

Preparatory Committee to 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,

9 – 20 January 2006

Malawi Mission to the United Nations, New York

Statement by Deputy Commissioner Willard Chingaru
Delegation of Malawi to the UN Preparatory Committee

Thematic Debate, Cluster III

**The excessive accumulation, misuse and uncontrolled spread of
small arms**

16 January 2006

Mr Moderator,

Malawi fully supports efforts to address the excessive accumulation, misuse and uncontrolled spread of small arms.

Malawi has recently acquired a machine for the destruction of small arms and light weapons and wishes to thank the UK Government for the support in acquiring this technology. Malawi publicly demonstrated its commitment towards tackling the accumulation of small arms at a National Stakeholders Workshop on Small Arms Control held in Lilongwe in November 2005, by destroying a number of weapons and by establishing a National Focal Point on small arms control. This workshop represented a crucial step in the enhancement of small arms controls in Malawi, and will be followed by extensive research on the nature of the small arms problem and the development of a comprehensive national strategy. This strategy will address factors behind the demand for small arms, as well as those factors driving their supply. And it will build upon very significant efforts that have already been taken in our country, including a national weapons collection programme and a Community Safety and Firearms Control Project which is being implemented in partnership by the Malawi Police Service and civil society.

In addition to the steps outlined above, Malawi is also addressing the demand for small arms through its nationwide Community Based Policing Programme. This programme has led to the adoption of community based policing as the guiding strategy behind policing in Malawi and to the establishment of community based policing foras across the country. These foras provide an opportunity for the police and the community to partner in the identification of security needs and the development of responsive and accountable policing strategies. This is a crucial component of efforts to enhance community safety and to ensure trust between the police and the community, and thus to reduce the demand for small arms amongst the general public. Malawi hopes that other countries will be able to learn from our experiences in this regard and to promote the principle of community based policing at the international level.

Malawi wishes to call upon donors and the international community to support Malawi's efforts tackling the accumulation, misuse and spread of small arms, through the provision of support to the National Focal Point. We also wish to express our support for continued efforts at the international level in this regard, and to recommend the further consideration of these issues prior to the Review Conference in July.

In particular, we recommend that the Review Conference and its outcome document should emphasise the importance of the relationship between small arms, development and poverty reduction, and call for the effective integration of international, regional and national measures to control small arms, promote development and alleviate poverty. In addition, we recommend that the Review Conference call for the promotion of programmes and measures that will help to reduce the demand for small arms, such as community based policing and security sector reform.