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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**H. E. MR. TETE ANTONIO  
AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT OBSERVER OF THE AFRICAN UNION  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON THE THEME, "PREVENTING  
CATASTROPHE: A GLOBAL AGENDA FOR STOPPING THE PROLIFERATION  
OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION BY NON-STATE ACTORS."**

**NEW YORK 15 DECEMBER 2016**

*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY*

**Your Excellency Mr. Alfonso Dastis, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain,**  
**Your Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General,**  
**Excellencies,**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me to start by congratulating you for convening this timely and very important debate, which comes at a time when criminal terrorist threats against global peace continue to persist. Your presence, Excellency Minister Dastis, to preside over today's discussions, stresses the critical importance of this debate and bears witness to your country's commitment to the fundamental principles and objectives of the UN Charter as well as to its determination to make a substantial contribution to the work of the UN Security Council. I wish to thank the previous speakers for their insightful presentations.

**Mr. President,**

Today's debate is an excellent opportunity that we must seize to demonstrate our commitment to take forward the ambitious recommendations emerging from the recent **2016 comprehensive review of the 1540 Committee**. The African Union recognizes that while progress has been achieved in regards to the implementation of Resolution 1540 (2004), much more remains to be accomplished if we are to witness long-term achievements in the global non-proliferation strategy for WMDs.

Clearly, the possibility for terrorist groups to carry out attacks by using chemical agents, may it be in the form of poisonous gases, liquids or solids with toxic effects on people and nature, remains a major global security concern. **The Defense and Security Division of the AU Peace and Security Department** recognizes that chemical weapons have been the most widely used and widely proliferated WMD compared to nuclear and biological weapons. In that context, terrorism brings a new dimension to the threat of proliferation of chemical weapons. Thus, it is our utmost responsibility to deny

access of nuclear, chemical and biological agents and technologies to unauthorized non-State actors.

As highlighted by the recent report of the 1540 Committee, this containment strategy **requires continuous efforts at national, regional and international levels.**

As you are all aware, Africa is a nuclear weapons free region with the signing and entry into force of the **Pelindaba Treaty**. The African Union has always been committed to global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. As early as 1964, the 1st Summit of the OAU adopted the landmark Cairo Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. This Declaration formed the basis and origin of subsequent efforts that culminated in the adoption of the Treaty of Pelindaba, which established the continent, as a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone.

It is indeed our view that Nuclear Weapon Free Zones remain an instrumental approach to strengthen global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament norms and consolidate international efforts towards achieving the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons – the NPT.

I wish to seize this opportunity to underscore that the African Union remains strongly committed to the **three NPT pillars of disarmament, nonproliferation and peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology** – all which are mutually reinforcing and equally fundamental for the authority and effectiveness of the regime.

**Mr. President,**

The adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1540 in 2004, added a critical and important tool to the global disarmament and non-proliferation framework – a tool that responds to the changing international security environment challenges and the growing range of actors within it. With the evolving threat of terrorism and transnational organized crime, the need to have a robust, effective and transparent approach to prevent non-state actors from acquiring, proliferating and using weapons of mass

destruction and their means of delivery, becomes a necessity and requires collective responsibility.

**The threats and risks that the resolution aimed to address more than ten years ago remain omnipresent.**

The increasing terrorist attacks in different regions, as well as, intelligence reports from various states indicate that terrorist groups continue to seek the material and the technology to construct and deploy weapons of mass destruction. Because of these reasons, the resolution continues to enjoy international consensus and support, especially in Africa.

In this regard, following the adoption of the UNSC resolution 1977 (extending the mandate of the 1540 Committee), the 20th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in January 2013, adopted a decision calling for the full and effective implementation of the resolution and requested the Commission, in collaboration with the 1540 Committee and the relevant regional and international partners, to support Member States' efforts towards this end.

The AU Commission has undertaken a number of activities to give political and practical support to the implementation of the resolution. These activities, combined with the indispensable technical support provided by the 1540 Committee, the partner states and organizations, have contributed to achieving significant progress in implementing the resolution. Such a statement cannot be made without duly recognizing the strong commitment of the Member States themselves, and the leading role they have taken, in achieving this progress. Indeed, without national ownership and leadership, no effort will produce long-term sustainable impact.

