Statement:
by
Dominic Misiolo SOFE, First Secretary,
Permanent Mission of Samoa to the United Nations
at
First Committee, Conventional Weapons Thematic Discussions

Mr. Chairman,

The Conventional Weapons thematic debate forces us to focus more seriously on the continuing dangers caused by the prevalence of these weapons, especially their inhumane effects on civilians in places of conflict. The current trajectory of increased military spending on such weapons and the widespread and ready availability of small arms and light weapons (SALW) contributing to insecurity and human rights abuse is a sure formula for disaster of unfathomable proportions. Simply put, the unregulated and illicit trade of conventional arms fuels conflicts, supports criminal activities, disrupts the peaceful lives of communities and contributes to human rights abuses - all because they are firmly rooted in economic gains.

The disarmament architecture has become weak with the rise of a new arms race and the bending of the international rules-based system to fit only a few States’ competitive agenda for power and control. This will only lead to a more volatile environment indiscriminately affecting small island states with no military forces like mine.

Samoa firmly believes in the protection International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and the rule of law provide, which is the motivation for our being a State Party to conventions and treaties that focus on disarming, managing illicit flows and banning inhumane conventional arms.

The Arms Trade Treaty has the potential to tackle the illicit arms trade and prevent diversion, which are the root causes of much of the human suffering around the world, including in the Pacific region. We welcome the adoption at CSP5 of a list of practical
recommendations on gender equality including understanding the gendered impact of armed violence and advancing the implementation of its authorization criteria relating to gender-based violence. We look forward to discussions at the sixth session of the ATT Conference of the State Parties on transparency and information sharing to help strengthen States ability to prevent illicit arms flows and diversions.

Strengthening one’s border control measures individually can only yield limited success. An all-Pacific countries joint approach is the effective and efficient way to combat the problem, as required of our region by our Leaders in their Boe Declaration of 2018 which expanded human security to also include climate change and environmental security.

Mr. Chairman,

The second review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munition will be held next year on the tenth anniversary since the entry into force of the Convention. We hope that more countries will sign and/or ratify the Convention to move us closer to our goal of universalization of the CCM as an important instrument towards global peace and security, so necessary ingredients to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

We value and acknowledge the efforts by civil society organizations, international organizations and other actors in advancing the fight for global peace and security especially during these unstable times.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by reiterating our unbroken faith in the rule of law coupled with realistic steps towards regulating the flow of arms can lead to a more stable and peaceful world, setting up the platform for the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

Thank you.