INTERVENTION BY NIGERIA ON COOPERATION ON MARKING AND TRACING OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Mr Chairman,

We will like to join others to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman.

Nigeria holds and uses a reasonable stocks of SALW and ammunitions because of her commitments to UN Peace Support Operations (PSO), Internal Security needs, its military training and operational requirements. Therefore, she appreciates the convening body of this meeting and finds it useful. Hence, the need for discussion on marking, tracing and cooperation.

To start with, she also ensures these items have appropriate markings most of which have been inscribed or printed on the arms and ammunition by the manufacturers. The markings mostly include; the model, calibre, year of make, manufacturer’s details, serial no and other necessary details by practice. There is no major remarking effected locally to avoid confusion arising from multiple markings except for butt marking for individual use when necessary.

The records and safe keeping process is ensured by retaining and registering the serial number of individual arms in the arms registers at all levels with which monthly, or quarterly returns are done to appropriate offices for centralized control, management and appropriate directives from time-to-time. This process is strict and in line with usual technical practices. This enables the ease of identification of individual arms for tracing.

During various experiences of her commitment to PSO to achieve UN Peacekeeping, peace enforcement and building objectives, various categories of SALW were recovered with markings of manufacturer or users and traceable to different countries. The obvious problem is what is the liability of a country or manufacturer, to arms sold or that have left such country or manufacturer to the application by the users. This probably requires being addressed by the MGE.
Thus, the importance attached for cooperation on issue of tracing to address such problems.

In Nigeria, because arms are registered and stored using the marking of the manufacturer, it is easy to identify and trace. Presently, records of some of the arms with end-users are being computerized. Additionally, Nigeria fully subscribes to the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials. This regional efforts ensures cooperation, transparency and moderates the sub-region’s activities in respect of SALW. This is because it allows ECOWAS countries have access to the records of transactions of member states.

On the issue of request for tracing, most of the request for tracing in Nigeria have been inter and intra security agencies. These are promptly treated and when such weapons are located, they are reported. We shall however welcome cooperation with other countries on training and other relevant areas.

Thanks for your attention.

Nigerian Delegation to the UN Open-Ended Meetings of Governmental Experts on SALW New York
9 - 13 May 2011
Mr Chairman,

Nigeria will like to associate herself with the comment of the delegation of ECOWAS. Our contribution is on the problem of illicit arms. Generally, we have no problems with the government owned and privately registered arms. It is illicit arms that have generated a lot of security problems for us in Nigeria as well as other countries in the West Africa sub-region.

The Nigerian government has been on top of the problem to ensure security. Be that as it may, it is important that arms producing nations endeavour to comply with the international norms of arms transfers with regard to non-state actors.

This act will go a long way in minimizing illicit arms. Indeed, it is one of the major areas requiring cooperation between producer and consumer nations.

Thank you.

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