

Fourth Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms and Light Weapons

Statement by Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania to the United Nations

14 June 2010

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me congratulate you on your election and assure you the full support of the Lithuanian delegation. We would further like to thank all facilitators for their excellent papers. Lithuania fully associates itself with the statement delivered by Spain on behalf of the European Union and will only offer some brief comments on issues that we see as particularly important.

First. Lithuania welcomes the choice by Ambassador Macedo to concentrate discussions on specific topics that have been determined and thoroughly discussed prior to this meeting. The scope of the UN Programme of Action is just too wide to be covered in five days and we must concentrate on areas where concrete recommendations could be made.

Second. we are particularly glad that the establishment of mechanisms with a view to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in SALW across borders was among topics chosen for our discussion. Lithuania believes that progress in this field can only be achieved through a combination of international, regional and national measures. On the international level, the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument should be enhanced, on the regional level – regional initiatives in the area of border protection should be encouraged. Finally, on the national level Governments should increase their efforts to collect, maintain and share data on small arms.

Third. the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, with its 56 member states in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok, is a good example of how regional cooperation can result in a comprehensive set of norms, measures and principles to control the whole life cycle of SALW. Just one month ago, the OSCE adopted the Plan of Action on SALW that lists a number of tasks related to implementing existing commitments and adopting new measures to fight the proliferation of illicit SALW. Lithuania will continue to dedicate due attention to SALW related issues during its OSCE Chairmanship in 2011.

Finally, we should not forget that this is our last biennial meeting before the UN PoA Review Conference in 2012. Our previous experience has shown that it is only through intensive and productive preparation process that meaningful results in the Review Conference can be achieved. Therefore Lithuania would like to encourage a fruitful discussion throughout this week, which – we are sure – will lead to an adoption of a final document on Friday.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.