



# AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

E-mail [australia@un.int](mailto:australia@un.int)

150 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York NY 10017-5612 Ph 212 - 351 6600 Fax 212 - 351 6610 [www.AustraliaUN.org](http://www.AustraliaUN.org)

## **Preparatory Committee for the United Nations conference to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects.**

9 January 2005

### **General Debate Statement**

**Statement by H.E. Ms Frances Lisson  
Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative  
of Australia to the United Nations**

**(Check against delivery)**

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Mr Chair

Allow me first to congratulate you on your election as Chair and to thank you and the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs for your efforts in preparation for this Preparatory Committee.

Mr Chair

Australia's priorities for the forthcoming Review Conference focus on the implementation of the Programme of Action. In particular, we urge Participating States to encourage implementation through capacity-building assistance in specific areas of identified need.

For example, Australia's experience in the Asia-Pacific region highlights the need for assistance in stockpile management and security – including documented destruction of confiscated weapons – to stem one of the major sources of illicit weapons and ammunition. Australia stands ready to assist our neighbours in identifying and implementing transfer controls appropriate to the region, in order to prevent the destabilising accumulation of arms.

One aspect of the Programme of Action with which Australia is particularly concerned is the link between illicit SALW proliferation and terrorism, including the illicit proliferation of Man-Portable Air-Defence Systems (MANPADS). The unauthorised access to and use of these weapons by terrorist and other non-state groups poses a continuing serious threat to civil aviation.

Australia is grateful for the consensus adoption at UNGA 60 of the First Committee resolution on preventing the illicit transfer, unauthorised access to and use of MANPADS. We urge all Member States to support international, regional and national efforts to combat the illicit transfer of MANPADS, to ensure that such weapons are exported only to Governments or their authorised agents. We also encourage initiatives to exchange information and mobilise technical expertise and other resources to assist States, at their request, to enhance national storage and export controls, destroy surplus stockpiles and other measures to address this problem.

In addition to traditional DDR processes, Australia also encourages consideration of the need for appropriate post-conflict reconstruction and sustainable peace-building, as demonstrated by recent successes in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands.

Mr Chair,

Australia is committed to the Programme of Action. We wish you well for the smooth running of the Preparatory Commission, and pledge our support to enable the Review Conference to achieve forward-looking outcomes.