

**STATEMENT BY NIGERIA AT THE 2ND MINISTERIAL  
REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE GENEVA DECLARATION  
ON ARMED VIOLENCE AND DEVELOPMENT**

**GENEVA - 31st October 2011**

Excellencies, Colleagues, Delegates Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to join those who have taken the floor before me to congratulate Switzerland for hosting this unique event of the 2nd Ministerial Review Conference and to also add my voice of thanks to UNDP for facilitating the process. My thanks also goes to the Secretariat of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development for their tireless efforts. My delegation looks forward to collaborating and working with all of you to achieve the desired goals of the Conference.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

2. The issue of armed violence and its negative consequences, is not restricted to developing countries. It is an issue that cuts across national, regional and continental boundaries. The Global Burden of Armed Violence report of 2011, drawing on comprehensive country-level data, as we heard this morning from Keith Krause, estimates that at least 526,000 people die as a result of armed violence every year linked to both conflict and crime.

3. For us in Nigeria, the issue of armed violence is one that we take very seriously due to the deleterious effect it has on national security and development. We believe firmly that since armed violence compromises security, it also compromises development as both security and development go hand in hand. The importance of combating armed violence therefore cannot be over-emphasised, if development is to be attained on a sustainable basis. We, therefore, welcome the theme of this Review Conference, which is "Reduce Armed Violence, Enable development"

4. Understanding too that the fight against armed violence can also be effectively prosecuted through international collaboration, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Goodluck Ebele JONATHAN, during his inaugural speech, expressed his administration's desire to collaborate at bilateral and multilateral levels to improve Nigeria's capability in combating and intensifying advocacy against the illicit trades in small arms and light weapons, which have become the catalyst for conflicts on the African continent and in post-conflict societies, they remain a major element of criminal activity.

5. This appreciation for the international dimension of the fight against armed violence is what led Nigeria to become one of the first countries to sign up to the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. This also informed why the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria referred to the uncontrolled existence of these small arms and light weapons as our own "weapons of mass destruction".

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

6. We wish to stress here that the global effort to combat the scourge of armed violence cannot yield positive results if there are no global legally binding instruments to regulate the trade in small arms and light weapons. We would therefore call on all nations to push for an early ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), when the ATT Review process is concluded in 2012.

7. While we have in place such processes of disarmament and reintegration of ex-militant combatants, safety and security management continues to be issues of concern due to the greed factor in play by global arms dealers. We will therefore urge initiatives like the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development to go into processes that would ensure positive progress for members and non-members alike, rather than talking more and doing less.

8. Nigeria would also encourage international collaboration in the areas of technology transfer and capacity building with a view to sharing best practices to combat the scourge of armed violence. To this end, we strongly encourage the convening of more seminars, like the one held in

Abuja, Nigeria in July 2011, thanks to the Government of Norway, which allowed participating countries to share ideas and experiences in the control of armed violence.

9. Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Nigerian delegation stands by the dictates of the Geneva Declaration and would be ready and willing to endorse the outcome document of this Review Conference.

10. I thank you for your attention.