international framework for the governance of space. We are encouraged by consensus adoption of the Final Report, of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We also recognize that discussions on norms, rules and

principles have been valuable in our pursuit of preventing an arms race in outer space.

**Madam Chair,**

The time has come for the international community to demonstrate resolve and commitment to ensure the issue of arms control and disarmament is done on a multilateral basis in order to secure global peace and security. In recent years, new dimensions have become increasingly important in international security, these include terrorism, illegal arms, human and drug trafficking. The United Nations has had to grapple with crisis situations in many parts of the world in pursuance of its mandate to maintain international peace and security. Therefore, there is a need to demonstrate the importance of multilateralism as a major facet of international relations.

**Madam Chair,**

Allow me to reiterate Lesotho's support for all United Nations Resolutions on arms control and disarmament and in particular, on the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free zones across the world which aim to achieve nuclear

disarmament objectives and thereby promote and strengthen regional and global peace and security. It is in this spirit that I wish to reaffirm my country's commitment to the Treaty of Pelindaba which paved the way for the African continent to be a nuclear-weapons-free zone.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity and call on the entire international community to join hands in bridging the gulf between rhetoric and action and fast track the implementation of the NPT. It is in this spirit that we reiterate our call to nuclear weapon states to sign and ratify TPNW to ensure that humanity lives in peace without fear of extinction.

**I THANK YOU!!!**