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STATEMENT

BY

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At the General Debate of the First Committee

14 October 2014

NEW YORK
Mr. Chairman,
At the outset, let me join other delegations in congratulating you on your election as Chairman of
the First Committee. We wish you and the members of the Bureau every success leading the
work of the Committee, and assure you of our full support and cooperation.

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of
Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). However, I wish to make the following observations in my
national capacity:

Afghanistan reiterates its full commitment to multilateral diplomacy, as an important principle
for advancing disarmament, non-proliferation and international security. We believe the global
goals towards arms control, arms reduction, and the full eradication of any type of Weapons of
Mass Destruction can only be realized through all sides displaying strong political will.

Afghanistan supports, unequivocally, all initiatives in the sphere of Nuclear disarmament.
Consistent with a core pillar of our foreign policy, we are fully committed to realizing a Nuclear
Weapons Free Zone in Asia and other parts of the world. In this regard, Afghanistan is party to
both the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Mr. Chairman,

As highlighted in two previous conferences in Oslo and Nayarit, the catastrophic consequences
and humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons are unbearable and should serve as an imperative
to prevent any use of these weapons in the future. We echo other delegations in saying that the
only guarantee against this is the total elimination of all Nuclear Weapons. We welcome the call
made at the Nayarit conference, for the development of a legally binding instrument prohibiting
any use of Nuclear Weapons and we are looking forward to the 3rd Conference to be held in
Vienna in December this year.

Decades after the adoption of the NPT, we have yet to see any substantial progress towards its
implementation particularly with regards to Article VI of the Treaty. As we approach the 9th
review conference of the NPT next year, we believe that sincere commitment and cooperation is
required by all, particularly Nuclear Weapon States; in order to move towards the realization of
the overall goal of the NPT and the objectives of its review conference.

We strongly support the establishment of a Middle East zone free of Nuclear Weapons and all
other Weapons of Mass Destruction. Any continuing delay in the establishment of the Middle
East Zone runs contrary to the commitments made at 2010 Review Action Plan and we call, in
this regard, for the convening of the conference without further delay.

We also stress the importance of achieving universal adherence to the CTBT and we believe its
entry into force will prevent further development and proliferation of these inhuman weapons.
Mr. Chairman,

This year marks one of the deadliest years for the Afghan people since 2001. Use of high Explosive Weapons systems with wide area effect, such as mortars, rockets and grenades, by terrorists groups in civilian populated areas and use of civilians as human shields have resulted in a dramatic increase in civilian causalities.

Indiscriminate and unlawful continuing use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), including pressure-plate IEDs, roadside bombs and suicide attacks by terrorists and extremist groups continue to cause an overwhelming loss of life of ordinary civilians, as well as Afghan and international security forces on a daily basis; and are in direct violation of international humanitarian law. However, my government in 2010, prohibited the import, export, and transfer of ammonium nitrate, the main substance for manufacturing IEDs, we still face a situation in which such substances continue to be trafficked into our territory from within our immediate region. As such, we call for more coherent efforts and integrated mechanisms to address this challenge in our region and beyond.

Mr. Chairman,

Having experienced enduring conflict and violence, Afghanistan has been one of the main victims of small arms and light weapons. During war time, millions of illegal arms and light weapons were imported or trafficked into our territory and over a million people were killed by small arms and light weapons alone and approximately one million people were disabled or handicapped because of these weapons and associated ammunitions. Small arms and light weapons have clearly been the main destabilizing and destructive element in Afghanistan over the last three decades. Afghanistan bears witness daily to fact that terrorists’ access to illegal small arms and light weapons fuels the cycle of violence in Afghanistan and in our region.

In this regard, Afghanistan fully supports the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. We welcome adoption of the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States, a process chaired by Afghanistan, and I thank all Member States for their cooperation throughout the process.

Despite the progress made in regulating the manufacture, trade, transit and circulation of small arms and light weapons, greater international cooperation and assistance is still needed to address challenges arising from the illicit circulation and uncontrolled spread of these weapons in many region of the world, particularly in conflict and post conflict situations. Hence, we also welcome the inclusion in the SDG’s the goal towards the reduction of illicit arms flow by 2030.

Mr. Chairman,

War and violence has left Afghanistan heavily mined; in fact it is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. Abandoned landmines and explosives ordinances continue to pose a great threat to the lives of many Afghan civilians and further jeopardize the security and development of Afghanistan and its people. Over a million people have already lost body parts due to landmines, and this widespread destruction and loss of life continue today. Moreover, at present,
the Taliban and extremist militant groups continue use mines to achieve their ultimate goal of threatening stability, safety, and development in Afghanistan.

Notwithstanding the many challenges ahead, the end of Afghanistan’s landmine and Explosive Remnants of War problem is in sight as Afghanistan has commenced work on a ten year plan in line with Ottawa Treaty extension request that will see Afghanistan mine free by 2023. This will be a monumental achievement for the country, a result of the hard work and dedication of the thousands of Afghan de-miners who have been supported technically and financially for many years by numerous donor states and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). Yet financial constraints greatly hinder our ability to meet this tremendous challenge successfully, therefore sustained international support and assistance is core in our shared efforts towards achieving this goal.

We welcome the Maputo+15 Declaration adopted at the Third Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personal Mines and Their Destruction. We condemn in the strongest terms all use of anti-personnel mines, and support the “completion” goals of the Maputo Review Conference. While the Convention has had great success in fomenting the international community’s resolve against such indiscriminate weapons and in implementing country-specific commitments, Afghanistan still suffers from the consequences of past use.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, Afghanistan is fully committed to the eradication of cluster munitions, and ratified the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions in September 2011. With the destruction of thousands of different munitions, Afghanistan is pleased to have destroyed all weaponry of this kind within its military stockpiles. We are fully committed to the provisions of the convention on cluster munitions, condemn all use of these weapons which are indiscriminate in their impact and we encourage its universalization.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.