Translated from French

Permanent Mission of Burundi to the United Nations
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The Permanent Mission of Burundi to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Department for Disarmament Affairs and has the honour to transmit herewith the reply to Note Verbale No. DDA/1-2004/TSA of 14 January 2004 on the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Burundi takes this opportunity to convey to the Department for Disarmament Affairs the renewed assurances of its highest consideration.

New York, 27 April 2004

Department for Disarmament Affairs
United Nations
New York
Republic of Burundi

Data and information on the implementation 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

1. On 15 March 2000, Burundi became a State party to the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa. It participated in all the meetings and activities organized within the framework of this regional coordination structure.

It also participated in the meetings organized by the African Union and the United Nations on the problem of the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

2. In February 2003, the Government of the Republic of Burundi established its National Focal Point, composed of representatives of the nation’s primary institutions such as the Office of the President and the Office of the Vice-President of the Republic, the transitional National Assembly and Senate, and senior officials from targeted ministries such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Safety, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Good Governance, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Communication, the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Human Rights.

Civil society is also represented in the National Focal Point.

3. The principal elements of the National Plan of Action are:

3.1 Raise the awareness of, and educate, the civilian population

(a) Action to be taken: Conduct awareness-raising workshops in all provinces for leaders from civil society, who will relay the message to local communities

– Organize high-level awareness-raising seminars on combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons for Burundi’s political partners; members of its administration, armed forces and police; and judges

(b) Primary objective: To involve everyone in a comprehensive effort to combat small arms and light weapons

3.2 Establish a database on small arms and light weapons

(a) Action to be taken: Gather and compile information on the movement and flow of weapons entering Burundi and on the illegal possession of weapons in that country

– Develop close cooperation with neighbouring countries in border monitoring through joint patrols

– Ensure regular exchanges of information among the customs, police and intelligence services
(b) **Primary objective**: To gain access to reliable statistical data on the circulation of small arms and light weapons and the sources thereof (legal, illegal and diverted)

### 3.3 Update obsolete Burundian legislation and bring it into line with that of States parties to the Nairobi Declaration

In Burundi, small arms are covered by Decree Law No. 1/91 of 2 August 1971 on firearms and ammunition and by Presidential Decree No. 1/92 of 2 August 1971, which established measures for implementation of the aforementioned Decree Law. These two legal instruments on weapons in Burundi need to be reviewed in order to bring them into line with the relevant regional and international agreements.

A subregional conference of parliamentarians from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, held in Bujumbura on 29 and 30 March 2004, recently took important decisions which will have a great impact on the harmonization of legislation.

The Parliamentary Plan of Action, adopted at Bujumbura, consists of four stages:

1. Discussion of the content of the report of the Bujumbura Conference by parliaments of the subregion;
2. Organization in Brussels, in June 2004, of a meeting of members of Parliament from the three countries and other legal experts in order to establish topics, legislation to be harmonized and terms of reference for national experts;
3. Exchange of information, comments and draft legislation by national experts from the three countries’ parliaments; the Nairobi secretariat will serve as coordinator; and
4. Organization of another meeting, to be held in Kigali in December 2004, from which harmonized draft legislation will emerge.

### 3.4 Strengthen capacities

(a) **Action to be taken**: Training of trainers workshops and training and retraining for the gendarmerie, police and intelligence services

(b) **Primary objective**: Instil in these partners of the National Focal Point an appropriate, realistic approach aimed at convincing those in possession of illicit weapons to return them

### 3.5 Develop effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes

The Government of the Republic of Burundi has just concluded a grant agreement with the World Bank for implementation of an emergency project on the demobilization, reinsertion and reintegration of former soldiers.

The first phase of this programme is one of disarmament, during which soldiers and former soldiers identified for demobilization will be disarmed. The weapons are to be collected, registered and stored in a safe place by the African Mission in Burundi.

The disarmament of soldiers and former soldiers will reduce the circulation of weapons, improve their monitoring and lead to the destruction of surplus weapons.
The Coordinator of the National Focal Point on small arms and light weapons is Ambassador Tharcisse Midonzi, Director of Legal Affairs, who may be contacted at the following address:

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