



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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MINISTER**

PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UN, NEW YORK

ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP

ON THE

**AFRICAN COMMON POSITION TO THE REVIEW CONFERENCE ON
PROGRESS MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN
PROGRAMME OF ACTION TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE
THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL
ITS ASPECTS**

AT THE

**PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR FIRST REVIEW
CONFERENCE OF UN PROGRAMME OF ACTION ON SALW**

NEW YORK, 9 JANUARY 2006

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the African Group, I wish to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the Preparatory Committee for the First Review Conference of the UNPoA. Let me also, through you, congratulate the members of the Bureau on their election. I assure you and the Bureau of our full support and cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

In response to your request in your letter of 20 December 2005 for summaries of the conclusions of recent regional and other meetings convened in connection with the review process, it is my pleasure to introduce the African Common Position to the Review Conference on the Progress Made in the Implementation of UNPoA, adopted at the Second Continental Conference of African Governmental Experts on Illicit Trade in SALW held in Windhoek, Namibia, from 14 to 16 December 2005.

The Conference, among other things, reaffirmed the 2000 Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of SALW. It reiterated that both the UNPoA and the Bamako Declaration are key elements in supporting conflict prevention and resolution and sustainable post-conflict reconstruction, promoting long-term peace and security, creating conditions for sustainable development through the prevention, combating and eradication of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. It, however, noted that, although the UNPoA and the Bamako Declaration represent key elements in peace and security, not all issues pertaining to small arms and light weapons are encompassed in the mandate of UNPoA.

The Conference expressed Africa's belief that, in tackling the problems associated with illicit trade in SALW as expressed in Bamako Declaration and UNPoA, it is important to reaffirm that it can only be addressed in a coordinated and multifaceted manner. It noted that a number of other initiatives introduced since 2001 that have enriched the broader debate on illicit SALW such as those related to the civilian possession of military-style SALWs, the transfer of SALWs to armed non-State actors, the Transfer Control Initiative, and the Arms Trade Treaty; and recognized that these discussions are continuing at their own pace outside the review process of the UNPoA.

The Conference agreed on the implementation of UNPoA at national, regional and international levels through application of various measures. At the international level, the Conference requests multilateral and regional institutions to include provisions for SALW programme in the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in post-conflict areas, in the consolidation of governance issues, in the area of strengthening legislation and improving operational capacity of law enforcement agencies on SALW, and in the promotion of socio-

economic development agendas that include public awareness on SALW. It encourages regional support for national DDR programmes. It urges all States and appropriate international and regional organizations to render assistance, including technical and financial assistance where needed, such as small arms funds, to support the implementation of UNPoA. It also calls upon them to assist in building capacities in various areas.

The Conference reaffirms that ensuring the reduction of the availability, supply and demand for SALW is critical to the well being of African States and could be achieved through various actions or initiatives at national, regional continental and international levels. Importantly, the Conference reiterates the need for these actions, efforts and initiatives to be supported through the full implementation of Section III of the UNPoA relating to implementation, international cooperation and assistance.

The Conference, in reaffirming the continued relevance of the UNPoA, requests that its integrity be maintained and that it should not be subject to negotiation. It recommends that the Review Conference should produce a report on the progress made in the implementation of UNPoA. It also recommends the convening of another Review Conference not later than 2012 with Biennial Meetings of States in 2008 and 2010.

The African Common Position is being submitted to the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and to the Executive Council this month.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Common Position represents an important contribution by African States to the forth-coming Review Conference and to the implementation of the UNPoA. Details of the document will be made available to delegations at the appropriate time. The African Group believes that the positions expressed in this document will contribute to the overall objective of preventing, combating and eradicating illicit trade in SALW. The document has, most effectively and in a general manner, addressed concerns commonly shared by all. We, therefore, urge all delegations to support the views articulated in this document.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.