Madame Chairperson,

I am honoured to address this meeting of the Preparatory Committee on the important subject of United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons In All Its Aspects (UNPoA) in the run up to the “Review Conference” as well as the envisaged “Arms Trade Treaty” (ATT). At the outset I wish to express full support of the United Republic of Tanzania to the UNPoA and to your leadership of this meeting. I am confident that you and your bureau, given your vast and rich diplomatic experience and great competence, you will steer this meeting to success. My delegation associates itself with the statement of the African Group delivered by Nigeria and that of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) delivered by Indonesia. We welcome the appointment of Ms. Angela Kane as High Representative of the Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Madame Chairperson,

I wish to point out that the UNPoA does not advocate the taking away of weapons from parties that possess and use them legally. We simply do not want weapons to fall in the wrong hands because not only do they hurt the interests of mercantile trade worldwide through, inter alia, crime – including high value asset seizures, terrorism, hijackings and piracy but are also used to take away innocent lives. They are also used to exacerbate conflicts and instability in many parts of the world. The Free World does not need these weapons to be proliferated. It is often said that “prevention is cheaper and better than cure”, so through effective implementation of the UNPoA we as Member States, the UN and the International Community, working in cooperation can do that.

Madame Chairperson,

A lot of efforts have been successfully made since the UNPoA was adopted ten years ago. Several sessions, namely the Biennial Meeting of States (BMS), the Governmental Group of Experts (GGE), the Meeting of Governmental Experts (MGE), as well as the ATT have yielded fruitful outcomes towards the primary UN goal of a peaceful and secure world, but more action
needs to be undertaken to fulfill the job. We equally commend Ambassador Jim McLay, Permanent Representative of New Zealand and Ambassador Roberto Garcia Moritan of Argentina as well as their bureaus, many others including some NGOs, H.E Mr. Sergio Duarte of Argentina too, the UNODA and Member States for their tireless efforts aimed at implementing the Programme of Action, ranging from the international tracing instrument, reporting to the UN Secretariat, marking and tracing, as well as the various activities of international cooperation undertaken in that regard.

Madame Chairperson

We have not done all there is to be done but we have the capacity to do a lot more to implement the programme, within its existing agenda responsibilities. In that regard we particularly welcome the work done by the Germany NGO - the GTZ especially in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, the International Action Network on Small Arms and Light Weapons (IANSA), Safer Africa, the OXFAM and many others, which for lack of time and space could not be listed here. It took our predecessors a lot of time and goodwill to adopt the UNPoA in an attempt to free the world from the menace of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs). It is our obligation to implement it and my delegation would like to call upon Member States, the UN and the International Community to do so.

Madame Chairperson

It is the humble view of my delegation that the success of this meeting will have a positive bearing on the envisaged Arms Trade Treaty. It is not a secret that SALWs have been used to cause havoc and mayhem, including callous loss of innocent lives in many parts of Africa and the World. A lot of time and other resources have been used to address the problems occasioned by conflicts and instability by way of preventing, resolving and managing them. The United Republic of Tanzania, albeit with meager resources has evidently sacrificed and contributed with utmost commitment to those endeavours. These resources could have been saved for development, including attainment of some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). For these and other reasons, my delegation once again calls on all people of good will to support the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects and have the weapons included in the scope of the Arms Trade Treaty too.

I thank You