**Mr. President,**

As you are aware, assistance is a key component in the implementation of resolution 1540. Many African countries continue to face challenges which impact their ability to dedicate the human and financial resources required to implement the regional and global disarmament and security frameworks, including resolution 1540.

Therefore, we believe that we need to capitalize on the mandate of the 1540 Committee, the expertise and resources of the partner states and specialized agencies, in order to ensure that the gaps and challenges faced by the Member States are well provided for, through a consolidated, well-structured, and mutually-agreed process.

In conclusion, allow me to state that the AU Commission reaffirms its commitment to collaborate with the **African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE)**, the **Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)**, the **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)** and the **1540 Committee**, in order to enhance the capacities of its Member States to prevent, counter and respond to the global agenda to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors.

**I thank you for your kind attention.**

List of Speakers

1. The Deputy Secretary-General

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1. Mr. Kim Won-soo, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs
2. Mr. Brian Finlay, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Stimson Center
3. Mr. T. James Min, Vice-President., International Trade Law and Head, Global Trade Law Practice Group of DHL Global Business Services

**Council Members**

4. Spain (President) – His Excellency Mr. Alfonso Dastis, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
5. Senegal – His Excellency Mr. Mankeur Ndiaye, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad
6. New Zealand – His Excellency Mr. Murray McCully, Minister for Foreign Affairs
7. United Kingdom – His Excellency Mr. Jeremy Wright QC MP, Attorney General for England and Wales
8. Angola – His Excellency Mr. Manuel Domingos Augusto, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
9. Ukraine – His Excellency Mr. Sergiy Kyslytsya, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
10. Russian Federation
11. Venezuela
12. Uruguay
13. Japan
14. France
15. Malaysia
16. China
17. United States
18. Egypt

**Rule 39**

19. Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü, Director General, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
20. Mr. Raja Raja Adnan, Director of the Division of Nuclear Security, International Atomic Energy Agency

**Rule 37**

21. Chile
22. Colombia
23. Sweden
24. Italy
25. Islamic Republic of Iran

**Rule 39**

26. His Excellency Mr. Jacek Bylica, High Representative Special Envoy for Non-proliferation and Disarmament, European Union
27. His Excellency Mr. Tété António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations
28. Ms. Alison August Treppel, Acting Executive Secretary for the Inter American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States
29. Mr. Juan Manuel Vega Serrano, President, Financial Action Task Force

**Rule 37**

30. Jamaica
31. Pakistan
32. Brazil
33. Indonesia
34. Philippines
35. Poland
36. Germany
37. Mexico
38. Argentina
39. Hungary

**Rule 39**

40. Mr. Ham Sang-wook, Chair, Missile Technology Control Regime
41. Mr. Song Young-wan, Chair, Nuclear Suppliers Group
42. Mr. Emmanuel Roux, Special Representative, International Criminal Police Organization
43. Mr. Paul Bekkers, Director of the Secretary-General's Office, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Rule 37**

44. India
45. Kazakhstan
46. Estonia
47. Israel

48. Slovakia
49. Slovenia

**Other**

50. Holy See

**Rule 37**

51. Australia
52. Guatemala
53. Ethiopia
54. Netherlands
55. Peru
56. South Africa
57. Bangladesh
58. Costa Rica
59. Morocco
60. Bulgaria
61. Ecuador
62. Belgium

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63. Ms. Julia Blocher, Research Officer, New York Office, United Nations University

**Rule 37**

64. Panama
65. Republic of Korea
66. Thailand
67. Afghanistan
68. Georgia
69. Turkey
70. United Arab Emirates
71. Canada
72. Jordan
73. Algeria
74. Kyrgyzstan
75. Armenia
76. Belarus



2016

Statement H. E. Mr. Tete Antonio  
Ambassador, Permanent Observer Of  
The African Union to the United  
Nations at the Security Council debate  
on the theme, "Preventing catastrophe:  
a global agenda for stopping the  
proliferation of weapons of mass  
destruction by Non-State Actors."

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