



*Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zimbabwe
to the United Nations*

STATEMENT

BY

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AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

ON

2015 NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE

**30 APRIL 2015
NEW YORK**

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR FREDERICK M. M. SHAVA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ZIMBABWE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE 2015 NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE, NEW YORK, 27 APRIL - 22 MAY 2015

Allow me to express my delegation's warm congratulations to you, Your Excellency, on your election to the Presidency of the 2015 NPT Review Conference and for the manner in which you are conducting the Conference so far. My delegation assures you of our full cooperation and support as you lead us through this challenging but extremely important conference. My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the member states of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM), and by the Permanent Representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

May I take this opportunity to convey our sincere and heartfelt condolences to the Government and People of Nepal on the tragic disaster that has resulted in the loss of many lives and disrupted the lives of millions. Our thoughts and prayers, support and solidarity are with you at this difficult time.

Madame President;

Zimbabwe attaches great value to the urgent need for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which we believe must remain the highest priority of the NPT. We strongly believe that the NPT provides a solid basis upon which all countries (State Parties and non State Parties) should seek to eliminate the deadly weapon from the face of the earth. In this regard, Zimbabwe underscores the importance of political will to achieve the objective of total nuclear disarmament. It is our view that the 2015 NPT Review Conference can only register success if all of us gathered here today demonstrate goodwill, without which this Review Conference will amount to mere rhetoric. Indeed, this Review Conference should honestly interrogate, the progress or lack thereof, made so far towards the implementation of the Treaty since its inception 45 years ago. Particular focus must be directed towards assessing how we have fared with regards to the targets we set ourselves for during the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Madame President;

Zimbabwe recognizes the importance of simultaneously pursuing the three mutually reinforcing fundamental pillars of the NPT; ie nuclear disarmament; non proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We, nevertheless, stress that dismantling of the weapons must remain our primary concern for it is our firm belief that without these weapons, there will be no proliferation, or threat of their use. In this regard, Zimbabwe urges the Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) to honestly fulfill their legal obligations under Article VI of the Treaty. The NWS must also be seen to be providing leadership towards the objective of total elimination of nuclear weapons, particularly by demonstrating transparency, irreversibility and international verifiability of their practical measures as they fulfill their legal obligations.

Madame President;

Zimbabwe recognizes the nuclear reductions that have taken place so far and applauds NWS that have continued to pursue such reductions. We stress that such reductions should not be construed for urgent total elimination of the weapons. Zimbabwe is gravely concerned over the reported modernization of the existing nuclear weapons. No modernization of such weapons of mass destruction will make them safe and secure. Rather, we view the modernization as a way of sharpening the weapon's destructive capabilities.

While we believe that the greatest responsibility for nuclear disarmament lies with NWS, as recognized by the Treaty, we also believe that states that possess the weapons but are not part to the NPT have an equally important role in the pursuit for a world without nuclear weapons. It is therefore, imperative in our view, to engage in candid honest dialogue with those states in a bid to bring them on board. While we continue to call on those who are outside the NPT to join the Treaty as non nuclear weapon states, it is our belief that we should also be pragmatic and realistic going forward. Whether nuclear weapons are possessed by State Parties to the NPT or by those outside, these weapons remain a danger to human kind. We view the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 not as a sign of success, but as a warning that the world is increasingly sliding into the danger zone.

Madame President;

Before total elimination of nuclear weapons, NWS must continue to provide concrete legally binding security assurances particularly to non nuclear weapons states. We also believe that efforts must be strengthened in pursuit of a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC), one that will outlaw the possession of these deadly weapons. Such a convention would undoubtedly increase pressure for the dismantling of existing nuclear arsenal. In the same light, we also believe that the immediate entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) will enhance confidence among states. The ratification of the CTBT by Annex II States must be a priority we should continue to pursue.

Madame President, Zimbabwe fully subscribes to the NAM position which recognizes the inalienable right of all states to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this regard, we call upon the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to ensure transparency and fairness as it considers various cases across the globe. As the chief nuclear watchdog, the IAEA must never be seen to be biased towards some, while seemingly being lenient or demonstrating reluctance to rein in others. The agency must work to gain the confidence of all Member States to effectively undertake its important work.

We welcome the recently concluded framework of a comprehensive agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme under the E3+3 negotiations. Equally, the creation of zones free from nuclear weapons must remain a top priority of the NPT in order to act as a confidence building measure toward total elimination of the weapons. We are happy that as a region we have taken the bold step to establish a nuclear weapon free zone under the Pelindaba Treaty signed in Cairo on 11 April 1996 which entered into force on 15 July 2009. This Treaty for which the Chair of the African Union Commission is the depository prohibits the development, manufacture, stockpiling, acquisition testing, possession, control or stationing of nuclear explosive devices and the dumping of nuclear waste in the territory of state parties nor to assist or encourage such activities. It also prohibits any attack against nuclear installations in the zone by the State Parties and requires them to maintain the highest standards of physical protection of nuclear material facilities and equipment which are to be used exclusively

for peaceful purposes in compliance with the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. Zimbabwe, thus calls for focused and serious discussions to allow the holding of a conference on a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

Madame President;

Let me conclude by applauding all those who are honestly working towards realistic, verifiable, transparent and sustainable nuclear disarmament. We, nevertheless, note that the current international system is riddled with growing tensions, particularly major power rivalries. We therefore urge the world's most powerful countries to engage in honest political dialogue aimed at eliminating the growing tensions and lay the ground for the pacific resolution of disputes. Only when there is mutual trust and confidence in one another can there be meaningful and realistic efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

I thank you, Madame President and wish you success!!!