



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Statement by Nigeria

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By

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at

The Thematic debate of the First Committee:

Conventional Weapons

71st United Nations General Assembly

New York, 21 October 2016

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation restates its confidence in your experience and ability to steer this ship to a purposeful destination. Nigeria aligns itself with Statements delivered by the Non-Aligned Movement and the African on this cluster.

Over the years, people have died needlessly from conventional arms and ammunitions produced primarily for the defence and security needs of nation States and other lawful uses. Indeed, our debates on this cluster in the last two days have so far demonstrated the magnitude and continued challenge we face globally regarding the scourge of the proliferation of illicitly acquired conventional weapons. These weapons could be found in old and new weapons systems, including anti-personnel land mines, Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) and Improvised Explosive Devises (IEDs) among others.

A large portion of global population, including many in my country, have seen, heard and experienced the consequences of Illicit small arms and light weapons in the hands of criminal gangs, terrorists and indiscriminately armed groups and militants. These weapons have continued to undermine otherwise peaceful societies, internal displacement, and are responsible for hundreds of deaths each day.

Small arms and light weapons, for instance, are responsible for more than half a million deaths each year. Evidences abound that violence perpetrated by arms in conflicts kill, on the average, almost 600,000 people annually. From Africa to the Middle East, the unprecedented carnage and bloodshed unleashed by terrorists and other armed militia, have left cities and communities destroyed or deserted, including the loss of precious lives, property and livelihood.

It is in this regard that my delegation commends the renewed efforts of all States and welcomes the 6th Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (BMS 6), which Nigeria fully participated in; but in particular, the noble work of Ambassador Courtenay Rattray. The consensus adoption of the outcome document is commendable, in view of its efforts to address numerous issues, including by highlighting the significance of the linkage between the UN PoA and the ITI and the SDG Goal 16. We look forward, with much hope, to the Third Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action in 2018.

My delegation also welcomes the successful outcome of the Second Conference of States Parties to the ATT under the Presidency of Nigeria and reiterates the need for a robust, effective and indiscriminate implementation of numerous instruments already in

place, as tools for regulating global transfer of conventional weapons. We urge States, particularly large producing and exporting States, not yet parties to this Treaty, to ensure timely accession. This is because we no longer think of risks that terrorists might obtain and use conventional weapons on a large scale as they already possess them and effectively deploying them for use optimally. My delegation wishes to seize this opportunity to express its best wishes to Finland as President of the Third Conference of States Parties in 2017.

Mr. Chairman, we look forward to working with other delegations and with their cooperation, to translate the vision of international peace and security, into a reality, for our future and those of our children.

I thank you.