



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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STATEMENT BY

DR. CHOLA MILAMBO
AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON

AGENDA ITEM 86
PROTECTION OF PERSONS IN THE EVENT OF DISASTERS

AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE

DURING THE

SEVENTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York
4th October, 2024

Mr. Chairman,

I thank you for giving me the floor.

Since this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor, allow me to warmly congratulate you and your Bureau on your election. You can count on my delegation for full support and cooperation during your tenure.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished delegate of Uganda on behalf of the African Group and the statement delivered by the distinguished delegate of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We wish to make the following remarks in our national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

The Zambian delegation supports the development of a new treaty based on the Draft Articles on the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters. The Draft Articles are a set of 18 articles adopted by the International Law Commission (ILC) in 2016. The draft articles address the human rights and human dignity of persons affected by disasters. Human and capital losses caused by disasters have been on the rise and are intensifying because of climate change and other factors. Disasters tend to disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in least-developed countries. My delegation therefore joins the voices that recognize the urgent need for an international legal framework that provides for harmonized laws and policies for the protection of persons in the event of disasters.

Mr. Chairman,

The Zambian delegation commends the ILC and the Working Group on the work done so far in the development of an elaborate framework addressing the protection of persons in the event of disasters. The draft articles are comprehensive and cover a broad spectrum of aspects of relating to disaster risk reduction. The draft articles can therefore serve as a foundation for the conclusion of a Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

Disasters often tend to be of a transboundary nature and have the potential to reverse the gains made towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The breadth and scope of the draft Articles to cover the various stages of the disaster cycle and uphold State sovereignty while safeguarding human rights and human dignity. There are at present numerous bilateral and regional agreements for the protection of persons in the event of disasters. Elaborating this convention will therefore complement and embolden existing soft law international arrangements such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

Conclusion

The Zambian delegation commends the work spearheaded by the ILC and the work done so far by the Sixth Committee towards the realization of the Convention on the protection of persons in the event of disasters. The adoption of this Convention by the General Assembly would fill an important international legal gap. It would be complementary to and synergistic

to the various extant bilateral and regional frameworks. The Zambian delegation remains open to further constructive debate on achieving this noble task.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.