



BELARUS

14 June 2008

The Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider 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

Stockpile Management and Surplus Disposal

Mr. Chairman,

Enhancing the effectiveness of **stockpile management** as well as safe disposal of weapons determined to be in surplus are issues of priority for Belarus. We regard these issues as **an indispensable element of the UN Programme of Action**. Effective stockpile management **improves human security** and **reduces the risks of proliferation of weapons or their diversion to illegal possession** and therefore contributes towards regional and overall stability and security.

Particular attention is being paid in Belarus to ensuring the safe storage of stockpiles of various types of SALW and also to destroying SALW surplus left on the territory of Belarus following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 2007 the national legal framework regulating the procedure for safe storage and destruction was completely updated. Over the last seven years the Ministry of Defence has destroyed more than 130 000 of units of SALW.

When it comes to modernization and securing of storage facilities, the financial resources currently available in Belarus are not always sufficient to promptly ensure the highest security of stockpiles. In this connection, Belarus delegation wishes to thank Belgium, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom for providing funds to launch the “Capacity Building of SALW Stockpile Management and Security” project. This project is a joint enterprise carried out by the UNDP and the OSCE since 2007 and is a good example where UN and regional organization unite their efforts to assist a member-state. The first phase of the project is aimed to modernize 4 of the 15 Ministry of Defence storage facilities. We hope that successful implementation of the first phase by the end of this year would help to mobilize the resources for securing other facilities in the framework of the project.

Though SALW destruction and surplus management are national prerogatives and responsibilities, they can also be the areas where interests of national and regional security fully coincide. Therefore targeted international assistance could compliment national efforts and contribute to regional security in very practical terms.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.