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STATEMENT BY

MR. JUSTIN SERUHERE
OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

DURING THE THEMATIC DEBATE
ON AGENDA ITEM 100: GENERAL AND COMPLETE
DISARMAMENT

IN THE 62ND SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

MONDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2007
STATEMENT BY MR. JUSTIN SERUHERE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA DURING THE THEMATIC DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEM 100: GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT, IN THE 62ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Mr. Chairman,

The United Republic of Tanzania joins other delegations that spoke before in congratulating you on your election to the Chair of this Committee and for the good leadership you have shown in steering both the general debate and the ongoing thematic debate.

Tanzania fully associates itself with the statements made by Nigeria, on behalf of the African Group, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Achieving a comprehensive disarmament regime in the world is a visionary goal. We commend the strides made so far in relationship to nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. The Tanzania delegation would like to remind the Secretariat that Tanzania was one of the countries that submitted views on the proposals for the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on July 16th 2006. We expect our contribution to be reflected in the list of contributors.

Mr. Chairman,

Tanzania reiterates its support for this Assembly’s long-standing call for both the full implementation of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and other disarmament conventions and urges for a speedy conclusion of a comprehensive ATT.

Mr. Chairman,

The problem of illicit circulation and proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) is yet to be fully accomplished. We join other delegations who spoke earlier on the issue in expressing great concern at the massive loss of lives, property and human dignity occasioned by SALWs on the populations of developing countries – especially in Africa. We believe the developing countries are not adequately safeguarded against the lethal threat of SALWs. We welcome the granting of observer status to the
Regional Centre on Small Arms in Nairobi which is doing commendable work in generating awareness on the threat of small arms and light weapons and assisting countries in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa in addressing this mandate. More needs to be done at the global level.

Mr. Chairman,

Tanzania has made considerable efforts in collecting and destroying SALWs, including unexploded ordinances. We are signatories to, and have ratified the anti-personnel Land Mines Convention and destroyed all land mines in our stocks. Furthermore, in joint efforts with the Belgian NGO, APOPO, Tanzania has developed an environmentally friendly and low cost technology using rats to detect anti-personnel mines that are thereafter destroyed. This technology is available for the United Nations and Member States who wish to search for and eliminate anti-personnel mines either in peacekeeping areas or post conflict reconstruction, repatriation and reintegration operations. We note that some countries in southern Africa with landmine problems are already successfully using this technology.

Mr. Chairman,

Tanzania expresses great appreciation for the efforts made by both the United Nations and the international community in addressing the problem of illicit circulation and proliferation of SALWs. As the challenge continues, Tanzania wishes to propose that an inter-session meeting for the African region be held before the next Biannual States Meeting so as to provide Member States, the international community and other stakeholders with an opportunity and forum to address comprehensively the problem of SALWs and its attendant consequences through increased international cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

In that regard, Tanzania proposes that the meeting be held between April and May 2008. We call upon the UN-ODA, development partners and countries of the African region to make the meeting materialize.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.