Statement

By

H. E. Ambassador. Daniel António
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Mozambique to the United Nations

at the First Committee of the General Assembly

On

Conventional Weapons:

Assistance to States for Curbing the Illicit Traffic in Small Arms and Light Weapons and Collecting Them

New York, 18 October 2010
Mr. Chairman

At the outset I wish to congratulate you Mr. Chairman, for your election to chair the First Committee of the 65th Session of the General Assembly.

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

Mr. Chairman

The Mozambican delegation commends the Report of the Secretary-General on the Assistance to States to curb illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them.

The report shows the engagement of the United Nations system and of the Member States on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 64/50. We note with satisfaction the progress made during the period under consideration.

In spite of the registered progress, we note with concern that the report indicates the continued traffic in small arms and light weapons, as well as of small transport through several channels, including on land, air and sea to the States under embargoes.

Mr Chairman

The Government of Mozambique reiterates the importance of the consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures at all levels. In this regard, we support the adoption of joint mechanisms that contribute to peace and security, in particularly the protection of civilians.

We believe that the Programme of Action adopted in 2001 is the most important instrument for addressing illicit trafficking in small arms, as it represents a framework for the establishment of international norms and measures to address the small arms issues and for the promotion of responsible implementation by States.

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome and encourage the establishment of the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms
Mechanism (CASA). We consider that this is a valuable contribution and will reinforce the role of the UN to deal with preventing violence and for mitigating the impact of small arms and light weapons on societies, communities and individuals.

Mr Chairman

Since 2008, the Government of Mozambique has increased its capacity in specific areas of SALW control, through the reactivation of the cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme in small arms.

The Government has established a partnership with the United Nations on conducting “Weapons Risk Mitigation and Mainstreaming Mine Action, Small Arms & Light Weapons Controls” through technical advisory in the areas of stockpile management and control as well as in the area of firearms registration and weapons collection, management and destruction, as well as training law enforcement officers and working with civil society in the area of civic education.

The Government of Mozambique continues to strengthen its national laws, regulations and administrative procedures, to exercise control over SALW in the areas of production, export, import, transit and retransfer, as well as to regulate the movement of firearms inside the Country.

The Government of Mozambique also undertakes public awareness campaigns, seminars and workshops, where accurate information is disseminated and participants have access to related documents and instruments.

Mr Chairman

In the framework of the Programme of Action, Mozambique continues actively involved in border management. In this regard, the country has been part of all joint cross border operations and training conducted under the supervision of Southern African Regional Police Cooperation Organisation (SARCCO) aimed at preventing, combating and eradicating illicit trafficking in small arms.

This partnership is extended to other countries worldwide which are facing similar situations in terms of prevention, combat and eradication of illicit trafficking in small arms. One of our priorities in this regional partnership is
the development of an integrated and electronic firearms registration, one of the pillars of the Arms and Ammunition Act (AAA).

Currently, information on registered firearms holders is meticulously stored in paper files, but without basic data such as make, calibre, producer, and serial number. Access and analysis of information is very limited and therefore it is impossible to distinguish between legal and illegal users. This challenge also constrains our ability to contribute to the international tracing cooperation with law enforcement agencies at the regional level.

Mr Chairman

In 2008 two major instruments of programming in the demining area, were approved, namely the National Mine Action 2008-2014, and the request of for extension from 2009 to 2014 the deadline for the conclusion of the process of demining in Mozambique 2009 to 2014, in compliance with the Ottawa Convention, keeping the demining at the center of the Mozambican Government development agenda.

Indeed, the Government adopted a strategy that aims at demining district by district, in order to address the problems caused by mines at the community level.

The priority of demining in Mozambique is the resettlement of the areas earmarked for social infrastructure, socio-economic areas of interest, such as agriculture, roads and bridges, railways, dams, power transmission lines, and industrial infrastructure.

Civic education on the danger of mines continues to be conducted in the areas where the demining activities are held or as self-employment in areas suspected of presence of mines.

The benefits from the implementation of the Mine Action Programme as well as those achieved by the control of the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons can not be overemphasized. Indeed, the improved security conditions allowed for the movement of people and goods throughout the country. and the access to farm land, public infrastructures and other socio-economic facilities that have contributed to our development efforts, particularly the attainment of economic growth and poverty reduction.
Mr. Chairman

Allow me to conclude by reiterating the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Mozambique to accelerate the completion of the demining process by 2014. Mozambique concur within the view expressed in the Secretary General’s Report that the growing acknowledgment of the issue of small arms and light weapons should be addressed through a wider and multi-sectorial approach as also stressed in the discussions in the Fourth Biennial Meeting held in June 2010.

Thank You Mr. Chairman.