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STATEMENT

BY

BRIG GEN BOB D KULIMA
MEMBER OF THE ZAMBIAN DELEGATION

OF

THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

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THE FIRST COMMITTEE

OF

THE 63RD SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ON

CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

WEDNESDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2008
NEW YORK
Mr. Chairman,

Zambia identifies herself with the Statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

The problem of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in Zambia originates from the period of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. Civil wars and conflicts in surrounding countries have also contributed to the problem.

The irresponsible transfer of arms from the manufacturers and brokers has impacted negatively on peace and security and sustainable development in Zambia and the sub-region.

Mr. Chairman,

As security is closely linked to development, The Government of Zambia has instituted the following measures to redress the adverse effects of small arms problem and thus spur development:

a. **National Focal Point.**

A National Focal Point comprising experts from stakeholders has been established to coordinate the implementation of the Programme of Action – PoA.

b. The Fire Arms Act was enacted to regulate all aspects of trade in small arms and light weapons.

c. **Co-operation with Civil Society**

The involvement of civil society in dealing with the problem of small arms and light weapons – SALW is cardinal. Zambia has, therefore, embraced like-minded civil society bodies to effectively deal with this problem.
d. Regional and Global Levels

Zambia welcomes the efforts being made regionally and globally, and in this regard has actively participated in various regional and international initiatives aimed at reducing the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs).

Mr. Chairman,

There has, in the past, been growing concern amongst States for the need to consider expanding the scope of Small Arms and Light Weapons to include equipment such as Man Portable Defence Systems – MANPADS in the discussions. Zambia strongly supports this line of thought and, therefore, joins other States and Civil Society organizations calling for the establishment of a legally binding instrument to regulate trade and flow of conventional weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Although the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) is not a legally binding instrument, Zambia wishes to join other Member States and Civil Society organizations in calling for the full implementation of an ITI in order to enable States identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. Furthermore, Zambia welcomes the successful conclusion of the Third Biennial Meeting held on 14 - 18 July 2008 whose outcome will pave way for the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) and the ITI.

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia remains committed to the promotion of the Ottawa Convention – Convention on the Prohibition of the use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines and on their Destruction. She remains committed to the implementation of the Nairobi Action Plan adopted in 2004.

Mr. Chairman,

For a long time now, cluster munitions have consistently killed and maimed civilians during and after conflicts. The contamination from cluster
bombs hampers post-conflict reconstruction and development – preventing a
return to normal life for the affected communities. Existing rules are not
adequate to protect vulnerable people from weapons that do not discriminate
between civilian and military targets or that cause excessive humanitarian
harm.

Zambia, therefore, joins other States and civil society organizations in
supporting the Oslo Process to establish an international treaty to ban cluster
munitions by the end of 2008.

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia coordinated Africa’s work before and during the Dublin
negotiations on the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and has
continued to do so in the preparation for the forthcoming Oslo Signing
Conference scheduled for 02 – 04 December 2008 to be held in Oslo
Norway. We hope that there will be sufficient countries that will sign and
ratify the Convention for it to come into force at the earliest possible time.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.