Statement by
The Co-operative Republic of Guyana
In the First Committee
On Thematic Debate on Clusters 1-4: Nuclear Weapons, Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, Outer Space, and Conventional Weapons
76th Session United Nations General Assembly
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman

My delegation joins those who spoke before me in congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and the other members of the Bureau on your election to lead the First Committee during its 76th Session. We are confident that the Bureau will ably lead this Committee in the discharge of its mandate and assure you of our full support and cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

1. Guyana aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of CARICOM and Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

2. Guyana joins the ardent call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in line with the three pillars of the Treaty on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), namely, disarmament, non-proliferation, and guarantees of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

3. We share the deep concern expressed by an overwhelming majority of the Member States during this Thematic Debate about the continued existence of nuclear weapons. Fifty-one (51) years since the entry into force of the NPT, the world still has more than 10,000 nuclear warheads.
4. My Delegation acknowledges the significant progress made in nuclear disarmament since the adoption of the NPT fifty-one (51) years ago and subsequent instruments but remains concerned that the reliance on nuclear weapons in defence and security policies, will continue to limit progress in reducing stockpiles.

5. Guyana remains firm in its conviction that nuclear weapons have no utility in today’s world and that their continued existence is contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. Nuclear Weapons are not useful deterrents but rather cultivate a state of insecurity and false defensiveness that only increases the chances of proliferation. The catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of the use of such weapons is guaranteed to affect all of us, irrespective of our involvement in or distance from the conflict.

6. Guyana therefore, reiterates its call for a world free of nuclear weapons, in the best interest of all humanity and urges all States Parties to promptly implement their obligations under the NPT, without further delay and to take positive measures to ensure the convening of the 10th NPT Review Conference, in a manner that contributes to a successful outcome.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The illicit trade of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects continues to threaten peace, safety, security and stability and has devastating impacts on socio-economic development, human rights and human development, including health and mortality, knowledge and education, income and standard of living.

8. Soaring rates of gun-related violence and the prevalence of gun-related fatalities due to the proliferation of illegal arms and ammunition, illicit drugs, money laundering, cyber-crime and other dimensions of trans-boundary criminal activities, pose a direct and significant threat to the security of countries in our Region.

9. As we observe the 20th Anniversary of the UN Programme of Action (PoA) on Small Arms and Light Weapons this year, Guyana renews its call for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) at national, regional and global levels. Only through the effective implementation of these instruments, can we truly achieve progress in preventing, combatting, and eradicating the misuse, diversion and illegal international transfer of small arms and light weapons.
10. In this spirit, we welcome the decision reached at the Seventh Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the UN PoA to establish a dedicated fellowship training programme on SALW, particularly for developing countries.

11. In closing, Mr. Chairman, my Delegation appeals to all stakeholders to preserve the spirit exhibited during the negotiation and adoption of these global instruments and to continue to deliver progress in their implementation.

12. Thank you.