STANDARD BY

HE DR. ISAAC C. LAMBA,

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE

REPUBLIC OF MALAWI TO THE

UNITED NATIONS

TO THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE

FIRST COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT AND

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

10th October, 2002
Mr. Chairman,

First and foremost, on behalf of the Malawi delegation, I join the other delegates who have spoken before me to congratulate you upon your election to the Chair of the First Committee. I also extend our appreciation to the previous Chairman, Ambassador Andre Erdos of Hungary, for his work during the 56th Session of the General Assembly.

We are confident that your personal dedication to decisive disarmament and non-proliferation will bring a successful outcome to our discussions. My delegation assures you of its full cooperation and support in the tasks ahead.

Mr. Chairman,

As we continue the deliberations of the First Committee in this 57th Session of the General Assembly, we are mindful of the fact that not long ago, we commemorated the sad anniversary of the tragic September 11th terrorist attacks. While sharing the grief of this tragedy, the attacks proved that the world faces a new serious threat against international security through terrorism. It is our sincere wish that our common resolve should now be
galvanized in stopping such a threat including that posed by the dangers of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons falling into the hands of these terrorists.

Mr. Chairman,

Weapons of mass destruction are a threat to human security throughout the world as their potential for destruction is too ghastly. In this regard, Malawi condemns the development of such weapons and regrets to note that the thirteen measures on Nuclear Disarmament annexed to the final document of the 2000 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) conference have not been fully implemented.

It is our hope that all states with nuclear weapons will strive toward total elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

Mr. Chairman,

Another area that my delegation is deeply concerned with, is, the multiplication and illegal use of small arms and light weapons (SALW). Malawi continues to suffer from the menace of crime and violence. Incessant criminal activities, for instance murder,
robbery and car thefts perpetrated by armed gangs which are on the increase in the country are all attributed to illicit trade, supply and stockpiling of small arms and light weapons. Malawi is therefore anxiously looking forward to the adoption of a comprehensive package of far-reaching measures that will lead to a world order of zero tolerance for the illicit trade in these dangerous weapons.

In addition, commitment in this endeavour is of utmost importance because Malawi believes that there can be no lasting political and social stability, nor meaningful economic development, in the regions and countries most seriously affected by the menace of small arms and light weapons. The active involvement of every member state at regional, continental and international organizations is crucial to the campaign against the menace of small arms. This must also be done in close collaboration with the civil society and other stakeholders at all levels. In this regard, all countries owe each other a great responsibility to achieve in this endeavour. Certainly, we need to work in unison to arrest this problem.

Mr. Chairman,
The world today has witnessed with horror the extent to which the illicit supply and uncontrolled circulation of small arms and light weapons have inflamed and prolonged internal conflicts and civil wars, which are sustained through the laundering of proceeds from illegal arms-trade by networks of international criminals. These criminal syndicates have seized the opportunity to exploit the apparent global disorder brought about by increasing international deregulation, liberalism and lax cross-border movement and trade. They openly and consciously flout and bypass national laws and international treaties thereby making it difficult for governments to keep them within the bounds of national laws and legally instituted law enforcement regimes. Invariably, these arms peddlers and brokers have well protected and politically powerful liaisons, consequently aggravating the difficulty in monitoring the flow and direction of small arms and light weapons. To this end, Malawi hails collective measures implemented by the international community such as the Programme of Action, adopted at the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects in July, 2001, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) protocol on control of small arms, ammunition and other related materials; the Bamako Declaration and other measures established against as criminal offences under national laws in order to
prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing, excessive accumulation, trafficking as well as possession and use of these harmful arms.

Mr. Chairman,

As a member of Southern African Development Community (SADC), my delegation is pleased with the outcome of the recently held Fourth Meeting of State Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction in June this year. We welcome Angola as the last member of SADC to ratify the Treaty.

Finally in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I wish to reaffirm my country's commitment to this Committee as the appropriate forum for open dialogue and debate on the issues of disarmament and for pursuing the common goal of a multilateral approach to the maintenance of International Peace and Security.

I thank you.