



ALGERIA

STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. MR. MOURAD BENMEHIDI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

**BEFORE
THE GENERAL DEBATE
FIRST COMMITTEE**

New York, 10 October 2012

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you for your election to the Chairmanship of the First Committee and assure you of the full support and cooperation from my delegation. We are confident that you will ensure, through your capabilities and long experience, the success of the Committee's work. Let me also felicitate other members of the Bureau on their election.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by Nigeria on behalf of the African Group as well as the statement delivered by Egypt on behalf of the Arab Group.

Algeria reiterates, on this occasion, his commitment to the multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and international security. During the year 2012, we have seen renewed efforts devoted to addressing a wide range of issues in this field. In this context, we note, among others, the convening of the Seoul Nuclear Summit, the NPT Preparatory Committee, the Diplomatic Conference of the Arms Trade Treaty, and the Review Conference of the Programme of Action on the illicit trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons. Those meetings offered opportunities to the international community to address a number of global challenges and make certain progress in this area.

In this regard, all States should pursue in good faith intensified multilateral negotiations, as agreed by consensus in the Final Document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly (SSOD-1), to achieve general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. As State-party to the main treaties related to weapons of mass destruction, Algeria reaffirms that nuclear disarmament remains its highest priority and expresses its serious concern over the danger to humanity posed by the existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use or threat of use.

My delegation would like to seize this opportunity to stress the need to universalize the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, and to ensure compliance with each of its three pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

While welcoming the convening of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference held in Vienna, Austria, earlier this year, Algeria calls on all States Parties to the NPT to implement the Action Plan adopted by consensus at the Eighth NPT Review Conference in May 2010. According to the terms of the NPT, Nuclear Weapons States have, in particular, to fully comply with their special obligations. It should also be recalled the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice which reaffirmed the continuing obligation of the States to work towards the elimination of their nuclear arsenals and the unlawful use of or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

In this regard, Algeria wishes to stress the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty. The achievement of such objective will contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. Algeria strongly supports the call for convening an international conference, at the earliest possible date, with the objective of an agreement on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified timeframe. In this context, Algeria wishes to reiterate the need for the conclusion of a legally binding instrument on Negative Security Assurances to all Non-Nuclear-Weapon States as well as a Nuclear Weapons Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

A majority of States have chosen to use atomic energy for exclusive civilian applications, in accordance with Article IV of the NPT. Indeed, the nuclear energy represents for many developing countries a strategic choice for their economic development and energy security needs. Accordingly, Algeria reaffirms the legitimate right to develop research, produce and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the non-proliferation regime.

The entry into force on 15 July 2009 of the Pelindaba Treaty establishing a nuclear weapons-free zone in Africa represents an important contribution to the strengthening of peace and international security. Algeria, which was among the first countries to have signed and ratified the Treaty of Pelindaba, calls on, in particular, States with nuclear weapons, which have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the relevant Annexes of this Treaty.

The example of the Pelindaba Treaty, and other nuclear-weapon-free zones established by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarontonga, Bangkok, Central Asia

and Mongolia's nuclear-weapons-free status, should also be followed in the Middle East. A positive step in that direction will be the convening in 2012 of the Conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East as set by the Action Plan of the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Algeria welcomes the initial steps taken such as the nomination of Ambassador Jaakko Laajava as Facilitator and the designation of Finland as a host government for the Conference.

Algeria calls on, therefore, the Secretary General of the United Nations and the three co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East to exert maximum efforts with a view to convening the 2012 Conference without any further delay and stresses the importance of the participation of all concerned countries in the Middle East at the Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

While we share the disappointment among Member States at the continuing impasse in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as well as in the Disarmament Commission, my delegation considers that this situation is caused by a lack of political will. In this regard, Algeria reaffirms the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament. At the same time, while recalling the decision CD/1864, adopted by consensus on 29 May 2009, under the Algerian presidency, Algeria calls on the CD to agree on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

On the substance, Algeria believes that no other UN forum does replace or relinquish the CD of its prerogatives or legitimize the dissociation of one of the fundamental issues within its mandate. Furthermore, we believe that the First Committee should send a strong and clear signal of support to the Conference on Disarmament. More generally, with such cases of persistent deadlock in some parts of the UN disarmament machinery, it will be relevant to convene a Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly (SSOD-IV) devoted to disarmament issues.

Mr. Chairman,

Algeria calls for balanced, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention as well as for the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Algeria regrets that the United Nations Conference for the Treaty on Arms Trade, held in New York last July, was unable to conclude its work to elaborate a legally binding instrument for the international transfer of conventional arms and looks forward for a resumed session of the Conference to be convened in 2013 in order to finalize the elaboration of the Arms Trade Treaty. The adoption of this new international instrument will certainly strengthen the institutional architecture in the field of disarmament.

Illicit trade of small arms and light weapons continue to threaten peace and stability in many countries and regions, particularly in Sahel, as a source of supply to terrorist groups and organized crime, and is therefore an ongoing concern to Algeria. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the successful conclusion of the Second Review Conference on the UN Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects. We continue to emphasize the importance of a full, balanced, and effective implementation of this Programme of Action. We wish also to stress that international cooperation and assistance is essential in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Mr. Chairman,

One of the basic guidelines of Algeria's foreign policy is our commitment to the regional peace and security. It is for this reason that the Algerian delegation will submit to the First Committee, as in previous years, a draft resolution on "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region" for which sponsorship and support from all delegations will be much appreciated.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, Algeria views the First Committee as an essential component of the UN Disarmament machinery and remains committed to working actively and constructively with all Member States in order to strengthen it during this 67th session of the General Assembly.

I Thank you