

**AN INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE EVELYN NAWASES-TAEYELE
CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL
AFFAIRS, ON THE OCCASION OF THE PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR GLOBAL ACTION
(PGA) WORKSHOP ON THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT
WEAPONS: THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS 7-8 MARCH 2013, WINDHOEK,
NAMIBIA.**

Director of ceremony, Hon. Members, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Hon. Evelyn Nawases-Taeyele, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs.

I would also, like to take this opportunity to welcome you all here today and thank you for having taken time out from your busy schedules in order to attend this workshop.

As you can see from the programme, the schedule over the next two days will be intense yet productive. We have three sessions over two days.

Director of ceremonies, Hon. Members and ladies and gentlemen. This Workshop could not have come at a better time. The world today is facing untold suffering and violation of human rights to the proliferation of illicit use of small arms and light weapons in conflict situations. The Republic of Namibia cannot remain aloof of this situation and pretend that things are fine.

In its unwavering efforts and commitment in contributing to efforts to eradicate illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in the world, Namibia attended a Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, that took place in New York from 27 August to 7 September 2012.

Namibia has made progress in the implementation of the UN Programme of Action. In July 2004, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Protocol came into force, after it was signed and ratified by 12 SADC Member

States. Namibia signed the Protocol on 14 August 2001 and deposited its instruments of ratification on 08 October 2004.

Namibia has also become party to the international and regional declarations and other protocols on the issue of small arms, ammunitions and other related materials. These include the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate, the Illicit Trading of Ammunitions and the Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons

In this regard, Members States were required to establish National Focal Points and National Coordinators to oversee the implementation of the SADC Protocol on the control of Firearms and Light Weapons. The Government of Namibia established a National FOCAL Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons following a Cabinet decision taken in 2003.

The National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons was approved by Cabinet in November 2004 and was subsequently launched by the President on 14 April 2005. Inter agency Committees and sub-Committee to coordinate the actual implementation of the National Action Plan are also in place. These structures will allow us as a nation to work towards the eradication of illicit firearms in the country. Verifiable database on all legal firearms will also be established. The institutional framework encompasses a National Management Committee, the National Focal Point Committee and the Regional Focal Point Committee.

AS required by the UN Programme of Action on the issue. The Government of Namibia submits reports to the UN every year on progress made with regard to the implementation of the United Nations Programmer of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. Also, as a requirement of the SADC Protocol, Namibia also reports to the Council of Police Chiefs on progress on the implementation of the Protocol.

It is worth mentioning that, Namibia has made good progress in this regard and all our 13 regions in the country are capacitated, in order to enable them to

successfully implement our National Action Plan on Small Arms and Light Weapons. As a country, we have an efficient and effective workable implementation strategy for our National Action Plan on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Having briefly, briefed the Workshop about the progress Namibia has so far made, I just hope that this Workshop will be an enjoyable and productive opportunity for us to discuss various issues with our counterparts from other countries.

With these few introductory remarks I pray for a successful Workshop.

I THANK YOU