DRAFT STATEMENT
by the Chairmanship of the FSC on behalf of the OSCE

Second 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

27 August - 9 September 2012, New York

Madam President,

Distinguished Delegates,

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, continues to play an important role in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The changing security environment has produced a variety of new threats in the politico-military area, the proliferation of illicit SALW being one of the most serious ones.

The internal OSCE review process initiated in 2008 led to the adoption of 2010 OSCE Plan of Action on SALW. In line with the priorities set out in the Plan of Action, in the past two years OSCE participating States have revisited their SALW export control commitments.

The OSCE shared with the UN the results of two information exchanges on the national control of SALW brokering activities conducted in 2008 and 2011. These exercises revealed that since 2008 at least five participating States have adopted new legislation on SALW brokering activities.

Reliable end user certification often presents a challenge for the licensing authorities. Here, the OSCE participating States established a list of minimum elements that an End-User Certificate (EUC) should contain.

Since 2009 fifty-one national EUC samples have been made accessible through the closed OSCE network. Furthermore, to facilitate higher standards and common practices in this area, the OSCE Secretariat, jointly with SIPRI, introduced an electronic EUC template applicable for SALW and conventional weapons export.
Along with review at the headquarters level, in 2011 and 2012 the OSCE conducted a series of targeted, region-tailored capacity building events for licensing authorities and customs services from twenty one OSCE states. This exercise was aimed at improving cross-border inter-agency co-operation on SALW and dual-use goods export controls.

Country specific dialogues have been initiated jointly with the German export control agency BAFA, the UNODC and UNODA. These activities focused on improving export control legislation concerning SALW and dual-use goods, relevant to the implementation of several international instruments, including the UN PoA, the OSCE Document on SALW, the Firearms Protocol and UN Security Council resolution 1540.

Considerable attention has also been paid to improving effectiveness of OSCE information exchanges on legislative controls and SALW transfers. Here, the OSCE aims to increase the quality and quantity of national submissions while reducing the paperwork. Two reporting mechanisms under the UN PoA and the OSCE Document on SALW have been harmonized. Now the "two-in-one" report can be submitted both to the OSCE and the UN.

Supported by SIPRI, the OSCE looked into the national practices on annual information exchange concerning imports and/or exports. We tried to make the aggregated data more accurate, while taking into account national limitations on data management, slightly different SALW categorization and reporting on transfers between the OSCE and the UN. Our work on this issue will continue.

Even though the 2010 OSCE Plan of Action on SALW has lead to substantial progress, the review conducted during a special OSCE event last May concluded that the OSCE still needs to do more to fully implement all provisions laid down in the Plan of Action. The OSCE intends to update the Plan this fall.

As a first follow-up step in this direction the OSCE has most recently reissued its Document on SALW consolidating all relevant decisions taken since 2000.

Madam President,

Before concluding I would like to articulate some of the major challenges and priorities that seem important from the OSCE perspective.
While impressive success has been achieved in setting norms, measures and principles for preventing the illicit trade in SALW, the implementation at the global level remains very uneven and often very challenging. The existing loopholes and grey areas in the national regulatory frameworks are still used for diversion and delivery of weapons to unauthorized users and conflict zones, including areas under UN arms embargoes. Therefore the OSCE calls for enhanced and focussed action to ensure full implementation of all agreed commitments.

As a consequence of the economic crisis, resources have become even more limited. We need to do more with less financial means. Hence, stronger co-ordination and co-operation among international actors gains the highest priority.

The OSCE has already benefited from partnerships with a number of international and regional organizations. Practical results have been achieved under the memoranda of understanding and joint action plans with the UNDP and UNODC. We have developed efficient co-ordination mechanisms with the UNODA, NATO and the EU, as well as bilateral actors.

The OSCE strongly encourages enhancing such co-operation at the international and regional levels. We need stronger regional emphasis in planning future activities based on realistic and measurable objectives.

Madam President,

A lot has been accomplished in the past 12 years in the OSCE area to establish and apply effective SALW control mechanisms. Despite the success achieved, further efforts are needed to ensure that no weapons end up in the wrong hands. Let me assure you that the OSCE will continue working to promote safe and secure storage, effective export and brokering controls, timely destruction and effective tracing of SALW to contribute to safer and more secure world.

Thank you very much.