



**Permanent Mission of
The Republic of Angola to the United Nations**

STATEMENT BY

**H.E. MANUEL DA COSTA ARAGÃO
MINISTER OF JUSTICE OF
THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA**

**AT THE GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS
OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE TO
REVIEW PROGRESS MADE IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME
OF ACTION TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND
ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRAFFIC OF SMALL
ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

NEW YORK, 27 JUNE 2006

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to congratulate you for having been elected to preside over the work of this review Conference on the implementation of the Program of Action on the illicit trade of light and small weapons, and to wish you success in this complex task. I would like to assure you my delegation's complete support in the forthcoming deliberations that will be adopted. We extend our congratulations to the remaining members of the presidency on their election.

I would like to seize this opportunity to salute the delegations in attendance, for their participation in this Conference is a reflection of the importance each State places on the problem of the illicit proliferation of trade of light and small weapons at the international level, which is a sign that the deliberations to be adopted during the Conference will allow a continuous fight against this plague in order to prevent the eruption of conflicts fueled by illegal possession of weapons by groups that oppose regimes in power in certain States.

Angola aligns itself with African Group, statement delivered yesterday by the Zimbabwe representative, and fully support de African Commom Position to the review conference.

Mr. President,

It is oportune to remember that the inclusion of the problem of proliferation and illicit trade of light and small weapons in the agenda of international discussions is increasingly important as a means of changing the attitudes of States regarding defense and security concerns at the domestic, regional, and international level.

On the occasion of the second Biennial meeting of States for the analysis of the degree of implementation of the UN Program of Action on the Illicit Trade of Light Weapons, which took place in 2005, the Republic of Angola illustrated the current implications of war with respect to the proliferation of light weapons, as well as some actions that are being carried out by the Angolan government with a view to disarming the civilian population.

Given the characteristics of the Angolan conflict, which ended four years ago, and after a careful investigation, we are in a position to state that the number of weapons in possession of civilians is not as of yet determinable. However, the situation in Angola is characterized by the following factors:

1. The existence of weaponry hideaways that were created during the war period.
2. The existence of weapons of war in the possession of civilians, whose disarmament process is being carried out in a systematic manner and on the basis of information provided by the population.
3. The existence of weapons of war owned by former soldiers (deserters and demobilized soldiers) who hid the weapons from their headquarters.

The report presented in the second biennial meeting of States stated that in the context of the Program of Disarmament of the Civilian Population, from April 2002 to April 2005, the National Police collected a total of 75.323 firearms of several calibers, 15.213 of which were weapons of small caliber, 3.126 were landmines of several calibers and 15.240 were ammunitions of several types.

Of the work accomplished after the presentation of the last report before this noble Assembly in 2005, we would like to highlight that from April 2005 to April 2006, the government's efforts resulted in the further recovery of 4.712 firearms of several calibers, 27 mortars of several calibers, 39 hand grenades and 2.973 ammunition units of several types. In that same period, the Angolan Armed forces proceeded to the additional collection of 8.653 weapons of different types, which were in possession of elements of the now extinct Civilian Defense.

Still during the period in analysis, 3 storerooms containing 57 firearms of several calibers, 44 mortars of several calibers, 12 units of ammunition of heavy caliber, and 16 explosives of several types were deactivated.

From this set of data, it is important to note that 212 weapons were voluntarily returned by the populations in some provinces of the country.

A report that illustrates the actions carried out by the Angolan Government is available to the officers present here and can be obtained at the Conference Secretariat.

Mr. President,

Aware of its responsibilities, the Angolan Government, through the National Commission for the Implementation of the United Nations Program of Action on the Illicit Trade of Small and Light Weapons, which was created in July 2004, has been developing a set of organizational and administrative actions, as well as marketing actions to divulge the disarmament process. These actions are centered on the following steps:

1. Fundraising to support the current expenses of the disarmament process. Herein resides the fundamental aspect of every activity, and for this reason we seize this opportunity to ask for the support of the

international community in the difficult task of disarming the civilian population;

2. Disciplining and prohibiting the ostensive use of firearms by military, militarized forces and personnel of private security companies, reserving for them the weapons of personal defense established by Law;
3. Development of a wide campaign of sensitization of the population for the voluntary return of weapons in their possession with the support of Non Governmental Organizations, Social Organizations and other institutions of the civil society; an international workshop on disarmament of civilians in Angola will be organized very soon to sensitization the political class, the Civil Society, and the population in general on the danger firearms in the hands of civilians pose on individual and collective security.
4. Development of efforts aimed at the creation of conditions for a more effective control of borders, namely the entry and exit points of citizens, border control booths, and ports and airports, with a view to preventing the practice of illicit trade of light weapons, their circulation and proliferation in the national territory.

In this context, the Government has initiated a process of creation of important juridical instruments through competent juridical institutions and the National Assembly in order to regulate the purchase, ownership and use of weapons in the whole national territory.

Still in connection to juridical instruments, Angola has been giving concrete steps with a view to ratifying the Protocol against the illicit manufacturing and traffic of firearms and their parts and ammunition, which is complementary to the UN convention against organized transnational crime, as well as other international instruments adopted by the United Nations.

Mr. President,

At the level of the sub-regional organizations Angola belongs, namely SADC and CEEAC, Angola has been seeking to emphasize to its partners of regional cooperation the importance of the fight against the illicit traffic of small weapons, since its recent past proves well the disastrous consequences of the existence and use of these weapons.

At a time when we have reached the end of the period initially foreseen for the implementation of the Program of Action, whose revision we will execute now, it is important to highlight that this is a matter whose execution is not confined to the context of this Conference, nor in the border limits of each State, independently of its level of economic development.

Mr. President,

The absence of international regulations allows armament dealers to, under the silent glance of some states, continue involved in the illegal trade and the transfer of weapons of light and small caliber to conflict areas, where serious and systematic violations of international humanitarian laws still persist.

Drawing on our own experience, we stress that the registry and follow-up of weapons transfer, as well as control mechanisms similar to those of the Kimberly Process, can be highly important to the implementation of the UN Program of combat to the illicit trade of weapons, and we propose its inclusion in the agenda of the Conference.

International cooperation and technical support are decisive to build the capacity of States in the implementation of the International Convention against Transnational Crime and its additional protocols, as well as the resolutions of the Security Council that seek to prevent, combat and eradicate the illegal trade of light and small weapons, such as arms embargoes, travel bans, prohibition of use of international financial services on the part of institutions or individuals involved, allowing states to execute the national, regional and global measures of the UN Program of Action.

The inclusion in the mandates of peacekeeping missions of the cataloguing and follow-up of weapons transfer, adoption of mechanisms of control of small and light weapons, as well as the mobilization of resources for the support of processes of peace consolidation, and financing of programs of DDR, Mine Action, and Resettlement of Refugees, can equally contribute to the prevention, combat, and eradication of the illegal trade of firearms.

Finally we launch two appeals:

First, for the adoption of complementary measures to the Program of Action, in order to allow States to continue to fight for the eradication of the illicit trade of light and small weapons, as well as their illegal proliferation in underdeveloped countries, whose borders are very vulnerable to this type of criminal actions.

Second, we urge the international community present here to support States emerging from conflicts in the implementation of their Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration programs, and in their search of solutions for the disarmament of their civilian population, for mine action and national reconstruction.

Thank you very much.