



**Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania
to the United Nations**

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**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR AUGUSTINE P. MAHIGA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

**DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS FIRST COMMITTEE
ON GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT**

THURSDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2008

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**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. AUGUSTINE P. MAHIGA,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset I wish to join delegates who have taken the floor before me to extend my delegation's congratulations on your election to preside over this Committee during the current General Assembly session. Through you, may I also congratulate the entire Bureau in which my delegation has full confidence in; we pledge our support and cooperation. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statements delivered on behalf of both the African Group and Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

The world today continues to face threats and challenges in the area of disarmament which has direct negative bearing on international peace and security. The threats and challenges are global, regional and national, which require a collective multilateral approach in addressing them. The United Nations as intergovernmental Organization with universal membership complimented by regional organizations and arrangements offer the most comprehensive and effective fora for addressing the problems. My delegation once again, reaffirms Tanzania's commitment to multilateralism and the United Nations in promoting and maintaining international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

In the multilateral framework of the United Nations, UN member states have been able to agree on several instruments and arrangements on disarmament and arms control. Through such measures, UN member states have been able to make some progress in destroying, reducing production of arms and ammunitions and their related systems and continue to seek effective ways of controlling an regulating movements of

such arms. The efforts are commendable, but they have pitfalls and shortcomings in this otherwise enlightened international efforts. A fundamental prerequisite in these efforts is the mobilization of sustainable political will and conviction in the inseparable nexus between disarmament and international peace and security. Secondly, it is to agree on **implementable** and verifiable agreements on disarmament and thirdly, it is to secure universality of such agreements through the United Nations. Tanzania pledges its unreserved support and commitment to support all the agreements to which we are a party and to participate fully in negotiating new instruments in the area of disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

At the height of the Cold War, the world was perched on a precarious balance to terror. The end of the Cold War brought relief and ushered in better prospects for disarmament in both nuclear and conventional weapons. Indeed, some progress was noticeable. However, current trends are disconcerting, the Conference on disarmament has moved to nowhere, nuclear proliferation and technological sophistication is pushing to new frontiers while military posturing and strategic deployments by major military powers in conventional terms is heading towards dangerous brinkmanship. The demand, supply and proliferation of small and light weapons continues unabated in the absence of an effective regimes to govern the transfers of conventional weapons including small and light weapons.

It should also be pointed out that the resources that go to research and development and investment in the armaments industries continue to outstrip the investments in economic and human development. The achievements of internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs are seriously undermined by expenditures on armaments as they are likewise affected by the negative impacts of climate change, the oil crisis, the food crisis, and now the financial crisis in the world.

Mr. Chairman,

Africa is a continent of great potential. In recent years the continent has shown positive sign of recovery! Today Africa has few hot spots, compared to the previous decade. Several countries that experienced internal conflict have steadily emerged out

of conflict situations. In such areas, efforts are underway to stabilize them and to ensure that they do not revert to conflict through peacebuilding initiatives under the United Nations and regional organizations.

Mr. Chairman,

In our deliberations on disarmament issues, it was worth revisiting and highlighting the role of confidence building measures. Military and non-military or a combination of both, have proved to be useful instruments in facilitating the prevention and resolution of inter-state and intra-state. In Africa, such measures have successfully been used in different security and political volatile situations to stabilize conditions in order to permit peace making, peace keeping and peacebuilding.

At this juncture I wish to recall Security Council resolution 1653 of January 2006 in which the UN support to conflict resolution and prevention found expression in the framework for Peace, Security and Development Pact for the Great Lakes Region of Central and East Africa. Through this framework, member states with the support and partnership of friendly countries, civil society, including international and local Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) have been able to support peace initiatives in the region. Historical and political breakthroughs have been achieved in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) after years of protracted conflicts. The situation in eastern DRC is still unstable, it requires multiple approaches to address it including building of mutual trust through confidence building measures among the parties involved. The States of the region, the African Union and the United Nations have a crucial and urgent role to play.

Mr. Chairman,

Tanzania and other countries in the Great Lakes Region continue to suffer from the effects of spread of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). The spread of these weapons is a continued threat to law and order and the general stability of the region. My delegation is pleased with and commends the UN interventions in this area. We welcome the outcome of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to consider the

implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects. The UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament, based in Lome, Togo has been very instrumental in developing capacities for addressing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, particularly in West Africa. We commend the work of the Centre which has relevant application to other sub-regions of Africa. We appeal to the United Nations and other partners to continue supporting the Centre.

Mr. Chairman,

The Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA) in eastern Africa which has its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, has also been very active in promoting disarmament and control of illicit SALW among member states of International Conference of the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa. RECSA assists 12 States in the region to implement their national plans under the framework of the Nairobi Protocol for the prevention, control and reduction of SALW. We welcome the granting of observer status of RECSA by the United Nations in December 2007 and call on the UN and other development partners to continue assisting the Centre. Apart from addressing the supply and demand sides of SALW, there is need to step up efforts to curb trade or transfer aspects of such weapons. The control regime ought to pay particular attention to the trade and re-supply of ammunitions. Guns are functional and dangerous only if they are regularly loaded with ammunitions. A cut in the flow of ammunitions would go a long way to demobilize illicit arms and light weapons.

The implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects should pay particular attention to the transfer of ammunition especially to non-State actors in conflict situations. The regime will be greatly strengthened by the proposed Arms Trade Treaty which is currently being negotiated and needs to be concluded expeditiously.

Mr. Chairman,

Tanzania is among the 156 States that have thus far subscribed to the Ottawa Mine Ban Convention. In May 2008, at the Dublin Diplomatic Conference we joined other States

in adopting a landmark Convention to ban cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians. The Cluster Munitions Convention which will open for signature in December 2008, is a remarkable instrument that incorporates humanitarian as well as human rights provisions. Unexploded sub-munitions can hamper development prospects for thousands of people whose livelihood is necessary; the initial response from the international community has been very encouraging. We hope it will receive the full support of the entire international community.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to reiterate the significance of multilateralism approach in our deliberations. Tanzania attaches great importance to this Committee as a forum for collective action to advance collective security in the world in all its aspects.

I thank you for your attention.