Statement

by

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Ambassador/Acting Permanent Representative
of Pakistan

at the

Second Review Conference of United Nations
Programme of Action on Small Arms
and Light Weapons

New York, 27 August 2012
Madame President,

We compliment you on your election as President of this Review Conference. We assure you of our delegation’s full support in your endeavours to making this Conference a success.

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Madame President,

This Conference represents an important opportunity to look back; assess progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) on SALW in a comprehensive yet integrated fashion. We look forward to productive negotiations leading to an agreed outcome.

Madame President,

Eleven years ago, the international community rightly identified and agreed that illicit trade in SALW causes human suffering, fuels conflicts, abets crimes and contributes to narcotic drugs and terrorist activity.

At all levels, the PoA implementation landscape paints a mixed picture of progress and challenges.

The unique national circumstances, priorities, as well as availability of financial and technical resources notwithstanding, the PoA implementation progress at the national level has been satisfactory. The growth in number and frequency of reports by States testifies to this assessment.

Implementation at the regional and sub-regional plane presents varying trajectories, illustrating differences in regional characteristics, complexities, needs and challenges.

Progress at the international level is relatively more significant. The adoption of International Tracing Instrument in 2005 is a concrete manifestation of progress in the context of PoA. Similarly, the regular Biennial Meetings, the Meeting of Group of Experts, among others, have served a useful purpose i.e. exchange of ideas, information, best practices and lessons learnt.

In the last decade, the United Nations, regional organizations, and the civil society at large made a sterling contribution in raising awareness, publishing useful research, providing assistance and working with States to advance the goals of PoA. We value their work and efforts.

Madame President,

The Government of Pakistan has taken several steps to promote the implementation of PoA. We have filed national implementation reports at regular intervals, outlining the measures that we have taken over the years.
Last year, we established an Inter-Ministerial Group to address the SALW related issues in an integrated manner. This Group comprises senior representatives from concerned Ministries and Departments to review the legislative, regulatory and enforcement measures regularly with a view to identifying possible gaps and putting in place improvements and remedial measures, where needed.

Among other important initiatives, the Inter-Ministerial Group has adopted policy guidelines on the export of conventional arms, setting a national evaluation mechanism to regulate trade in arms. The Group is in the process of instituting additional measures to further strengthen the enforcement regime including in the areas of imports and licensing.

Madame President,

The complex nature of the challenges arising from the illicit trade in SALW demands a comprehensive and integrated approach. The PoA and ITI represented significant steps in regulating the illicit trade and the manufacturing side of these weapons, but essentially from a supply perspective. These approaches are useful and should continue. However, greater attention is now required to address the issues related to these weapons from a demand side as well.

The demand side of the equation is manifested in the unresolved disputes in various regions and sub-regions, the growth in terrorist activities, the rise in narcotic drugs and organized crimes. As in the case of supply side, a similar, if not more robust, level of efforts and resources are needed towards the demand side of the SALW field in line with calls for full and effective implementation of PoA.

Madame President,

The key to progress in PoA implementation as well as its primary challenges lay at the national level. Many national reports point to several implementation challenges, chief among them being the lack of adequate technical and financial resources.

In our view, International Assistance and Cooperation is central to and the main enabler of the PoA implementation. In the absence of meaningful and sincere effort in this regard, full implementation of the PoA will remain elusive.

The Non-Aligned Movement has presented a comprehensive working paper on this vital issue. We fully endorse the paper with its several valuable recommendations. We trust that the Review Conference would examine these recommendations with the seriousness they deserve.

The long-term success of the PoA lies in deepening and strengthening the international consensus that it represents. Prudent channeling and meaningful promotion of international assistance and cooperation is sine qua non for the full and effective implementation of PoA at all levels.

Thank you Madame President!