

REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY**

**MR. NKOLOI NKOLOI  
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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

**21 OCTOBER 2016, NEW YORK**

*Please check against delivery*

**Mr. Chairman,**

1. My delegation aligns itself with statements delivered on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement and Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. I however, wish to highlight some concerns in my national capacity.
2. Botswana places great importance to the attainment of international peace and security hence we join the international community in deploring the continuing human rights violations in battle fields around the world where innocent civilians have become casualties of merciless killings by warring factions.
3. The thematic discussion on Conventional Weapons is very important in that it touches on the most extensively circulated weapons with widespread use. In this respect, we remain concerned over the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of these weapons, particularly Small Arms and Light Weapons, in many regions of the world.
4. In this regard, we hold a view that the destruction of surplus, seized, collected, confiscated and forfeited weapons and ammunition is key in reducing the burden of managing large stocks and security systems available for illicit circulation.
5. Recently, my delegation participated in the sixth 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. We note with satisfaction, the successful conclusion of this meeting particularly the endeavour to link the UNPoA with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Mr. Chairman,**

6. Today's environment is characterised by complex interdependence, technological advancement and large flows of people, goods and services. Any successful efforts to combat the illicit proliferation of SALW require cooperation at various levels among Member States. In this connection, Botswana continues to play her role through active participation in organisations such as the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO) and the bilateral Joint Commissions on Defence, with a view to conducting cross border and coordinated operations with neighbouring States in order to prevent and combat illicit trafficking.
7. Cooperation and Assistance measures remain critical in determining the success and failure of national efforts. It is hence important that continued

assistance is afforded to those nations that lack the requisite skills and resources in order that they may achieve concrete results in implementing the UNPoA and other measures agreed to by the international community.

**Mr. Chairman,**

8. My delegation acknowledges that States do develop and acquire conventional arms for legitimate protection of their interests. In addition, such weapons may be employed to promote and preserve international peace and security. We are however worried by the employment of high calibre projectiles, particularly those with a wide area of impact.

9. Recent conflicts have demonstrated this aspect in a very elaborate manner. Images of wanton destruction of infrastructure are accessible through different forms of media such as TV, just to name a few.

10. Furthermore, recent technological developments such as the use of unmanned air vehicles, drones and autonomous weapons further complicate this matter. While recognizing the strategic and operational requirements for such weaponry, we hold a view that there is a need for serious and sober interrogation on the employment of these. The established body of public international law such as International Humanitarian law amongst others should guide and inform such discourse.

11. Finally, all acquisitions of arms, both small and large, come at a huge price hence there is an opportunity cost. For most nations, meagre resources are diverted to procure arms while economic and social development programs are neglected. This has a negative bearing on our desire as leaders to provide a better life for our people. That Agenda 2030 will be affected is indeed without a doubt.

**Mr. Chairman,**

12. In conclusion, I wish to reiterate security and development are inextricably intertwined and the absence of one would negatively impact on the other.

13. Rest assured of Botswana's support for the international community's efforts aimed at promoting international peace and security.

**I thank you for your attention.**