

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE HON.  
DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND  
REGIONAL INTEGRATION OF GHANA, HON. THOMAS  
MBOMBA, AT THE FIRST MEETING OF STATES  
PARTIES OF THE TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF  
NUCLEAR WEAPONS, 21<sup>ST</sup> -23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE, 2022, VIENNA,  
AUSTRIA.**

**Excellencies,**

**Ministers of State**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Mr. President**

I would like to begin by congratulating you on your election as President of the First Meeting of States Parties of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and to assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in the discharge of your duties.

Ghana applauds Austria and in particular, Hon. Alexander Schallenberg, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Federal Republic of Austria, for the invaluable contribution towards the organisation of this historic conference.

This meeting could not have come at a more important time given the heightened risk of nuclear war in recent times. The collective action of global leaders to secure our planet from the use of nuclear weapons can therefore not be considered as an option. It is for this reason that Ghana is proud to be part of this process that seeks to guarantee global peace and security.

**Mr. President,**

Nuclear weapons are the most lethal and inhumane weapons ever devised by humankind. They are unlike any other weapons given the scale of devastation they cause. Nuclear weapons are uniquely persistent, extremely fatal, genetically damaging with astounding humanitarian consequences, i.e. global climate disruption, widespread famine and indeed the utter decimation of our planet, once they are unleashed. Today, the threat posed by nuclear weapons is palpable. Consequently, the possession of these weapons makes the possessor a threat to our collective humanity.

Mr. President,

Apart from test explosions, the world has not been confronted with a nuclear weapon detonation since the 1945 bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nonetheless, the reality of the continued misery and utter devastation visited upon families and communities is still fresh on our minds. No nuclear weapon explosion has ever happened by accident. Indeed, the

proliferation of nuclear weapons will always leave the door open for humanity to cease to exist..We cannot allow ourselves to dwell on the utopian idea that nuclear deterrence would continue to hold.

The recent rise in the status of nuclear weapons in strategic communications, military spending, and political rhetoric by certain nuclear-weapon states, makes this risk reduction efforts worthy of attention.

It cannot be stated enough, nuclear weapons remain one of the most serious threats to our humanity, with severe long lasting environmental consequences and an affront to our common store of life. Disarmament and non-proliferation remain critical tools for fostering a secure environment conducive to human development, as enshrined in the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

Nuclear weapons may appear to be far removed from Africa's immediate security concerns, which are more focused on small arms, intra-state conflict, and human security issues. Nonetheless, nuclear disarmament remains a top priority for African states' foreign policy initiatives including Ghana. Ghana has and will continue to support international norms that aim at complete and total disarmament and the prohibition of use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and thus believe that there is no better time to have a Treaty such as this one.

Mr. President,

Nuclear weapons in the hands of any State poses an unacceptable threat to all of humanity, posing the risk of catastrophic widespread decimation to civilian populations, not to mention the radiological climatic impact that would reverberate across national boundaries.

Mr. President,

There is no doubt that the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of nuclear weapons has provided a prudent legal pathway toward the elimination of nuclear weapons. The TPNW is a significant milestone in the long global effort to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Given the slow progress and frustrations that had characterised nuclear disarmament for so many years, the TPNW represents a watershed moment in the global effort to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Ghana, for its part, has made significant contributions to this treaty, signing it in 2017. We are encouraged by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)'s successful adoption on July 7, 2017, and the subsequent opening of the Treaty for signature on September 20, 2017. Ghana actively participated in the negotiations and was one of the first countries to sign the Treaty when it was made available for signature. The Treaty has become an essential component of the general disarmament discourse, reinforcing the Non-Proliferation Treaty's objectives, particularly Article six (6), which aims at achieving strict and effective international control of nuclear weapons. Ghana affirms that using multilateralism to address global disarmament issues is critical to achieving a safer and more secure world. This is especially important in light of contemporary threats to world

peace and security, such as the abiding menaces of terrorism, global warming and also, the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The Government of Ghana is considering the legal instrument that would seal the ratification of this all-important Treaty. It is our hope that our country will soon join the ranks of State Parties before the next meeting of States Parties.

To conclude, I urge Member States to remain steadfast in their efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons and achieve complete disarmament for current and future generations. I hope that this conference will help establish the TPNW as the new reference point for all States, civil society groups, and academia seeking credible progress toward a world truly free of the threat of nuclear weapons.

I thank you for your attention.