Permanent Mission of
The Republic of Angola to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS
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TEMATIC DEBATE ON
ILlicit TRADE OF SMALL ARMS
AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS

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125 East 73rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10021
Mr. President, Excellencies,

I take this opportunity to congratulate the new chairman of our Committee. My congratulations are extensive to the new director for disarmament for his election. Also, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely and important meeting.

As I have already stated during the general debate of this commission, Angola continues deeply concerned with the issue of the illicit trade and the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons due to their negative impact in the security and stability of different regions of the world, particularly the African continent.

Smalls arms and light weapons,

- destabilise regions;
- fuel, and prolong conflicts;
- destabilise relief programmes;
- undermine peace initiatives;
- exacerbate human rights abuses;
- hamper social and economic development and;
- foster a culture of violence

In this regard, Mr. President, we stress the importance of the ECOWAS Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons, as well as the SADC protocol on the control of firearms, ammunition and related materials in the region, the Nairobi Declaration and the OAU Bamako Declaration.

Furthermore, my Delegation is of the view that, if the combat to the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons is to succeed, the international community should better coordinate efforts and, implement agreed international measures to prevent illicit trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons manufacture and traffic, reduce excessive and destabilising accumulations, and transfers of Small Arms and Light Weapons in post-conflict situations.

Mr. President, the need to ensure implementation of a robust follow-up component to the UN Conference Programme of Action, as well as the consideration of multilateral legal instruments, in particular those dealing with arms brokering, marking and tracing of Small Arms and Light Weapons, is also critical in this regard.
Mr. President, As we already stated, the Government of Angola continues deeply concerned with the issue of the illicit traffic and the proliferation of small and light weapons.

We have established a National Commission for the Disarmament of Civilians as well as a Commission for the implementation of the Program of Action on the Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons, that we do consider as one of the greatest accomplishments of our country, in the national commitment to address the challenges posed by Small Arms and Light Weapons.

In this connection, the different disarmament actions carried out from 1999 to 2007 have allowed for the collection of nearly 157,992 weapons of several calibers.

The weapons collected include: 60,110 weapons of different calibers surrendered by the Civil Defense; 28,327 weapons collected during the year of 2006 and 6,129 weapons of several calibers collected during the first quarter of 2007.

In addition to the results mentioned above in this continuous process, we would like to highlight the accomplishment of the following actions:

- Elaboration of the Draft Project for the Disarmament of Civilians;
- Elaboration of the budget proposal for the process of disarmament of civilians;
- The programming of seminars, with the help of the United Nations, for the training of disarmament instructors;
- The exchange of experiences in this area with neighboring countries that experience the same reality;

At present, the main priorities of my Government are as follows:

- Organization of an international workshop on the impact of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in countries emerging from conflict;
- Realization of provincial seminars for capacity-building in disarmament;
- Raising awareness in the local media on the danger of small arms and light weapons;

Besides these actions, Angola has equally been engaged, at the level of the Community of States of Southern Africa, in the fight for the banishment of this scourge in our sub-region. Efforts are to be made by all member countries in the implementation of the political declaration elaborated in 1999 and adopted by the Heads of State and Government of Member States in Windhoek, Namibia, in March of 2001.

The current challenge is in maintaining the dynamism reached in order to consolidate and develop the existing practical initiatives and to ensure that the commitments contained in the SADC declaration on firearms, the SADC Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunitions and Related Materials, the Declaration of Bamako on the Illicit
Traffic of Weapons and the UN Program of Action on the same matter are implemented in a gradual but effective manner.

Mr. President, To conclude, allow me to say that although the results mentioned constitute a good indication of the work in progress, we are aware that more progress should be done in order to fully reach our disarmament goals.

However, it is my hope that the international community will continue to support our countries specially those emerging from conflict situation, with the assistance of all appropriate post-conflict initiatives related to illicit traffic and the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

The implementation of the report of the Secretary- General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa is also of great importance in this regard.

I thank You, Mr. President, for your attention.