CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY

H.E. AMBASSADOR RAMADHAN M. MWINYI,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED
REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
DURING THE THEMATIC DEBATE OF
THE FIRST COMMITTEE, ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS,

NEW YORK, 23 OCTOBER 2012
Mr. Chairman,

My delegation continues to express its concerns on the proliferation of conventional weapons in many parts of the world. Conventional arms, particularly Small Arms and Light Weapons continue to be a major threat to development, peace and security in the Continent of Africa, especially the sub-region of the Great Lakes Region. These categories of weapons have caused immeasurable loss of lives and destruction of properties and infrastructures. In essence, they remain a single major cause of unending conflicts and instability in many parts of Africa.

As much as the UN continues the fight against poverty and the attainment of sustainable development, we should throw the same weight on the control of small arms and light weapons. Most countries that are in conflicts and wars in Africa do not manufacture those weapons. While the manufacturers and traders continue to make huge profits on these weapons, the negative economic and social impacts of their proliferation are borne entirely by Africa. It is indeed true that there is a positive correlation between development, peace and security. Therefore there is no peace and security without the control of trade in small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

By committing ourselves to negotiate, adopt and ratify an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), we are likely to avert conflicts and wars thus saving the lives of innocent people as well as preventing destruction of properties and infrastructures. We can not afford to eradicate poverty and achieve economic growth and sustainable development in a situation of conflicts and wars. It is imperative therefore to see the birth of an ATT.
My delegation considers the adoption of ATT as a necessary instrument for regulating conventional weapons and not denying Member States the right to self-defence.

Mr. Chairman,
My delegation wishes to underscore the Principle of Consensus as the most viable option for making progress because it would assure Member States of collective ownership and thereby speed ratification or accession.

My delegation therefore recommends that the resolution on ATT be adopted by consensus and calls on all delegations to support it in this direction. It is an arms control but not a disarmament instrument.

Mr. Chairman,
The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania pledges full commitment to the negotiation of a viable, balanced and vibrant Arms Trade Treaty. We will genuinely work with, and engage other delegations to ensure we adopt the ATT come March 2013. We encourage all delegations to do the same.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.