

**Statement by the United States of America on  
Combating and Eradicating the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons  
Across Borders**

Delivered by Steven R. Costner  
U.S. Department of State  
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At the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the  
*UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade of Small Arms and  
Light Weapons in All its Aspects*

Mr. Chairman,

The United States recognizes the importance of combating the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons across borders. I commend the work of Mr. Federico Perazza in composing the working paper (A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/WP.1) on this issue to facilitate today's discussion.

Mr. Chairman,

The United States fully supports the general objectives of the working paper and endorses the vast majority of its content. As such, instead of reiterating all that is said in the paper, I would like to provide a few points for further consideration in discussing this topic.

- President Obama has called on the U.S. Senate to provide advice and consent to ratify the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials, more commonly and easily known as CIFTA, and the United States fully supports its implementation. As a matter of clarification, however, I would note that CIFTA is not necessarily binding on all Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS), as stated in Section III.10.(d), but rather it is binding on States that have become party to the Convention.
- Regarding Section IV, paragraph 2, the United States supports a commitment to enhance cooperation for more effective control of borders “with a view to combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons as well as related criminal activities” as long as it is not read as expanding the scope of the UN Programme of Action (PoA). Any “related criminal activities” not already mentioned in the PoA should be discussed in appropriate venues outside the PoA process.
- Section IV calls for establishing national focal points “for sharing information in order to prevent and combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons across borders.” The PoA already calls for the establishment of a National Focal Point, an area that, as the Small Arms Survey pointed out, still needs work. The Focal Point for the PoA should also handle inquiries regarding the prevention of illicit trade of small arms and light weapons across borders. Having separate Focal Points for multiple PoA issues could complicate coordination and inadvertently hamper international cooperation.

- Finally, the United States does not see the need for another instrument “to prevent and combat the illicit trade in SALW across borders,” as the PoA already fulfills that role. Recommendations to consider such negotiations on a new instrument are beyond the scope of the Biennial Meeting of States. However, we would support further discussion of the issue at the January 2011 Meeting of Government Experts.

Mr. Chairman,

The United States continues to support full implementation of the PoA and stands ready to help Member States requiring assistance in this regard.

Thank you.