

REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

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DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**DURING THE
THEMATIC DEBATE OF THE**

**FIRST COMMITTEE
ON "CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS"**

22 OCTOBER 2014, NEW YORK

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Mr. Chairman,

1. My delegation aligns itself with statements delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement and Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.
2. The attainment of peace and security is of paramount importance to Botswana and I wish to state that the ability of States to maintain safety and stability is a precondition for the achievement of sustainable economic and social development.
3. It is for this reason that we remain deeply concerned over the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, across the world, including in my own region, Africa.
4. There is no doubt that the very presence of these weapons causes serious insecurity in many parts of the world, sometimes undermining institutions of governance and often times provoking both intra and inter regional conflicts.
5. To this end, we welcome the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty last year, as a legally binding instrument aimed at curbing the uncontrolled trade and circulation of SALW. We look forward to the entry into force of this Treaty on 24 December 2014, and are committed to becoming part of this instrument.

6. SALW continue to pose a danger to communities everywhere in the world where terrorists and Non- State actors use them to commit atrocities and human suffering. From Africa to Middle East to Latin America to Asia, the story is the same – conventional weapons are used to kill, maim, intimidate and even impoverish local communities.

7. Every day we wake up to gruesome pictures of innocent journalists, peacekeepers, humanitarian workers, women and children, who have fallen victim of these indiscriminate attacks.

8. My delegation therefore welcomes the adoption of resolution 2178 recently by the Security Council, which aims to tackle the threat of foreign terrorist fighters, to criminalise them and to eliminate those who finance them. Successful implementation of Resolutions such as these requires the international community to work together, both at regional and sub –regional levels, in order to achieve set goals.

Mr. Chairman,

9. We are of the view that the destruction of surplus, seized, collected, confiscated and forfeited weapons and ammunition is a starting point for reducing weapon stockpiles available for illicit circulation, in so doing, reducing the burden of managing unnecessary stockpiles.

10. It is in this context that we note with satisfaction, the successful convening of the fifth Biennial meeting of States to consider implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all Its Aspects, in June of this year, of which my delegation participated.

11. Implementing the commitments of the PoA remains critical in attaining the integrity of this process. It is against this backdrop that Botswana has established an Inter- Agency body responsible for the implementation of the PoA and Regional Protocols aimed at addressing the proliferation of SALW.

12. Cooperation and Assistance are also indispensable in determining the success and failure of national efforts to implement the PoA. It therefore remains imperative that we use the limited resources from various donors effectively in order to achieve concrete results.

13. In conclusion, **Mr. Chair**, my delegation wishes to reiterate its support for all efforts directed at preventing, combating and eradicating the proliferation of illicit trade in SALW.

I thank you for your attention.