STATEMENT

BY

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AT

THE FOURTH PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE ARMS TRADE TREATY

New York, 14 February 2012

Please Check Against Delivery
Mr. Chairman

I congratulate you, and members of the Bureau upon assumption of your respective roles. My delegation is confident that you will steer this Meeting to a successful outcome, and will work constructively in this endeavour.

Mr. Chairman

Uganda associates itself with the statement delivered by Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. We fully support the position of the Member States of the African Union and Regional Economic Communities on promulgating an Arms Trade Treaty aiming at achieving the highest possible common international standards on arms transfers. We are convinced that the adoption of an effective Arms Trade Treaty will go a long way in supporting and enhancing the Members States’ effort to curb the problem of illicit proliferation of arms and their ammunition, while preserving the legitimate rights of States to procure arms for self defence.
Mr. Chairman

In order to provide for the highest possible common international standards on arms transfers, we would like to highlight three key elements:

- the Scope of the proposed Treaty should cover conventional, small arms and light weapons as well as their ammunition. Mr. Chairman, ammunitions are a very important component of the Treaty because without them firearms cannot be lethal. In addition, the proposed Treaty should regulate manufacture and production (including production under licence) of firearms and ammunition.

- the Parameters of the proposed Treaty should provide for national interests in respect to peace and security, development, poverty reduction, and prevention of violent crimes and terrorism.

- implementation and coordination of the proposed Treaty should be vested in the UN Office of Disarmament.
Mr. Chairman

Uganda, the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, have suffered from armed conflicts perpetrated by the easy availability and proliferation of illicit Small Arms and Lights Weapons and their ammunition. These armed conflicts have visited untold suffering on the innocent civilian population in terms of loss of lives and property, displacement of communities giving rise to increased numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons. This has resulted in retarded development in the affected communities and countries.

Mr. Chairman

Uganda strongly believes in and subscribes to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the Treaties and Charters creating the African Regional Economic Communities in respect to peaceful resolution of disputes. To this end, Uganda has, at national level put in place a strong legal and institutional framework to encourage voluntary surrender of firearms by the negative forces and the Karimojong pastoral communities who have for quite a long time used them to terrorize innocent civilians. The negative forces include members of the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).
Mr. Chairman

Uganda has also adopted programmes such as Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) and Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme (KIDDP) aimed at addressing human security and providing alternative livelihood for the communities with the ultimate objective of reducing demand for and acquisition of illicit firearms.

Mr. Chairman

Uganda appreciates the assistance and support rendered by the international community which has enabled her to execute the above programmes—especially EU Member States, the United States Government, Japan and other development Partners. Uganda is further grateful to her neighbours for the support, understanding and cooperation in executing joint operations in addressing the LRA and ADF problem.

Mr. Chairman

Uganda has in line with the United Nations, regional and sub-regional instruments established a National Focal Point (NFP) on Small Arms and Light Weapons and developed and launched a National Action Plan (NAP) on Small Arms and Light Weapons. One of the key objectives of NAP is to strengthen legislation on firearms, ammunition and related materials.
Mr. Chairman

Uganda has developed and launched a policy on firearms, ammunitions and related materials providing for measures to regulate import, export, re-export, transfer, brokering, marking and licensing of firearms, ammunition and related materials. The Policy provides for an end user certificate as requirement before clearance is obtained in respect to any transactions related to import, export and re-export of firearms, ammunition and related materials. A Bill addressing international concerns on import, export, re-export, transfer, brokering, end user certificate, marking and licensing of firearms, ammunition and related materials and the seeking to repeal the existing Firearms Act (1970) is being developed.

Mr. Chairman

In conclusion Uganda believes that attaining national, regional and global peace and security is a pre—requisite to development and agreeing on an effective arms trade Treaty would greatly contribute to this endeavour.

I thank you