



**SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENT DELIVERED BY SOUTH AFRICA AT THE MEETING OF THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS**

**16-18 November 2022  
Agenda item 6- General Exchange of Views**

**Chairperson,**

At the outset allow me to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW). We assure you of our full support and cooperation as we work towards the successful outcome of this meeting.

South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) and would like to make the following remarks in a national capacity.

My delegation reaffirms its commitment to the CCW and the humanitarian principles enshrined in the Convention. South Africa attaches great importance to this framework Convention as evidenced in our ratification of all its Protocols annexed to the Convention and remains committed to taking all necessary steps to fully implement our obligations under the CCW and its Protocols.

**Chairperson,**

South Africa remains deeply concerned over a wide range of security, humanitarian and socio-economic consequences arising from the illicit manufacture, transfer, and circulation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread to unauthorized recipients in all regions of the world; as well as their possession by terrorists, illegal armed groups and criminals, as well as transnational organized criminal organizations.

The Eighth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS8) to Consider the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPoA) can be deemed successful in underscoring our collective determination in the implementation of our undertakings. South Africa is satisfied that the Outcome Document focuses on capacity-building, including the proposed establishment of a dedicated fellowship programme on small arms and light weapons.

We wish to underline the need for a balanced, full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA) and the International Tracing Instrument, and in this

regard, stress the urgent need to intensify efforts to promote international cooperation and assistance.

My delegation has been actively involved in the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group to elaborate a set of political commitments on addressing existing gaps in through-life ammunition management. We believe that the two sessions held during 2022 has provided us with many useful proposals on which to build upon in order to achieve a cooperative global framework on ammunition safety and security. In doing so, we will work constructively with other delegations in achieving such a framework, which should also address the elements of such as international cooperation and assistance and the necessary implementation mechanisms as part of its follow up.

**Chairperson,**

Regionally, the African Union (AU) is working towards the implementation of its Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for “Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020”. In this regard, South Africa wishes to recall that the AU Master Roadmap has been extended for a period of ten years, from 2021 to 2030, with periodic reviews every two years. South Africa remains steadfast in its resolve, together with our fellow African sisters and brothers, and with the support of the international community, to making concrete progress on the implementation of the AU Master Roadmap, within the context of the AU’s Agenda 2063.

We value the discussions of the open-ended Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS). In the view of my delegation, international humanitarian law should apply to all weapons, including LAWS. In this regard, we highlight that these or any new technologies of warfare would need to be compliant with the rules of international humanitarian law, including those of distinction, proportionality and military necessity, as well as their potential impact on human rights. Therefore, South Africa reaffirms our support for the continuation of this work. We believe that the mandate of the GGE should evolve to allow the Group to build on the work of the GGE in particular, in relation to the need for new legally-binding provisions for addressing the humanitarian and international security challenges posed by emerging technologies in the area of LAWS.

**Chairperson,**

South Africa participated in the recently held Eighth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). One of the stated purposes of the ATT is to contribute to international and regional peace, security and stability. It is also worth noting that it is only through our full, active and collective implementation of the Treaty and support to its subsidiary bodies that we can achieve the objectives of the ATT. Those objectives remain that of setting the highest possible common international standards for regulating or improving the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms, as well as to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade in conventional arms and to preclude their diversion.

My delegation remains fully committed to participate actively and constructively to reach a consensual outcome of this meeting.

Thank you