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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS TO THE HIGH LEVEL PLENARY MEETING TO
COMMEMORATE THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE
TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

New York, 26 September 2016

President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to join you as we observe the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. I thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing this meeting.

Our gathering comes near a number of auspicious commemorations.

Next February, the world will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Tlatelolco Treaty. This landmark instrument was the first to prohibit nuclear weapons from a densely populated region. It served as a model and inspiration for future nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Just a few days ago, the world marked the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The Secretary-General underscores the importance of all efforts to uphold the international norm against nuclear testing while we accelerate efforts for the Treaty's entry into force.

One day before that anniversary, the Security Council adopted a resolution in support for the CTBT. In welcoming this action by the Council, the Secretary-

General acknowledged the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to uphold their moratorium on nuclear tests.

But this resolution is not a substitute for the entry-into-force of the CTBT. Rather, it is a wake-up call for the need to accelerate our efforts toward the entry-into-force and universality of the Treaty.

As we scan the global horizon, we face growing nuclear dangers.

Progress in multilateral nuclear disarmament has come to a standstill.

Tens of billions of dollars have been pledged to maintain and upgrade nuclear weapon systems.

One country – the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea – has repeatedly defied the norm against nuclear testing and the will of the international community in the *irresponsible* pursuit of nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities.

Sadly, many countries continue to include nuclear deterrence in their security doctrines. But recent developments have shown that nuclear weapons do not ensure peace and security. Rather, their development and

possession has become a major source of international tension.

Meanwhile, we see growing divisions on the future of multilateral nuclear disarmament. The next review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons begins in 2017. The world cannot afford another period of inaction.

As the Secretary-General has often said, there are many possible paths to a nuclear-weapon-free world. May this day serve as a reminder that all paths should only lead to one destination – to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

I thank you very much for your dedication and commitment. I wish you all the best for your continued efforts to achieve a peaceful, more prosperous and nuclear-weapon-free world.

Thank you.