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**Statement by**

**H.E. MR. JOSÉ CONDUGUA ANTÓNIO PACHECO  
MINISTER OF INTERIOR  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE**

**AT**

**THE 2006 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, 27 of June 2006**

**Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen;**

On behalf of the government of Mozambique and on my own behalf, allow me to congratulate you, Ambassador Prasad Kariyawasam, on your election to preside this Conference. I am confident that under your leadership, our deliberations will produce successful outcomes.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to commend the Department of Disarmament Affairs for the work done in preparing for the Conference.

**Mr. President,**

The key challenge before us in today's world is to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons that constitutes a serious threat to peace, security, stability and development in many countries, particularly in Africa. Such an illicit trade has become a major factor in endangering the lives of innocent civilians and destruction of public and private property.

The Program of Action in Small Arms and Light Weapons, since its adoption in 2001, has served as an excellent framework for concerted global efforts aimed at building international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. Therefore, this Conference must contribute in a meaningful way in finding appropriate solutions, including financial, technical and human resources to enhance for the implementation of its key provisions.

**Mr. President,**

In Mozambique, the root causes of proliferation and illicit use of firearms arms and light weapons are directly linked to the turbulent history of the southern African region. With determination and collective resolve, we have succeeded in bringing to an end such a turbulent past and are now fully engaged in regional economic integration for the benefit of our peoples.

For these reasons, we are committed to the implementation of the program of action as a step forward to the consolidation of peace, security and stability in the country and beyond its borders. In the report submitted to the United Nations last July, we have highlighted the progress made in that regard.

In this context, in Mozambique, the process of collection and disposal of firearms begun in 1992 as an integral part of the overall peace process, as well as an important contribution to post-conflict peace building. In 1995, a structured special operation aimed at identifying, recovering and destroying hidden caches of fire arms, codenamed *Rachel* was initiated. To date, several such operations have been successfully conducted, resulting in destruction of about 30 thousand different types of firearms and more than a million of ammunition and other related material.

The *Rachel* operations are conducted with the collaboration of the republic of South Africa and constitute a remarkable example of fruitful cooperation between neighboring countries in the area of public security.

Mozambique continues to encourage initiatives from the civil society towards promoting and consolidating the culture of peace and non-violence.

Furthermore, in compliance with the program of action, Mozambique has established in 2005 a National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which is responsible for the coordination and integration of national efforts required to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

The review process of our national legislation is one of the priorities of the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons. To this end, we are on the stage towards the launching of a national small arms survey which will become a foundation for a national action plan on small arms.

**Mr. President,**

We recognize that, apart from the national efforts, the success of the implementation of the Program of Action depends, to a large extent, on our political commitment to strengthen cooperation at regional and global levels.

Accordingly, in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), we are in the process of implementing the Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and other Related Material, signed in August 2001 and entered into force July 2004. This Protocol bears testimony of the political will and determination of SADC member states to enhance restrictive measures to the access and use of firearms by citizens and improve the operational capacity of institutions in charge for law enforcement, as well as to promote firearms awareness for citizens.

In the context of the African continent, the preparatory process for this Conference has culminated with the adoption of the African Common Position to the Review Conference, in Windhoek, in December 2005.

The African Common Position reaffirms the continued relevance of the Program of Action, whose integrity should be observed. The implementation of the Program of Action remains a key element supporting conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in promoting long-term security and stability to create an enabling environment for sustainable development in African continent.

Within the framework of the implementation of the Program of Action at global level, special emphasis must be given to provisions on small arms and light weapons in post conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, in capacity building and technical assistance in areas such as legislation and regulation, law enforcement, destruction of small arms and light weapons, and in the promotion of socio-economic development agendas. Those provisions should include public awareness on small arms and light weapons, thereby emphasizing the responsibility of all member states to ensure the sustainability of national initiatives in the implementation of all the United Nations Program of Action undertakings.

**Mr. President,**

We appreciate the fact that the preparatory process for this Conference witnessed a great deal of engagement and remarkable efforts from all delegations aimed at bringing different positions and interests much closer, given the complexity of the issue at stake.

Therefore, it is our hope that at the end of the Conference we will be able to come out with a strategy that will foster the full implementation of the Program of Action, while enabling the establishment of measures to reduce the negative impact of small arms and light weapons. Such measures must include the promotion and increase of support to the victims of armed violence, as well as the establishment of an international legal binding instrument on the transfer of small arms.

Peace and stability are pre-requisites for development and prosperity for all. This can only be possible in a world free of poverty, conflict and violence, where people live in harmony.

Therefore, we welcome the adoption of the Declaration on Armed Violence and Development in Geneva on 7 June 2006, as it represents yet another step forward in support to governments, international organizations and non-governmental

organizations committed to working against armed violence and related issues within a development perspective.

To conclude, **Mr. President**, I would like to assure you the full cooperation and support of Mozambique as you lead our common endeavors to ensure the successful outcome of the United Nations Conference To Review The Progress Made In The Implementation Of Program Of Action To Prevent, Combat And Eradicate The Illicit Trade In Small Arms And Light Weapons In All Its Aspects.

**I thank you.**