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STATEMENT

BY

**MAJOR-GENERAL TUWEEFENI J. M'LUKENI
HEAD OF DELEGATION**

**DURING THE GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS OF THE

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE TO REVIEW PROGRESS MADE IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION TO
PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

NEW YORK, 11 JANUARY 2006

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation joins those who have spoken before us in congratulating you on your election as Chair of this important meeting and, through you, also congratulate all the members of the Bureau. We also thank you for the fully inclusive and consultative process in preparing for this meeting. There is no doubt that under your skillful chairmanship this meeting will achieve what it is intended for.

Namibia fully aligns itself with the African Group statement delivered past Monday by the Nigerian representative.

Mr. Chairman,

Cognisant of the devastating impact that small arms and light weapons have on political, social, economic development and security, the Republic of Namibia took serious steps immediately after independence to collect and recover all illegal small arms and war materials in possession of ex-combatants and civilians. Additionally, all citizens were encouraged through campaigns to surrender all illegal weapons in their possession without being charged or prosecuted.

Mr. Chairman,

Since the year 2000, and following the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action (UNPoA), Namibia has become a party to most international, including regional, agreements/protocols related to small arms and light weapons. Furthermore, we have actively participated in promoting the implementation of the

UNPoA by hosting a sub-regional meeting on 23 and 24 May 2005 and the Second Continental Conference of African Governmental Experts on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons from 14 to 16 December 2005, whose outcome was the adoption of the African common position for the review process. Namibia fully supports the African Common position to the review conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite our achievements in implementing the UNPoA on small arms and light weapons through the confiscation, collection and destruction of all such weapons and ammunition, Namibia still faces some financial and logistical constraints in implementing the National Action Plan (NAP) covering all areas that would have addressed the shortcomings in implementing the UNPoA.

Challenges such as brokering activities, control of firearm collectors, as well as amnesty for voluntary handing-over of firearms, which are not yet addressed by the Namibian legislation, are still to be dealt with.

Mr. Chairman,

It is our view that these challenges can only be solved with dedicated international assistance that could include capacity building, as well as technical and financial assistance. We highly appreciate all assistance rendered to Namibia so far in our endeavour to implement the United Nations Programme of Action.

I thank you.