

# Canada

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STATEMENT BY

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DURING THE

THEMATIC CLUSTER DEBATE: CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS  
OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE, UNGA 61

NEW YORK, 12 OCTOBER 2006

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DÉCLARATION DE

EARL TURCOTTE  
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PENDANT

LE DÉBAT THÉMATIQUE SUR DES ARMES CLASSIQUES  
LA PREMIÈRE COMMISSION, ANGU 61

NEW YORK, LE 12 OCTOBRE 2006

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Madame Chair,

The illicit transfer and misuse of conventional weapons has had devastating impact on people throughout the world. Canada's approach to the many issues related to conventional weapons includes both traditional non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, as well as humanitarian, human rights and development concerns. While there have been some disappointments during the past year, we have also seen progress, reflecting the widespread collective determination of States to address issues related to small arms, landmines and a host of other conventional weapons.

### **TRANSFERS - UN REGISTER / ARMS TRADE TREATY (ATT)**

Madame Chair, Canada recognizes the need to continue to strengthen the global, regulatory framework governing the transfer of all conventional arms. To this end, Canada fully supports United Nations Resolution 60/226 on the Transfer of Conventional Arms and submits regular, annual reports to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We encourage all States to submit annual reports pursuant to this resolution.

As stated at the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons Review Conference in July 2006, Canada is also supportive, in principle, of a comprehensive, legally-binding Arms Trade Treaty which prevents the illicit flow of arms to conflict zones. We commend the work to date of civil society and the United Kingdom on the ATT initiative and will work closely with all involved.

### **SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS (SALW)**

Combatting the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, while respecting the legitimate interests of lawful firearms producers, exporters, retailers and owners is an important element of Canada's foreign policy. Canada remains committed to the full implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and places particular priority on transfer controls to prevent illicit flows, ensuring responsible civilian possession and appropriate use of small arms by state officials, stockpile management and disposal, reducing

demand for small arms and light weapons for illicit purposes and increased international cooperation and assistance. Canada also welcomes the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts to examine the brokering of small arms and light weapons.

Like many others, Canada was disappointed that States did not agree upon an outcome document at the Review Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons in July. Nonetheless, it is our belief that through renewed creative and constructive effort, we will achieve our common goals.

With respect to process, Canada sees great value in regular, global level meetings to advance implementation of the UN Programme of Action. These should include both formal meetings of States at least every two years, and informal, inter-sessional meetings to bring States together more frequently so that important thematic work can continue to be undertaken between formal meetings of States.

#### **MAN-PORTABLE AIR DEFENCE SYSTEMS (MANPADS )**

Canada also recognizes the multi-faceted threat posed by the illicit trade in Man-Portable Air Defence Systems and values the many initiatives in this area, particularly those of Australia, Israel, and the United States. Canada views the potential risks of the misuse of MANPADS primarily from a non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament perspective and will continue to work closely with other States to effectively address this issue.

#### **ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES**

Another area where concerted action on conventional weapons is well underway is in the global effort to rid the world of the scourge of anti-personnel landmines. With 151 States Parties, the Ottawa Convention has become a key instrument in addressing the humanitarian, peace, security and development impact of anti-personnel mines. At the World Summit on Mine Action in Nairobi two years ago, last year in Zagreb, and at the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention held in Geneva last month, States Parties reaffirmed their determination to achieve the goal of a world free of anti-personnel landmines and to providing

all necessary support to landmine survivors in order that they can be rehabilitated and reintegrated into their societies as full, productive members. Canada continues to support all aspects of mine action and commends the significant efforts of mine-affected States Parties to fulfill their treaty obligations within established deadlines. Canada also acknowledges the extremely valuable contributions of so many other donor countries and is pleased that we are collectively 'staying the course'. The results speak for themselves. The number of direct victims has been cut virtually in half and vast tracts of land have been returned to productive use. Even greater results can be expected as the number of States Parties continues to grow.

In our capacity as coordinator of the Convention's universalization contact group, Canada is pleased to report that four countries have ratified the treaty since December 2005, and several more indicated at the most recent meeting of States Parties in September that they have put processes in motion that will lead to accession in the near future.

We welcomed the many statements by States Parties which emphasized the importance they place on universalization of the Convention and encourage accession by all countries.

#### **CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS (CCW)**

Canada is extremely concerned about the humanitarian and development impact of other types of weapons as well and hopes that the third Review Conference on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, to be held next month in Geneva, will produce concrete results. Canada welcomes the entry into force of Protocol V of the CCW which addresses the humanitarian impact of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). We are in the process of considering ratification of Protocol V and encourage all states to do so as well.

Canada, like many other countries, is disappointed by the lack of progress on mines other than anti-personnel landmines (MOTAPM) after almost five years of discussion and hopes that States will begin to negotiate a new protocol on MOTAPM immediately following the upcoming Review Conference.

The current mandate of the Explosive Remnants of War working group, which has attempted to determine the adequacy of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) with respect to

weapons which may cause Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), is coming to an end. It will be important to determine appropriate next steps.

Madame Chair,

It is our sincere hope that we will continue to use our collective experience to guide our deliberations in order that the work we undertake during this session of the First Committee will further advance our shared arms control and humanitarian goals.

Thank you.