STATEMENT BY

H.E. MR. CHARLES T. NTWAAGAE
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

DURING THE

GENERAL DEBATE

OF THE

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
ARMS TRADE TREATY

12 JULY 2012
NEW YORK

2. Let me begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference. Let me also assure you of my delegation’s full support to you and Members of the Bureau in the discharge of your mandate.


Mr. President,

4. Botswana is honoured to participate in this historic Conference which we are confident will usher in significant improvements in the conduct of the global trade in conventional arms.

5. My delegation applauds the efforts of the original sponsors of the UN Arms Trade Treaty process who, in 2006, placed the issue on the agenda of the General Assembly. We are profoundly grateful for these efforts, which have culminated in the convening of this Conference.

6. Botswana also wishes to thank you, Mr. President, for the role you played in chairing the preparatory process. We believe that the Chairs Paper of 14th July 2011 is a fair reflection of the views of Member States and is a good basis for negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty.

Mr. President,

7. Allow me to share my delegation’s views on some of the issues to be discussed during this Conference.

8. Botswana supports a strong and robust Arms Trade Treaty. We are committed to the goal of curbing the illicit transfer of conventional weapons at national, regional and global levels.
9. Botswana believes that, if left unregulated, the illicit arms trade has the potential to fuel ongoing conflicts, organized crime, terrorism and acts of aggression.

10. Botswana supports the inclusion of small arms and light weapons as well as ammunition, in the Treaty.

11. We also believe that existing multilateral, regional and bilateral arrangements should serve to complement the Arms Trade Treaty.

**Mr. President,**

12. Botswana believes that the effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty can best be achieved through international cooperation including benchmarking exercises, capacity building, information exchange and technology.

13. We are encouraged by the pledges already made by some Member States to provide some assistance to developing countries for the implementation of the Treaty.

14. Botswana supports the creation of an Implementation Support Unit that will perform various functions including matching needs with resources.

**Mr. President,**

15. Botswana believes that objective criteria should be used for the application of the Treaty. We believe that implementation of United Nations Security Council sanctions and arms embargoes should be the main criteria for applying the Treaty.

16. Botswana’s view is that each State Party should reserve the right to allow an import or export of weapons covered by the Treaty. However, our position is that such transfers should not be made to states which violate international human rights or humanitarian law.

17. I thank you for your attention.