



**NEPAL**

---

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Lok Bahadur Thapa,  
Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations,  
at the 78<sup>th</sup> UNGA, First Committee, General Debate on all  
disarmament and international security agenda items**

New York, 5 October 2023

*(Check against delivery)*

**Mr. Chair,**

I would like to congratulate you and members of the Bureau on being elected to steer this committee.

I assure you of my delegation's full support in the work of this Committee.

I align my statement with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

**Mr. Chair,**

We are once again convening in the midst of multiple challenges to international peace and security.

Conflicts and geopolitical tensions are expanding. Polarization, distrust, and dissension are rising. But dialogue and diplomacy are sidelined.

Nuclear arsenals and the arms race are on the rise.

The annual global military expenditure has soared 2.4 trillion US dollars. Resources critical for the attainment of the 2030 agenda of sustainable development goals have been diverted away.

The disarmament and non-proliferation regimes have seen setbacks with increasing reliance on nuclear deterrence in security doctrine where modernization and upgradation of nuclear arsenals continue unchecked.

It is imperative that we pause to reflect. Advanced arms or modernized nuclear weapons, or narrative of deterrence promise nothing, but only destruction.

**Mr. Chair,**

Today, no nation stands immune to the spectre of catastrophic consequences arising from the accidental or deliberate use of nuclear weapons.

For this, the elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee to the non-use of these weapons.

We call for legally binding assurances to non-nuclear-weapon-states against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

**Mr. Chair,**

Nepal's commitment to general and complete disarmament is total and unwavering.

This emanates from our constitution, and it remains a fundamental tenet of our foreign policy.

Nepal believes that the use or threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) is against the principles of the UN Charter and international humanitarian, human rights, and environmental laws.

**Mr. Chair,**

As a committed party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a signatory to the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), Nepal unequivocally calls for the general and complete disarmament of nuclear weapons in a time-bound manner.

TPNW complements and bolsters the objective of general and complete disarmament. Nepal is committed to ratifying it at the earliest possible.

We consider NPT as the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We regret the persistent failures of NPT review conferences to reach a consensus on a substantive outcome. We call upon the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) to demonstrate renewed political will for the successful outcome of the 11<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference.

Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS) must fully honor their legal obligations by ensuring the transparent, irreversible, and verifiable elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

We also stress the early conclusion of the Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty.

Nepal lends its full support to the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, which are building blocks of disarmament and a world free from nuclear weapons.

Nepal strongly supports the inalienable right of states, as stipulated in Article IV of the NPT, to harness nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) should continue promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy while strengthening its safeguard mechanism to prevent proliferation.

We sincerely believe that the discussions on arms control should be inclusive and transparent.

**Mr. Chair,**

Nepal commends the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) for its effective operation and verification mechanisms, which provide credibility to the regime. Likewise, the Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention (BWC) stands as a vital framework to prevent the weaponization of biology, and we must bolster its foundations. Urgently, we need a universal, non-discriminatory, and legally binding mechanism to address biological threats.

Illicit trade of small arms and light weapons remains a persistent cause of violent deaths globally provided their use by criminals, human rights abusers including terrorists. We should continue to build on the outcome of the BMS8 (*Eighth Biennial Meeting of the States to Consider 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*). Stronger cross-border cooperation and support is required to strengthen the implementation of its POA.

**Mr. Chair,**

As a global common heritage of humankind, outer space must be safeguarded against the perils of an arms race and weaponization. It should be reserved solely for peaceful endeavors. We advocate for transparency and confidence-building measures in all matters related to outer space.

Both outer space and cyberspace are poised to become arenas of conflict amidst growing mistrust and confrontation.

The prospect of malicious use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and frontier technologies is looming large.

Nepal emphasizes the pressing need for a global regulatory framework to ensure an open, secure, and accessible ICT and cyberspace. Developing countries should be provided support to enhance their cybersecurity capabilities.

Disarmament machinery should not be the hostage of parochial national interest. The United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) must operate effectively to propel us forward in non-proliferation and disarmament.

We support the inclusion of gender perspectives in disarmament frameworks recognizing that women, youth, and civil society actors are catalysts for change within the disarmament architecture.

We believe that regional disarmament institutions and regimes play a crucial role in complementing the global disarmament framework by fostering dialogue and confidence-building measures. We must enhance the role of UN regional centers for regional disarmament.

**Mr. Chair,**

Nepal will table a draft resolution entitled 'United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific' in the capacity of the host state.

My delegation looks forward to receiving the continued co-sponsorship and support of all Member States, as we have enjoyed in the past, for the adoption of this resolution by consensus.

In conclusion, Nepal reaffirms its commitment to the pursuit of disarmament, peace, and security.

Our collective future depends on the solidarity and cooperation we forge within and beyond this committee.

Let us work together to build a safer, more peaceful world for all.

**I thank you**