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## **STATEMENT**

**BY**

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HEAD OF DELEGATION**

**DURING**

**THE GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS  
OF 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, 27 JUNE 2006**

Mr. President,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel greatly honored and privileged to deliver this statement on behalf of the Republic of Namibia.

Mr. President,

Permit me to begin by congratulating you on your election as President of this very important Review Conference. This is a demonstration of the trust the world has in you to successfully conduct this Review Conference. My congratulations are also extended to the other officers of the General Committee.

Mr. President,

I wish to reaffirm Namibia's political commitment as expressed in the country report conveyed by our Permanent Mission in New York to the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs.

Namibia remains convinced that the United Nations Programme of Action (UNPoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects, the Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the SADC Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials continue to be the most effective international, regional and sub-regional frameworks to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade and proliferation of firearms in the world.

Namibia's Constitution provides the foundation for Namibia's foreign policy. Article 96 of our Constitution, *inter alia*, provides that the State shall promote international cooperation, peace and security and that it shall foster respect for international law and treaty obligations. Hence, the Namibia National Action Plan (NNAP) on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) is but one of the many practical efforts in our commitment to honor the aforementioned instruments by properly monitoring, managing and curbing the acquisition, possession, distribution and use of SALW in order to contain their continued falling into the wrong hands.

In a bid to comply with international, regional and sub-regional instruments, the Republic of Namibia is party to the following instruments:

- The United Nations Programme of Action (UNPoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small and Light Weapons in all its Aspects;
- The United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime;
- The Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons;

- The SADC Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials; and the
- SARPCCO Agreement in respect of Co-operation and Mutual Assistance in the Field of Crime Combating.

Mr. President,

Namibia regards the issues of prevention, combating and control of proliferation of illicit trafficking in SALW on the one hand, and economic development on the other, as inseparable undertakings. In this respect, Namibia adopted the already mentioned National Action Plan on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which has been developed to ensure proper implementation of the aforementioned instruments, by enhancing capacity for law enforcement in conformity with the global norms. Namibia's National Action Plan focuses on the following aspects:

- Institutional Framework;
- Policy and Legislation;
- Stockpile Management;
- Border Control;
- International and Cross Border Co-operation and Information Exchange;
- Public Education and Awareness Raising;
- Training and Capacity-building;
- Research; and
- Critical Areas Support and Resources.

**Institutional Framework:** Our Institutional Framework is comprised of the National Management Committee consisting of all Permanent Secretaries from the Offices, Ministries and Agencies represented on the National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The National Focal Point members are drawn from the Office of the President, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs and Immigration, Safety and Security, Defence, Justice and Attorney-General, Environment and Tourism, Finance, Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the Polytechnic of Namibia and non-governmental organizations. The National Contact Person in Namibia is the Inspector General of the Namibian Police.

**Policy and Legislation:** There has been firearms legislation in place in Namibia since 1938. Presently, the main law regulating gun usage is the Arms and Ammunition Act, Act 7 of 1996 that came into effect in April 1998. This Act lays out the rules for licensing firearms to individuals, dealers, importers, exporters, and manufacturers and makes provisions for matters such as ammunition and the destruction of arms. The law makes provision for the limitation of the number of firearms, marking of firearms and declaration of certain persons as being unfit to possess firearms. It further takes into consideration crimes of a violent nature to declare a person to be unfit to possess a firearm.

**Challenges for Namibia:** The main challenges facing Namibia to effectively and efficiently accelerate the implementation of the NNAP on Small Arms and Light Weapons, among others, are:

- lack of much needed technical and financial resources;
- training and capacity-building for the law enforcement agencies;
- reviewing and enacting laws to ensure commonality; and
- vast border areas and inadequate border technical equipment.

The primary and most important activities of both the National Management Committee and the National Focal Point on SALW are:

- engaging donor countries, organizations and co-operating partners for financial support to implement the NNAP;
- training/capacity-building of the Regional Focal Points countrywide;
- review of the National Policy and legislation as a matter of national priority; and
- public education and awareness raising, and continual co-operation with the international, regional and sub-regional stakeholders and co-operating partners.

Mr. President,

Finally, I would be failing in my duty if I did not thank our civil co-operating partner, Safer Africa, for providing Namibia with both financial and technical support in our endeavors to implement the international, regional and sub-regional instruments aimed at preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects, in order to promote and consolidate peace, democracy, good governance and the rule of law in Namibia and the region.

On behalf of the Republic of Namibia, I wish to assure you of my country's strong support for the full implementation of the UNPoA and a successful conclusion of this Review Conference on the basis of your draft outcome text, while also considering the African Common Position adopted in Windhoek, Namibia, in December 2005.

I thank you, Mr. President.