

COLOMBIA



COLOMBIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Statement
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**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**

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, ASSISTANCE
AND NATIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING**

New York, 14 July 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Third Biennial Meeting States and assure you of the full cooperation and support of the Delegation of Colombia in your work during this week.

We would also like to express our appreciation for the excellent presentation by Mrs. Kerry Maze from UNIDIR, which clearly shows the challenges faced with regard to the issue of assistance and international cooperation and the importance of linking needs to available resources.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me, first of all, to present the working paper by the States of Latin America and the Caribbean, which we have circulated today as an official document for this meeting. It addresses, in a practical manner, all of the themes you have proposed for this Third Biennial Meeting.

We value all the recommendations made in the Working Paper. Nevertheless, we wish to highlight the importance of considering the adoption of a follow-up mechanism that allows for the strengthening of the Programme of Action in its various areas of consideration.

Likewise, we would like to highlight the need to convene a new Review Conference of the progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action in 2011.

We hope this document, agreed by consensus by the countries in our region, contributes with the debates this week and adds possible elements for an outcome document.

Colombia would like to point out that international cooperation is an integral part of the Programme of Action. The Programme of Action, as its name indicates, is a commitment to act, but also a commitment to international cooperation. Only through concerted action of the international community can we face this problem that so deeply affects many of our countries. As it was pointed out by the distinguished delegate of the United Kingdom, it is a shared responsibility, which requires coordinated action.

Mr. Chairman,

Secondly, and in its national capacity, Colombia emphasizes the importance of achieving significant progress in terms of cooperation and international assistance. We must focus our attention on identifying our opportunities and challenges in each of the areas of the Programme of Action, in order to be able to redirect assistance and cooperation towards them, advancing progressively in the adoption of measures and procedures for the effective implementation at the national, regional and global level of the Programme of Action and of the instruments developed within its framework: the International Tracing Instrument and those that emerge as a natural development of the Programme of Action in important areas such as illicit brokering and stockpile management, among others.

We believe it is necessary to do a better job at the diffusion of existing mechanisms or of the initiatives being carried out to make the specific needs identified by States coincide with available resources for assistance and international cooperation.

The objective is for international cooperation to help overcome national weaknesses and to achieve the necessary legislative and institutional strengthening for the effective application of the Programme of Action.

Within this framework, we would like to highlight the importance of strengthening international cooperation understood as the timely exchange of information and coordinated work between States.

Likewise, we believe it is important for this issue to be developed with greater impetus at the regional level, involving sub regional and regional bodies.

It is important to encourage the development of spaces at this level, in order to create opportunities to discuss those matters and advance the effective fulfillment of the commitments acquired through the Programme of Action. The support of international organizations to these spaces, and to the initiatives originating from them, is valuable.

Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of Colombia would like to see action oriented measures that allow for progress in the following areas reflected in the outcome document:

- Harmonizing of legislation.
- Building national capacity through the training of customs, police and intelligence officials, as well as those responsible for arms control; through the strengthening of border controls and investigation techniques, among others.
- Strengthening cooperation and the exchange of information, including legal assistance and judicial cooperation between countries.

Furthermore, we would like to refer to the recommendations presented by the Non-Aligned Movement in its Working Paper. We welcome and highlight the importance of this document.

Likewise, Mr. Chairman, we highlight the importance of initiatives carried out within the United Nations. Therefore, we are very pleased with the establishment of the Support System for the implementation of the Programme of Action and welcome the other proposals made to strengthen work at the regional level. The Organization is called upon to carry out a more active role in the promotion and facilitation of the effective application of the Programme of Action and its follow-up.

These are only some ideas that we wish to share based on our national experience.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.