

REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

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DEFENCE ATTACHÉ
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**DURING THE
FIRST COMMITTEE'S
THEMATIC DEBATE ON
"CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS"**

**27 OCTOBER 2015
NEW YORK**

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Mr. Chairman,

1. At the outset, my delegation wishes to begin by thanking you for the manner in which you are guiding the deliberations of this Committee and assure you of our support and cooperation.
2. We align ourselves with statements delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement and Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.
3. We also take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for the reports on Small Arms and Light Weapons, including A/70/183 of July 2015, which continue to greatly broaden our understanding of the subject matter. We duly take note of the recommendations contained therein.

Mr. Chairman,

4. My delegation remains deeply concerned about the uncontrolled manufacture, transfer and circulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, across the world. Like in all countries, perpetrators of criminal activities in Botswana use these weapons to carry out the most heinous crimes, with lasting consequences on the innocent, especially women and girls.
5. It is for this reason that we welcome deliberations on this Agenda item with the hope they will lead to concrete recommendations that will facilitate better responses to the challenges posed by the illicit circulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, including full implementation of the provisions of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, in all its Aspects, and all resolutions adopted by the Security Council under this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

6. We believe that the destruction of surplus, seized, collected, confiscated and forfeited weapons and ammunition could be a

starting point for reducing weapon stockpiles available for illicit circulation, because by so doing, the burden of managing unnecessary stockpiles would be significantly reduced.

7. It is against this background that we note with satisfaction, the successful convening, in June this year, of the Second Open Ended Meeting of Governmental Experts (MGE2) on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all Its Aspects (UNPoA), in which my delegation participated.
8. The meeting considered a number of issues including that new developments in Small Arms and Light Weapons manufacturing, technology and designs including the use of polymer components and modular weapons systems have significant implications for marking, record keeping and tracing which pose challenges on the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI).
9. Bolstering implementation of the commitments of the Programme of Action therefore remains critical to maintaining the integrity of this process. 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 effectively in order to achieve concrete results.
10. Furthermore, we hope that implementation of Security Council resolutions such as resolution 2220 of May 2015 can also help to address this problem. Needless to say that successful implementation requires the international community to work together, both at regional and sub-regional levels, in order to achieve the desired goals.
11. It is against this backdrop that my delegation also welcomes the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty on 24 December 2014, as an instrument aimed at curbing the uncontrolled trade in and

circulation of conventional weapons, including Small Arms and Light Weapons.

12. My delegation acknowledges the necessity for nations to possess conventional arms for legitimate protection of their territories, interests and maintenance of global peace and stability. We are, however, concerned that such weapons are deadly as they cause pain and suffering with far-reaching consequences. Recent developments such as use of armed unmanned air vehicles and autonomous weaponry further compound this problem.
13. It is doubtful if the use of these weapons meets standards of public international law, International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and international human rights law. We, however, welcome the discussions concerning these emerging challenges.
14. Let me conclude by assuring you of Botswana's constructive engagement as we continue to take stock of the status of implementation of programmes, identify new challenges and solutions to close the existing gaps in arms control and securing international peace and security as a whole.

I thank you for your attention.
