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NATIONAL STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY DATO PADUKA HAJI ABDUL GHAFAR ISMAIL
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT

THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE SESSION
OF THE 69TH UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me begin by extending my warmest congratulations on your assumption as Chairman of the First Committee for this year’s session and also to the other members of the bureau on their elections.

You have our full support and best wishes in your efforts to promote the interests of the members of this committee.

Mr. Chairman,

Brunei Darussalam aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and we reaffirm that disarmament and non-proliferation play an important role in safeguarding world peace and stability.

With today’s unpredictable world security environment, there is a clear need to further intensify and improve disarmament efforts to address proliferation concerns. This is more so now, as we are faced by old and new threats. This, we believe, demands systemic change to handle old and new threats before they become uncontrollable.

Mr. Chairman,

Brunei Darussalam continues to stress the importance of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons at both regional and the global level. Thus our challenges here are how to improve the effectiveness of non-proliferation.

At the regional level, we are a State Party to the Treaty of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANFWZ). It would contribute more effectively and significantly to the maintenance of peace, security and prosperity in the region should all Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) accede without reservations to the Protocol of the SEANFWZ Treaty at the earliest opportunity.

At the global level, Brunei Darussalam has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) on 10 January 2013. We hope that the Treaty will soon enter into force and become fully operational to achieve its objectives.

Furthermore, on 18 February this year, Brunei Darussalam became the 162nd member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). For us, this membership signifies our continuous commitment to support nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as well as the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and energy.
Mr. Chairman,

On another issue, we are also deeply concerned with the advancement of other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), particularly with regard to chemical and biological weapons, which are readily available to many countries.

More alarming is that these WMDs are now possible alternatives for terrorists to use, and thus pose a greater threat to all. It is therefore imperative for the international community to ensure that counter-measures are keeping pace with the increasingly sophisticated methods for procuring WMDs.

On this note, Brunei Darussalam supports the efforts of the international community and relevant UN resolutions aimed at addressing potentially devastating consequences. We uphold the objectives and principles of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) as well as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Furthermore, we join the international community in condemning the use of chemical weapons in wars and conflicts which violates human rights and international law as well as cause great loss of lives.

Our concerns also include conventional weapons, in particular the illicit international transfer of small arms and light weapons (SALW). Hence, we encourage information sharing and capacity building as we believe such activities must be curbed and properly monitored not only for the countries that procure these weapons but also to those manufacturing them.

Mr. Chairman,

Brunei Darussalam therefore believes that supporting the process of disarmament and non-proliferation at regional and international levels can help achieve lasting global peace and security.

We reiterate our full commitment to non-proliferation of all types of nuclear weapons and other WMDs, through our established policy not to develop, acquire or proliferate any kind of WMD or their delivery systems. In this regard, Brunei Darussalam will continue to support international cooperation, peaceful settlement of disputes, dialogue and confidence building measures.

Thank You.