STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mrs. Byrganym Aitimova,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan
to the United Nations

at the general exchange of views of 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 Aspect

27 August 2012
New York
Madam President,

I wish to congratulate you for your leadership and thank you and the four facilitators for working tirelessly to ensure a successful Review Conference with an effective Outcome Document and 2012 Declaration. The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW), with its many new threats and manifestations, has reached enormous and complex proportions. Central to our deliberations and collective response is the Programme of Action (PoA) which needs strengthening to eliminate serious gaps in implementation at all levels, especially, the national. Hence, to move forward, the Outcome Document has to include a clear mandate with well delineated procedures and structures, including the International Tracing Instrument (ITI).

The earlier preparatory meetings have indicated that the PoA has to be effective at the global, regional and national levels simultaneously as interventions at any one level will promote gains in the other two. While the issues are numerous, my delegation will address only the most critical ones at each of the three levels.

First of all, we propose that Member States submit more specific data on how the PoA is implemented at the national level than done presently in their country reports. Many have yet to develop their own SALW PoAs, and corresponding structures in a comprehensive way, and should do so speedily. Each State should work on the establishment of adequate stockpile management and security, the effective implementation of the UN Firearms Protocol, as well as, the ITI. Just as crucial are the steps necessary to prevent the illicit proliferation of the new threat of surface-to-air man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS) and their components. These call for an exchange of best practices, capacity building, technical assistance, improving measurability, the use of web-based information platforms, and matching assistance needs with available resources.

Illicit SALW trade is impacting political security and sustainable development in literally all regions of the world. Hence, the Outcome Document should outline the close and active engagement of regional organizations than hitherto. It is critical to implement and coordinate cross-regionally the relevant legally and politically-binding regional instruments. Regions, through their structures, must vigorously complement and provide additional efforts at the national level. The challenges presented by extensive and isolated borders demand greater coordination and vigilance with timely and reliable exchange of information, especially on the smuggling of SALW through air transport which is most difficult to combat. Hence, the need for stringent measures for greater collaboration between customs, border control mechanisms, defense and security forces, police and judicial authorities across regions because of the strong nexus between terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and the illicit trade in SALW, at all levels, through strengthening legislative regimes, improving training programmes and updating equipment.
At the global level, the task before us is to also implement the ITI. We propose that the Group of Experts continues to develop norms for measuring effectiveness not just to curb brokering but also the illegal manufacture, import and export of these weapons. Though the PoA is valuable, we see the necessity of an overall legally binding treaty to regulate arms trade. Hence, the SALW component should be firmly included in the content and modalities of the Arms Trade Treaty, and also in the UN Register of Conventional Arms.

In addition, governments will need to work with the relevant entities of the UN through a system wide coherence, together with the World Customs Organization and Interpol. The Security Council will have to address challenges posed by SALW in relation to human security, with special attention given by Member States to women and children, with increased representation of women at all decision making levels and a specific link between the PoA and the SC Resolution 1325. UN and regional peacekeeping and peace support operations must ensure safe storage, disposal and tracing of illicit SALW, together new mandates and teams of civilian and military experts. The Peacebuilding Commission has to be fully engaged in carrying out its task together with civil society.

Kazakhstan rigorously implements measures to tighten established controls over the export, manufacture, supply and transfer of SALW in accordance with strict national regulations. Annually, the government has been successful in uncovering crimes involving the use of fire arms and explosives, as a result of which, thousands of small arms have been taken out of illegal circulation. Today, the country is trying to enact national legislation on export control. As OSCE Chair in 2010, Kazakhstan held regional meetings and worked relentlessly to prevent the proliferation of illegal circulation of such weapons. My country supports and provides information, on a regular basis, to the UN Register of Conventional Arms and the OSCE Document on SALW, knowing that both will make a considerable contribution to global efforts.

To conclude, the PoA remains the global framework for cooperative efforts to combat illicit arms. Kazakhstan stands ready to join the multilateral action to improve global, regional and national security, and human wellbeing through combating this scourge of illicit trade of SALW.

Thank you.