



*Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cabo Verde to the United Nations*

## **80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

### **First Committee – Item: Conventional Weapons**

#### **Statement by Ambassador Tania Romualdo, Permanent Representative of Cabo Verde to the United Nations**

Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Cabo Verde aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Group, and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP). Allow me to add a few remarks in our national capacity.

Mr Chair,

In a world increasingly marked by armed conflicts, polarization, and the resurgence of militarization, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to peace, multilateralism, and the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

The impact of conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons, continues to challenge global peace and human security. These weapons fuel conflict, organized crime, terrorism, and gender-based violence; they destabilize societies and obstruct development efforts and are the true “weapons of mass destruction” in many communities around the world.

Recent data remind us of the human cost: in 2024, over 270,000 people lost their lives to homicides involving small arms and light weapons. That’s 46% of all violent deaths globally and

surpasses the number of those killed in armed conflicts. Behind these figures are stories of loss, displacement, fear, grieving families and orphans left behind.

Cabo Verde reiterates its full support for the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the International Tracing Instrument. We recognize their central role in strengthening national legislation, improving stockpile management, and enhancing international cooperation and assistance.

We also encourage greater attention to emerging technologies, including 3D-printed firearms and online trafficking, which complicate tracing and regulation.

Mr. Chair,

Regionally, Cabo Verde is proud to contribute to efforts within the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), notably through the creation of National Firearms Focal Points and the Commission on Arms and Explosives, mechanisms that promote information sharing, training, and operational cooperation among our member states.

ECOWAS continues to play a vital and proactive role. We commend the outcomes of the October 2024 Annual Meeting of National Commissions on Small Arms, which focused on artisanal weapons and improvised explosive devices, reinforcing the coordination between national and regional priorities.

Mr. Chair,

Cabo Verde firmly believes that disarmament and development are inseparable.

Global military expenditure has reached an unprecedented 2.7 trillion US dollars, a 9.4% increase from 2023 - the highest level since the end of the Cold War.

The Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace reminds us that investing in social infrastructure, education, health systems, youth empowerment and lifting millions out of poverty and hunger must take precedence over the proliferation of arms.

In this spirit, Cabo Verde joins the call to reduce military spending and redirect resources toward human development, resilience, and peacebuilding. Sustainable peace is built not on weapons, but on justice, inclusion, and opportunity.

Let us therefore renew our collective resolve to curb the illicit flow of arms, promote responsible state behavior, and advance the goals of disarmament as a foundation for a more secure and humane world.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.