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STATEMENT BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

AT

THE FIRST COMMITTEE GENERAL DEBATE ON DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY 81ST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

12th -16th October 2026
Conference Room 4
United Nations Headquarters
New York

Mr. Chair,

1. At the outset, allow me to extend my delegation's warm congratulations to you on your election, as well as the other members of the Bureau and assure you of Ghana's full support and constructive cooperation.

2. Ghana aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Group of African States and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

3. Against the backdrop of the eighty-first session's theme, "**Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation**," global military expenditure has surged to an unprecedented **$2.9 trillion**. This staggering allocation highlights a critical security paradox: massive investments in arms have not fortified collective stability but rather intensified geopolitical friction while starving sustainable development.

4. For Ghana, disarmament is not an abstract ideal, but a practical imperative for the protection of human life. To translate this imperative into action, my delegation will focus on three core priorities: **restoring trust in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime; protecting people from the weapons that cause daily loss of life; and managing the security implications of emerging technologies**.

Mr. Chair,

5. Nuclear disarmament remains vital to international peace and security. My delegation views the erosion of the global arms control architecture, the expiration of New START treaty limits, and the resurgence of nuclear rhetoric with profound concern. Having had the honor of presiding over the Third NPT PrepCom, we witnessed both deep-seated divisions and a genuine commitment to bridge them; it is with deep regret that we note the Eleventh Review Conference concluded without a consensus outcome.

Mr. Chair,

6. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Ghana therefore calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm their unequivocal undertaking under Article VI of the Treaty and to implement in full the commitments agreed at previous Review Conferences. We urge them to begin, without delay, negotiations on a successor arms control framework and to keep their moratoria on nuclear explosive testing in place until the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty enters into force.

7. As a State Party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Ghana was honoured to host a regional conference on its universalization in Accra in January this year. Ghana considers the TPNW to complement and reinforce the NPT, and we look forward to a successful First Review Conference of the Treaty in December. My delegation also reaffirms its steadfast commitment to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba). We also continue to support the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Mr. Chair,

8. In West Africa, human security is acutely threatened by the illicit proliferation of small arms, light weapons, and IEDs driven by terrorist and criminal networks. To prevent insecurity from spreading from the Sahel to coastal states, Ghana acts proactively through the Accra Initiative and its National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons. Notably, our recent Gun Amnesty Programme secured over 4,000 unregistered firearms, leading to the public destruction of 2,132 weapons on July 9, 2026. Ghana stands ready to share this experience in support of the African Union's *Silencing the Guns* initiative.

9. While national measures remain vital, they must be underpinned by robust international cooperation. Ghana calls for the enhanced implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and its International Tracing Instrument, alongside the universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty. We also urge the full execution of the Global Framework for Through-Life Conventional Ammunition Management, supported by sustained international assistance and capacity-building tailored for African States.

Mr. Chair,

10. On emerging technologies, Ghana maintains that decisions over life and death must never be delegated to machines. My delegation supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on lethal autonomous weapons systems and encourages the Seventh Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, in November, to adopt a mandate to that effect. Military applications of artificial intelligence must remain subject to meaningful human control and international law.

11. Ghana reaffirms that international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, applies in cyberspace, and welcomes the commencement this year of the Global Mechanism on ICTs. For developing countries, capacity-building remains fundamental to an open, secure, stable, and peaceful ICT environment. Ghana further supports legally binding measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. Chair,

12. As the President of the General Assembly underscored at the opening of this session, trust cannot merely be sought; it must be earned through action. Ghana remains committed to engaging constructively with all partners to build consensus and advance meaningful outcomes.

13. **I thank you.**