STATEMENT

By

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AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF MALAWI

At the

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE
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(Check against delivery)
Mr. Chairman,

I would like to join all the other delegations who have spoken before me in congratulating you and the other members of the bureau, on your election to guide the work of this very important Committee. We are confident that your knowledge and vast experience will steer our work towards achieving lasting peace and security. My delegation, therefore, assures you of its full cooperation and support in this noble endeavour.

Mr. Chairman,

As we once again meet for the deliberations of the First Committee in this 59th Session of the General Assembly, we are aware that neither the Disarmament Commission nor the Conference on Disarmament have been able to reach consensus on the programme of work or the agenda. We ask for a high political will from all major players interested in real consolidation of United Nations central role in ensuring the goal for peace and security in the world.

Mr. Chairman,

Malawi is encouraged by the harmonious global efforts of averting and stopping the threat of international terrorism. We are keenly aware of the dangers posed by terrorists who can carelessly resort to the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), especially nuclear weapons, chemical weapons and biological weapons.

It is against this background that we remain concerned that some of the critical legal instruments governing the multilateral disarmament regime
have recently come under threat or have stalled in implementation. In this regard, Malawi reaffirms its commitment to the conclusion and implementation of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), and continues to call for its universality.

Mr. Chairman,

It is our hope that the forthcoming 2005 Review Conference of the NPT will not follow the difficulties of the last three preparatory meetings where the interplay of responsibilities between Nuclear Weapons States and Non-Nuclear Weapons States had very diverse perspectives.

Mr. Chairman,

Malawi again welcomes the efforts of the United Nations Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Stockpiling and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their destruction, or the Ottawa Convention, through the United Nations Mine Action Service for its role in the operationalization of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

It is clear that the fight against the spread of landmines has been successfully fought under regional and international initiatives. In this regard, we wish to inform you that Malawi will attend the First Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention, scheduled for Nairobi, Kenya, from 29th November to 3rd December, 2004.
Mr. Chairman,

You may wish to know that Malawi is in the process of implementing the Convention through a multisectoral approach, which involves Government and the civil society. The Government of Malawi has been able to participate at the meetings of the Convention after it started accessing the sponsorship programme, and this has helped the country to make progress in the implementation of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by joining the international community in addressing the problems of small arms and light weapons, which do not only pose a threat to the security of States, but also endangers their socio-economic and political stability.

Malawi is satisfied with the important progress achieved with respect to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the activity of the open-ended working group to negotiate an international instrument to enable states to identify and trace in a timely and reliable manner, illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons.

We agree that the supplies of small arms and light weapons should be limited only to Governments or to duly authorized entities, and arms transfers must be under national, regional and international control in order to prevent them landing into the hands of those heartless terrorists and non-state actors.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.