



**Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania
to the United Nations**

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STATEMENT BY

**DR. JUSTIN N. SERUHERE, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, A.I. OF
THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF
TANZANIA
DURING THE PLENARY SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE ON
THE ARMS TRADE TREATY**

NEW YORK, 5 JULY 2012

**STATEMENT BY DR. JUSTIN N. SERUHERE, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES *a.i* OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS DURING THE DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE ON THE ARMS TRADE TREATY
IN NEW YORK, 5TH JULY 2012**

**Mr President,
Excellencies,
Representatives of Intergovernmental Organisations,
Representatives of Non-governmental Organisations,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you for your election to lead this Conference. We trust in you and we assure you of our full support. My delegation is greatly honoured to be part of this negotiation on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). As you may all recall there have been several rounds of preparatory negotiation meetings at the levels of the United Nations, regions and nations. My delegation is optimistic that after those rounds of preparatory meetings, delegations present here are ready and prepared to engage into the negotiations on the Chair's Non-paper. It is in this regard that I pay tribute to the Chair for having successfully steered the deliberation and negotiation processes since 2010 that have led to this conference we have gathered here for. Let me state at the outset that the envisaged Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) illustrates that we all understand the problems arising from illicit trade of weapons.

My delegation associates itself with the statement of the African Group delivered by Nigeria and that of the Non-Aligned Movement delivered by Indonesia.

Mr. President,

Tanzania is ready to engage into negotiations on the establishment of an ATT, not because it is the big manufacturer and supplier of weapons but because we are neighbouring countries that have both intra-state and inter-state conflicts. As a result, Tanzania has constantly been the home of refugees and illicit cross-border weapons. This situation is threatening our long lasting pillars of peace, security and stability as it is true that when your neighbour is not at peace you are also indisputably not at peace.

Mr. President,

Irresponsible manufacture, sell, transfer and supply of conventional arms always lead to lack of peace, insecurity and instability in different regions. Such actions contribute immensely to the violation and abuses of human rights, establishment of undemocratic Governing systems, lack of rule of law as well as bad governance. As a result, the world has experienced human torture and sufferings, loss of innocent lives particularly elderly, women and children who most of the time cannot defend themselves.

The misuses of weapons have caused destructions to the environment, infrastructure, development and total retardation of the economic growth. The time has therefore come for us to stop being the victims of illicit transfer of arms that violate international law as well as

international humanitarian law. The proposed ATT like other international instruments will help safeguard peace, security and stability for the present and future generations. It will regulate the transfer of arms and thus reduce loss of lives, human suffering and economic destructions in terms of conflicts and wars caused by crime, terrorist acts, piracy and drug trafficking.

As we engage into negotiations, we cannot aim for less than a legally binding instrument which establishes the highest possible common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. The right of Member States to self-defence remains since the Arms Trade Treaty does not seek to prohibit but rather regulate arms trade. Nevertheless, states should not forget their responsibilities under relevant international law.

Mr. President,

The United Republic of Tanzania has always supported the process towards an Arms Trade Treaty and welcomes the Chair's Non-paper to be the basis for negotiations. Tanzania is in a region (the Great Lakes Region) that has and is continuing to suffer the consequences of illegal trade in arms, especially small arms and light weapons and their ammunition which are being used in the exploitation of natural resources. Therefore, it is encouraging to see that they as well as other weapons that can be used to breach the peace, security and stability have been included in the Chair's Non-paper. It is important that their means of transportation and delivery are also regulated because the civilians have suffered from weapons they do not even manufacture for far too long.

Mr. President,

The inclusion of international co-operation and victim assistance as well as an implementation support unit is important because it shows that we are all in this together. Co-operation of Member States will be required be it at the bilateral or multilateral level. As I said earlier, we welcome the non-paper as the basis for negotiations. However, there are a number of areas that need clarification, additions as well as elimination. The essence is to avoid any ambiguities and thus ensure full compliance. I believe this is the forum for that.

Mr. President,

My delegation is of the view that the ATT should not be a tool for disarmament rather a tool for arms control. In that regard, the various elements of the ATT must be geared towards arms control. However, considering that the UN Charter requires the UN Organization to guarantee and maintain international peace, security, development and human rights the ATT must not be discriminatory. It must include all Member States and encompass all weapons and their components without exception. Likewise, its implementation must involve the inclusion and participation of all Member States through the Secretariat of the United Nations. The ATT should complement the Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and the *International Tracing Instrument* as well as the UN Register on Conventional Arms. Let us be prepared to play our part to achieve a strong and inclusive treaty so that its goals and objectives can be attained. I wish this Conference fruitful negotiation which will lead to the adoption of the ATT.

I thank you all for your kind attention.