



MALAWI

STATEMENT

by

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AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF MALAWI TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

to the

***Second Biennial Meeting of States on 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, 12th July, 2005

Mr. Chairman,

Malawi joins all the previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the second United Nations Biennial Meeting of States to consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects.

We are convinced that you and other members of the Bureau will guide this meeting to a successful conclusion and we assure you of our fullest cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

Malawi fully associates itself with the statement made by Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. Chairman,

This Second Biennial Meeting of States provides us with an important opportunity to consider the way forward as we look back and reflect on what has been achieved since the Programme of Action was agreed in July, 2001.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is an obvious threat to peace, development and security. Malawi therefore, views as a positive development the recent agreement, by the Open-Ended Working Group on an international instrument that would enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons in a timely and reliable manner.

Mr. Chairman,

Malawi continues to take various measures towards the implementation of the programme of Action (POA) in recognition of the serious consequences of illicit circulation of small arms on peace, security and stability of the country. One of the measures is the establishment of The Malawi National Focal Point (NFP) on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) which is underway with the active participation of both Government and Non-Governmental Organisations.

When fully operational the NFP will have a Secretariat with a full-time Administrator and support staff. The focal point will develop a National Plan of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. In addition it will oversee, and manage the implementation of the Plan of Action as well as conduct research and further studies on SALW, while raising public awareness on the dangers of small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Chairman

Malawi's Firearms Act has been operational since December 1967 and as such it needs modernisation to reflect the current situation. In this regard, we are encouraged by the interest shown by the British Department for International Development (DFID) to support the review of the Firearms Act. Currently, the only policy regarding the government approach to Small Arms control is the Operational Implementation Programme for the SADC Firearms Protocol dated August 2002 which was developed by the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Coordinated Organisation (SARPCCO).

As a developing country, Malawi welcomes any further assistance to enable the NFP to perform its coordination role in order for it to implement the range of measures introduced to deal with the problem of proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons. Other areas requiring support include exchange of information, training and capacity building.

Mr. Chairman

At global and regional levels, Malawi has actively been involved in negotiations for the conclusion of legally binding instruments aimed at solving the problem of small arms and light weapons proliferation. As a state, Malawi is a signatory to the UN Vienna Protocol, Bamako Declaration and the SADC Protocol. The SADC Protocol has already been ratified and is therefore part of the national law.

Mr. Chairman,

Malawi does not manufacture Small Arms and Light Weapons, but over the past 15 years it has experienced a steady increase in cases of armed robberies and organized cross border criminal activity. The Non-Governmental Organization Community and Civil Society organizations have played a crucial role in the checking of illicit trafficking and trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons at cross border level.

Mr. Chairman

In conclusion, Malawi is ready to join the international community in meeting the challenges that lie ahead in the

implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action.

I thank you.