STANETEN BY

H.E. MR. CHARLES T. NTWAAGAE
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

DURING THE 65TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

AT THE

FIRST COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

18 OCTOBER 2010, NEW YORK

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
Mr Chairman,

1.0 Allow me to express my delegation’s congratulations to you for your election as Chair of the First Committee. We assure you and the Bureau of our full support in guiding the deliberations of the Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

2.0 The attainment of international peace and security is of paramount importance to Botswana and I wish to reiterate that the ability of States to maintain safety and stability are essential preconditions for the achievement of sustainable economic and social development.

3.0 Botswana recognizes the need for the international community to step up its efforts to prevent combat and eradicate the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons.

4.0 In June of this year, Botswana welcomed the conclusion of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider 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, which produced a consensus based outcome. We are committed to the full implementation of the Programme of Action as well as measures mandated by regional and international legal instruments including the Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the SADC Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials.

Mr. Chairman,

5.0 As reflected in the outcome of the Fourth BMS, my delegation concurs that cooperation and assistance measures remain critical and primary in determining the success or failure of national efforts in implementing all aspects of the Programme of Action. In this respect, it would be useful for us to consider how the limited resources from various donors can be effectively utilized to attain concrete results.

6.0 Botswana is of the view that one of the ways of ensuring efficiency in the utilization of available resources is to place emphasis on regional approaches. It is important for States in different regions to harmonize their efforts in addressing critical issues such as border control, stockpile management, marking, tracing, specialized training, information sharing and the development of legislation.

Mr. Chairman,

7.0 Botswana supports measures to enhance International Assistance and Cooperation, in particular, the encouragement of donors to provide technical and financial assistance to facilitate technology transfer and assistance for the implementation of regional agreements to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.
8.0 Botswana also supports the development and enhancement of follow up mechanisms so as to ensure effective coordination as well as instill a greater sense of urgency in addressing the problem of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

9.0 In that regard, Botswana fully endorses the Programme of Action Implementation Support System (PoA – ISS) which seeks to match the needs of States with resources for the purpose of promoting the goals of the Programme of Action, an initiative which opens up a useful channel of facilitating and expediting International Cooperation and Assistance.

10.0 This is why this year Botswana is co-sponsoring the Draft Resolution entitled “Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures” which echoes Botswana’s views on the strengthening of practical cooperation and assistance.

11.0 Botswana would welcome the strengthening of the PoA - ISS initiative, including the convening of meetings where potential donors could meet directly with potential beneficiaries.

Mr. Chairman,

12.0 Botswana has submitted a request for assistance through the PoA - ISS for the Computerization of the Central Arms Registry of Botswana. Support for this project will be highly appreciated.

I thank you for your attention.