



**UGANDA**

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**STATEMENT BY**

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DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF UGANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT  
THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE  
OF THE 58TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**NEW YORK  
OCTOBER 7, 2003**

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Mr. Chairman,

The Uganda delegation has already had an opportunity to congratulate you and your Bureau upon your election to steer the work of the First Committee. We continue to assure you of our full cooperation and support.

Mr. Chairman,

We also wish to congratulate Mr. Nobuyasu Abe upon his appointment as Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and thank him for his introductory statement which has provided us with useful guidelines for our deliberations.

Mr. Chairman,

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons as the weapons of choice in the numerous conflicts in Africa is a real and present threat to peace and security not only in our continent but in the world as a whole. The ease with which these weapons are procured, transported and distributed has helped fuel conflicts between and within states.

In our own region, the Great Lakes Region of Africa, positive developments have been achieved in the regional led efforts to resolve the conflicts in the DRC, Burundi and southern Sudan. It is our ardent hope and desire that the "Peace Dividend" that the region stands to gain should not be lost through the illegal use of the vast arsenal of small arms that have been deployed in these conflicts, especially by the non-state actors.

Uganda, therefore, welcomes the Report of the Group of Government Experts on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons which will be examined by our Committee during this session. Uganda is ready to support any positive proposals aimed at the elaboration of an international instrument on the tracing and control of these weapons.

We also welcome the successful conclusion of the United Nations First Biennial Meeting of States to consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects which took place here in New York last July. We look forward to the next one in 2005 and the Review Conference in 2006.

Mr. Chairman,

Terrorism is one of the vilest Scourges of our time. Tens of thousands of civilians have been killed or maimed through indiscriminate acts of terrorism all over the world. This has added a new and urgent dimension to the need for an elaborate regime of disarmament and arms control. If terrorist groups should gain access to Weapons of Mass Destruction such as nuclear, biological or chemical weapons, the world would be brought to a deadly and terrifying precipice.

It is, therefore, now more urgent than ever before that multilateral efforts should be increased towards persuading all nations to ratify the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). These efforts should be continued until there is a universal agreement to totally eliminate and ban these weapons. Uganda will lend her total support to these efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

The continued impasse with regard to the convening of the Conference on Disarmament is a matter of great concern to Uganda. We urge the working group to press on with its work until a program of work for the conference is agreed. We believe that international peace and Security, including issues of disarmament, is the purview of multilateral endeavour, particularly through the United Nations.

With regard to the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the use, stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their destruction, Uganda is pleased to note that more and more countries are ratifying or acceding to the Convention. We urge the remaining states to come aboard without any further delay. In this regard, Uganda will co-sponsor a resolution on the implementation of the Convention and we associate ourselves with the remarks that the delegation of the Kingdom of Thailand will make on that subject.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

The Uganda delegation wishes to express its support for your proposal to hold a special session to review the work methods of the First Committee, in particular, and the General Assembly, in general. We believe that this review is opportune and that it will contribute to making the work of our organization more efficient and more profitable.

I thank you.