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STATEMENT

BY

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AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

DURING THE

SECOND CONFERENCE TO REVIEW PROGRESS MADE
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION
TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERRADICATE
THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND
LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS

28 August, 2012
New York
Madam President,

Since Zambia is taking the floor for the first time, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Madam President, on your election as President of the Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

I wish to align Zambia’s statement to the statement of the African Group which was issued earlier by the distinguished delegate from Nigeria and also with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Zambia has strongly supported the United Nations Programme of Action (UNPOA) in the Fight against the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects and other related materials since its inception (2001). Zambia continues to participate in International, Regional and Sub-Regional Programmes in this fight.

Like many developing countries, Zambia continues to face challenges in controlling the inflow of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, despite tightened security in the border areas.

However, Zambia is committed to the Fight against Illicit Trade and Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons because of its potential to cause political instability, increased rates of crime, and economic instability. In this regard, Zambia has made tremendous efforts to implement the United Nations Programme of Action through its various activities at national, regional, sub-regional and international level. Zambia has put in place certain measures such as:

1. Appointment of a National Focal Point Coordinator
2. Review of the Firearms act to conform to regional and international standards.

You may wish to note, Madam President that the Zambia National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons which comprises Stakeholders from Government
Agencies, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOS) and headed by a National Focal Point Coordinator has been put in place and coordinates all activities of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

The Firearms Act which seeks to regulate the importation, registration, acquisition transfer/movement of firearms has been submitted to the relevant authorities for review and subsequent amendments so that it is in conformity with the Regional and International Standards.

- Zambia has a strong end-user certification process including verification of all firearms that are imported into the country as stipulated in our National Laws
- With regard to International Transfers of Small Arms and Light Weapons our Firearms Act provides that any person or institution who wishes to import or export the same shall have prior and adequate Government authority for such activity.
- The Firearms Act prohibits the production of any illicit craft.

Zambia through her National Focal Point has been sharing and updating information on National Point of contacts through Interpol National Central Bureau.

As per the SADC Protocol on the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons which calls on States Parties to introduce programmes aimed at reducing the prevalence of Illicit Small Arms, Zambia has had firearms Amnesties whereby members of the public are encouraged to voluntarily surrender Illicit Firearms in consideration of various incentives which has led to the surrender of about 130 assorted firearms in 12 months.

Zambia continues to sensitize its citizenry on the dangers of the Proliferation of Small Arms & Light Weapons. Zambia has embarked on a countrywide exercise to mark new and existing stocks of firearms, in order to improve tracing and
record keeping. Zambia has endorsed the month of July each year as the month for destruction of all Obsolete and recovered Illicit Firearms. In the year 2010 alone, over 1,000 firearms were destroyed.

At Regional Level, Zambia has been cooperating with other regional members to implement the UNPoA at Sub-Regional Level through the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Related materials. This is being achieved through the Secretariat of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Coordinating organization (SARPCCO) which serves as the SADC focal point on the SADC Firearms Protocol.

SARPCCO is working on the drafting of Model Law in order to promote harmonization of Firearms Legislation in the Region. This is in keeping up with the prescripts of the SADC Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunitions and Other Related Materials.

Zambia in conjunction with Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) hosted a National Media sensitization Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Security Reporting. Zambia also hosted a workshop on Best Practices Guide on Disarmament and Demobilization in conjunction with RESCA.

In conclusion, Madam President, it is Zambia’s hope that as we combat the illicit trade in small and light weapons in all its aspects, the issue of ammunition will also be considered as the light weapons and small arms only become functional with input of ammunition I wish to reiterate Zambia’s commitment to the United Nations Programme of Action and the ITI implementation. It is Zambia’s hope that the Programme of Action will be implemented in its entirety as it is a essential for achieving a peaceful world for all.