REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

Statement by

His Excellency Mr. Daniel António

Permanent Representative of the Republic of Mozambique to the United Nations

before the First Committee

on the agenda item 96
on Conventional Weapons
64th Session of the General Assembly

New York, 19 October, 2009
Mr. Chairman

At the outset, and on behalf of the Mozambican Delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Ambassador José Luís Cancela, for your election to chair the First Committee of the 64th Session of the General Assembly.

Our warm congratulations also go to the others members of the Bureau. We are certain that under your leadership we will reach significant results in our deliberations.

Mozambique fully associates itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group on the agenda item 96 on Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them

Mr. Chairman

My delegation would like to commend the Secretary General for the informative report before us as it reflects the positive results attained in curbing illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, as envisages by resolutions 63/72 and 63/66.

We note with satisfaction that during the period under consideration, the United Nations was able to reinvigorate the coordinating action on small arms mechanism as a step that we are sure will contribute for a greater coherence in the small arms issues. Indeed, this coherence had a significant impact in the strengthening of regional ownership, focusing on concrete and time-bound goals, and moving towards an alignment of the regional action plans.
We recognize that it is essential to work at all levels, through the exchanging of experiences and adopting by collective mechanisms that contribute to the implementation of politically and legally binding instruments on conventional arms.

Mr Chairman

Mozambique reiterates its commitment and engagement to 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.

We encourage the international community to continue its efforts to strengthen effective arms control mechanisms in order to reduce small arms demands and armed violence.

Mozambique remain engaged to working with other Members States in the process towards an “Arms Trade Treaty” in view to establish common international standards for import, export and transfer of conventional arms. In this context, we will continue to participate actively in the deliberations of the Open Ended Working Group in 2010, to promote this Treaty.

Mr Chairman

Having experienced years of conflict and unrest, Mozambique continues to face the dual challenge of addressing threats to civilians posed by landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), left from the conflict, as well as emerging threats posed by the uncontrolled proliferation of firearms and constrains in the management of government stockpiles of weapons.
Allow me, therefore, to highlight some efforts made by the Mozambican Government to ensure national ownership in the response to the challenges posed by small arms and light weapons.

Mozambique adopted in 2007 the Arms and Ammunitions Act (AAA), a first step towards harmonization of national legislation regarding the control of small arms and light weapons, in order to address the new challenges posed by the political and socio-economic development of the country.

With the adoption of this Act our efforts have been focusing on civilian possession and use of small arms, record keeping, marking and tracing, import, export and transit, trade, arms embargoes and the related penalties. All our interventions coordinated by the Inter-Ministerial Commission to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons, in Mozambican known as COPRECAL.

The Government of Mozambique also holds public awareness campaigns, seminars and workshops where all the relevant legislation and measures are explained and discussed with the population at large.

Mr Chairman

Mozambique believe that the activities undertaken at regional and sub regional levels are crucial to strengthen efforts made at country level. In this context, we are one of the thirteen Member Countries of the Southern African Regional Police Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO), to which we have been actively involved since its inception in 1995.

Indeed, Mozambique has been engaged in all kinds of initiatives to curb the illicit trafficking of SALW and promote a culture of
peace in the region by participating in SARPCCO joint operations, regional meetings and training under the supervision of SADC and SARPCCO, such as the Training Course on the Identification and Safe Handling of Firearms and Explosives,

Mozambique is also INTERPOL Member State and consequently of the Interpol Sub-Regional Bureau which has a crucial role in preventing and combating transnational organised crime, especially in the strengthening of regional cooperation, collaboration and information exchange in the field of preventing and combating illicit trafficking in firearms.

The issue of arms transfers is also important. In this regard Mozambique is among those countries that support initiatives to promote the transparency on the transfer and manufacture of SALW.

In our endeavours to address the challenges posed by SALW, we continue to rely on the technical cooperation and assistance from regional, continental and international organizations such as SADC, African Union and United Nations and other bilateral partners.

Mr. Chairman

Let me conclude by expressing our hope that the growing acknowledgment of the importance of a coordinated approach to small arms issues advances the results of the programme of action as we approach the Fourth Biennial Meeting scheduled for June 2010.

On our part we reiterate our commitment to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Thank You Mr. Chairman