



**Statement by His Excellency Mr. Rudolph Michael Ten-Pow**  
**Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the**  
**Co-operative Republic of Guyana**

**General Debate of the Disarmament and International Security**  
**Committee (First Committee)**  
**on all Disarmament and International Security Agenda Items**

**Conference Room 4, United Nations Headquarters**  
**New York**

**11 October 2017**

**Mr. Chairman,**

At the outset, please accept my delegation's congratulations on your election as Chair of the First Committee for the 73<sup>rd</sup> session. I wish you success in the discharge of your mandate and can assure you of Guyana's full support. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Guyana aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of CARICOM and wishes to highlight a few points in its national capacity.

First, Guyana remains unwavering in its commitment to the disarmament agenda of the United Nations in all its aspects. The maintenance of international peace and security, which is the core purpose of the United Nations, requires the collective will and effort of the entire membership and disarmament is a crucial component of efforts to achieve this objective. Disarmament is even more urgent when we consider that development depends on peaceful, stable and secure societies and vice versa. As Agenda 2030 rightly recognizes, there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development. Guyana was therefore greatly encouraged by the many positive developments recorded over the past year in the field of disarmament.

We welcome the successful convening last June of the Third Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action for Combating the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. Efforts at all levels to combat the illicit trade in [SALW] are especially important to Guyana as a small developing country, given the serious humanitarian and socio-economic consequences of the proliferation of the illicit trade in our territories. This trade and associated illegal activities, such as transnational organized crime, drug trafficking, and trafficking in persons, is an obstacle to peace, security,

stability and sustainable development in our region and fuels a culture of violence. Guyana is of the view that the Programme of Action makes an important contribution to combatting this scourge and welcomes the outcome of the Third Review Conference. We were especially encouraged by the small but significant inroad made in having references to ammunition included and we hope that in the coming years Member States can reach consensus on the need to broaden the scope of the Programme of Action to addressing the question of ammunition in a comprehensive manner. We urge all Member States to work for the full implementation of the Programme of Action and underscore the importance of international cooperation and assistance in that regard.

Guyana also reaffirms its commitment to the Arms Trade Treaty and encourages those Member States that are yet to ratify the Treaty to do so in order to ensure the Treaty's universalization.

**Mr. Chairman,**

On the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Guyana remains firm in its conviction that nuclear weapons have no place in our world and that their continued existence is contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and the spirit of the Charter. The adoption last year of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons closed an important legal gap and strengthened the global norm for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Guyana recognizes that the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world depends on action by both Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Weapon States and was the first country to both sign and ratify the TPNW as a sign of our commitment to contribute to this goal on which the security of our planet and its peoples depends. We urge all Member States to ratify the Treaty in order to secure its early entry into force.

We also wish to underscore the need for all Member States to commit to the obligations provided for in the other legal instruments underpinning the disarmament architecture,

including the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and we appeal to all stakeholders to demonstrate responsible leadership on the question of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Guyana affirms the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and condemns the use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances. Our position is that the use of chemical weapons is in violation of international norms and standards and of the human rights of persons affected by their use. We are alarmed by the incidents of chemical-weapon use confirmed by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and welcome the Decision taken by the Fourth Special Session of the Conference of States Parties to the CWC on "Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use." We wish to underscore the importance of attributing responsibility whenever chemical weapons are used as a means of ensuring that perpetrators of this war crime do not act with impunity. We also believe that the process of attribution should be evidence-based and conducted in an impartial manner.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, Guyana is pleased with the increasing recognition of the need to include a gender dimension in our deliberations on questions of disarmament, peace and security. We recognize the essential contribution that women make on these critical issues and believe that women should be included at all levels of discussion and decision-making.

Guyana reiterates its strong and principled commitment to the United Nations disarmament agenda and its aspiration to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. We therefore intend to remain actively engaged in the work of this Committee.

I thank you.