Opening statement by Ambassador Nozipho Joyce Mxakato-Diseko, Chairperson-Rapporteur of the intergovernmental working group to consider the possibility of elaborating an international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies
22 May 2017

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to welcome you today and I thank you for your trust in electing me again as the Chair-Rapporteur of the open-ended intergovernmental working group pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 15/26, 22/33 and 28/7.

As you are aware, the sixth session of the intergovernmental working group on private military and security companies will primarily focus on responding to the mandate given to us by the Human Rights Council. I trust that at the end of this session, this IGWG will come up with a set of conclusions and recommendations which should address the question regarding the possibility of elaborating an international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies. I would therefore like to request all delegations to focus their interventions towards this question.

In this context, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the regional coordinators who engaged with me extensively during the preparatory stage of the sixth session and provided substantive inputs and contributions in order to develop the draft programme of work. The informal consultations with Member States, held on 15 May 2017, were another opportunity to engage with delegations directly which contributed to narrowing any gaps on the differences in a number of outstanding issues related to PMSCs.

In order to facilitate the discussion during this session, the Secretariat has shared with you a document compiling recommendations from the five previous sessions (copies of which are available in the room) and a discussion document containing main elements of the regulatory framework to the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies (copies of which are also available in the room).

The issues that we are dealing with this week are complex and multifaceted. Human rights abuses perpetrated by PMSCs need to be addressed. Also, there is a need to ensure effective remedies to victims. The previous sessions have discussed a range of issues around these topics as well the processes, instruments and regulatory frameworks available at the national and international levels to address the abuses and provide remedies to victims. The discussions in the past sessions have also provided an overview of the gaps and areas where more efforts are required by the international community.

In view of this background, the draft programme of work developed for the sixth session consists of reflections on previous sessions, including areas of convergences, mapping of processes and initiatives as well as reflections on challenges and areas where additional efforts are needed. On Tuesday and Wednesday, we shall proceed with drafting conclusions and recommendations by the IGWG to the Human Rights Council.

I thank you all for your continued active engagement in this process and look forward to a fruitful session for the next three days.