

STATEMENT BY NIGERIA ON ATT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: CSP3 GENEVA, 11 – 15 SEPTEMBER 2017

Let me begin by thanking Ambassador Stevens for her incisive presentation. I would also like to thank the other panelists for bringing further clarity and analytical depth to the subject of our discussion.

2. Together, they have shown that the ATT is not an end in itself but one of the means of facilitating the attainment of the SDGs.

3. Nowhere is the connection between the ATT and SDGs more relevant than the African continent, which continues to witness a multiplicity of conflicts, instability and insecurity, linked to the availability of weapons in the hands of several non-state actors.

4. Poverty eradication, building productive capacity, and environmental sustainability, the major issues of focus of the SDGs, cannot be sustained under such conditions of violent conflict and insecurity. Evidence shows that high levels of conflict prevented several countries on the continent from achieving a number of the MDGs.

5. While it may be argued that the availability of weapons is not the primary cause of some of the intractable insecurity problems facing the continent, implying the existence of other underlying political and socio-economic issues, it, nonetheless, accentuates these problems. The tendency is that once protagonists of conflict have access to weapons, they want to use them to define their own space, instead of exploring pacific conflict resolution options.

6. From experience the security problems on the continent are cyclical in form. No sooner is one conflict ended than a new one erupts, creating an environment of insecurity that is inimical to the pursuit and attainment of the SDGs.

7. Resources that could have been better utilized in pursuing development to benefit the citizenry are wasted on the efforts to resolve the problems of insecurity. Indeed, conflicts and

instability impact negatively on the ability of affected countries to implement the SDGs. Countries like Nigeria and several others within our region continue to bear the brunt of the poorly regulated trade in conventional arms.

8. For Africa, peace is an imperative for attaining the SDGs. Leveraging the presentations by Ambassador Stevens and the erudite panel, Nigeria calls on all countries to hasten the implementation process of the ATT in order to put a stop to the unregulated and irresponsible transfer of weapons, which exacerbate problems of insecurity and fuel conflicts in several countries.

9. Nigeria also calls on the exporting countries, in the spirit and letter of the ATT, to exercise a sense of responsibility on this matter. Furthermore, we call on the importing countries to review their extant regulatory environment in order to plug all the loopholes, which allow illicit weapons unfettered access into their respective jurisdictions.

10. I thank you.