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# MALDIVES

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**Statement by**

**Ahmed Suzil,**

**Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of the Maldives to the United Nations,  
during the eightieth session of the United Nations General Assembly,  
at the General Debate of the First Committee**

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**Date and time:** 8 – 17 October 2025, 10:00 – 13:00 and 15:00 – 18:00

**Venue:** Conference Room 4

**Format:** In person

**Length:** strictly less than 8 minutes

**Background:**

Length of statement: 640 words



Thank you, Chair.

1. I congratulate you and the Bureau on your election. The Maldives stands ready to work with you to advance this Committee's work.
2. The Maldives aligns itself with the statement delivered by Uganda on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.
3. We are witnessing a reversal in disarmament.

Key treaties are weakening.

Arsenals are expanding with new technologies.

Rising tensions are eroding trust and dialogue, while military budgets reach record levels and divert resources from people's most basic needs.

4. Disarmament is not a choice; it is a responsibility. We must restore trust, renew dialogue, and redirect resources from weapons to development.
5. To that end, action is needed on three fronts.
6. First, recommit to nuclear disarmament.

Withdrawals from arms control treaties, at a time when nuclear weapons grow more powerful, precise, and accessible, are deeply alarming.



Such actions unravel decades of progress and push the world closer to instability.

We urge nuclear-armed States to renew dialogue and recommit to disarmament treaties, starting with ratifying the CTBT and adopting no-first-use policies.

They must present clear, transparent, and time-bound plans to eliminate nuclear stockpiles.

Every delay carries a price, one that could cost innocent lives and the very foundations of peace.

While nuclear-armed States must lead, all treaty Parties share responsibility to uphold commitments and ensure accountability.

The Maldives fulfils its obligations by ratifying key treaties, and enacting national laws,

We also call for urgent action to address the environmental dangers of nuclear waste transport and disposal. For island States, where healthy oceans are lifelines, this threat is existential.

Together, we must ensure the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty delivers measurable outcomes.

## 7. Second, regulate emerging technologies.



The arms race has moved beyond land, sea, and air into cyberspace and outer space.

Emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and autonomous weapons systems, are advancing faster than the frameworks to govern them.

Unchecked, they could transform warfare and erode humanitarian, legal, and ethical boundaries.

Israel's genocide in Gaza shows what is at stake. AI-enabled targeting systems have reportedly been used against civilians, blurring lines between surveillance and warfare, and accelerating decisions with limited human oversight.

We must close the governance gap through inclusive, transparent, and binding rules that ensure accountability, prevent misuse, and promote responsible innovation.

Technology must serve humanity: saving lives, advancing health, creating opportunity.

That is why the Maldives joined the International Atomic Energy Agency, believing in nuclear science for peaceful purposes, including cancer treatment.

## 8. Third, rebalance spending from weapons to development.

Last year, global military expenditure reached 2.7 trillion dollars.



Last year, more than one hundred countries increased defence spending. Global military expenditure reached 2.7 trillion dollars. The Secretary-General's report on disarmament warns that, if current trends continue, this will rise to 6.6 trillion dollars by 2035.

Redirecting even a fraction of this would transform lives.

Ninety-three million dollars a year—less than four percent of military expenditure—could end hunger by 2030 in low-income countries.

Five trillion dollars could fund twelve years of quality education for every child in these countries.

The challenge before us is not a shortage of means, but a shortage of moral clarity.

Redirecting resources from military spending toward sustainable development is essential to getting the SDGs back on track.

For SIDS, fair and affordable access to finance is the difference between debt and development, between fragility and resilience.

When resources – instead of weapons - flow to people, the world becomes safer.

9. The Maldives remains committed to working with partners to strengthen counter-proliferation efforts and uphold the rule of law.



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10. Our collective security cannot rest on weapons.

It must rest on trust; built through dialogue, cooperation, and respect for binding commitments.

I thank you.