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STATEMENT BY
H.E. MR. ROBERT G. AISI
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
DURING THE
4th BIENNIEL MEETING OF STATES PARTIES
ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS
14 – 18 JUNE 2010, NEW YORK

Mr Chairman

At the outset, I congratulate you on your assumption of the chair of the 4th Biennial Meeting of States to the Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Mr Chairman

In 2005, Papua New Guinea provided to the United Nations its National Report on actions taken in implementing the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Since then, further developments have taken place which are also linked to the broader development aspirations of the Country.

Firstly, Papua New Guinea (PNG) does not manufacture and/or export any type of arms whatsoever. Yet it suffers greatly from the illicit use of and trade in small arms and light weapons especially in the hands of the wrong people. These small arms and light weapons originate mostly from the armouries of Government institutions including the Military, Police and private users for example security companies. Anecdotal information also suggests that there has been illegal trafficking of arms across our porous land and sea borders. The Challenge therefore facing PNG is to:

1. develop baseline data not only to monitor and measure reduction in the level of armed violence but also the kinds of small arms and light weapons used and whether these are new or the same ones, which are being circulated through various illegal "loan" of these weapons by various intermediaries and parties; and,
2. deal with current problems emanating from the use of small arms and light weapons especially in conflict and crime situations.

Secondly, since 2005, Papua New Guinea has progressed in a number of initiatives outlined in its 2005 Report. These include:

1. A nationwide Guns Control Awareness and Road show programme, which culminated in the completion of the "**Guns Control Report Recommendations**" in 2005. The Report recommended a holistic approach in addressing the issue of small arms and their illicit use including legislative and policy changes as well as effective operational enforcement and awareness in partnership with Civil Society Organisations. The Report was accepted by the National Parliament in August 2009. The Report's 227 recommendations have been reviewed by the Department of Prime Minister & National Executive Council (PM&NEC) and an implementation matrix has been developed, which will soon be returned to Cabinet for endorsement. Once Cabinet endorsement is given, the implementation process will commence.
2. In terms of **National Institutional Framework** for coordinating implementation of the Programme of Action, a more focused institutional arrangement is currently being discussed by a Policy team within Government and will be finalised soon and brought before the National Government for approval as part of the implementation strategy of the Guns Control Report Recommendations noted above. This has become necessary because of a strong recommendation in the Report for the establishment of a mechanism to specifically focus on Guns Control. In looking at this arrangement, the team also had the benefit of studying materials produced by the UNDP through the Bureau for Crisis Prevention & Recovery (BCPR) particularly in relation to establishment and functioning of Small Arms & Light Weapons Commission. The current institutional arrangement is under the Law & Justice Sector but is considered too broad in its focus and scope of activities and consequently placing less emphasis on the implementation of the Programme of Action.

3. In terms of **stockpile management**, PNG has refurbished all its military armouries and ammunition storage facilities and installed a computerised system with Standard Operating Procedures for monitoring access and issuance of firearm. The Australian Government has been very supportive in this project. Surrender and destruction of weapons on Bougainville Island in the aftermath of the settlement of civil conflict remains an important part of the peace building initiative and reconciliation as required within the provisions of the Bougainville Peace Agreement, an agreement reached pursuant to the provisions of the National Constitution of Papua New Guinea.
4. In terms of **Marking, Record keeping and Tracing**, the Registrar of Firearm has responsibility over this and is the key point of contact for tracing of firearms throughout Papua New Guinea.

In addition to progress noted, Papua New Guinea is in the process of finalising its first ever National Anti Corruption Strategy as part of the fulfilment of its obligations under the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which was ratified in 2007. Once completed and implemented, it is envisioned that this Strategy will address issues of Governance at all levels of government and society including the regulatory enforcement institutions and which will complement the implementation of the Guns Control Strategy.

Thirdly, it is evident in Papua New Guinea that the demand for small arms and light weapons especially in the context of conflict and crime has generated a network of people whereby a system of loaning firearm is practised. This is a trend that is already under pressure because of excessive demand now being generated by the perceived threats from new developments in the mining and resource industry to community preservation at the village-community level and is likely to propagate a rise in the supply of small arms and light weapons from outside Papua New Guinea.

Finally, Papua New Guinea recognises that people empowerment through enhanced economic and social development in the forms of increased income generating opportunities and service delivery will have a significant impact in curtailing the demand for small arms and light weapons and therefore the supply and/ or the circulation of such weapons.

With its 40 year Vision Plan, the Papua New Guinea Government aims to do exactly that and eventually make the country a "*Smart, Wise, Fair, Healthy and Happy society by 2050*".

Mr. Chairman

In closing, Papua New Guinea will be submitting a detailed National Report on the implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action by December 2010.

Thank you.