

July 15, 2008

The State of Israel

National statement for the third biennial meeting of states on the implementation of the United Nations 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

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the chair of this important meeting. Allow me to assure you of Israel's full cooperation and assistance in bringing this BMS to a successful outcome under your leadership. I would also like to thank Ambassador Streuli for preparing the working paper and his presentation this morning.

Mr. Chairman,

Since its inception, The UN Programme of Action has become a significant document that has underlined the international community determination to fight illicit trade in small arms and light weapon.

By underlining the fundamental responsibility of states to take action to mitigate the humanitarian affects of this phenomenon, the UN POA has provided the guidelines towards achieving this objective. We believe that this fundamental principle applies very much to the issue of stockpile management.

Poorly managed and insecure small arms and light weapons stockpiles pose considerable risk to public safety and a security threat to societies. Many people had lost their lives due to arms and ammunition diversion from inadequate national stockpiles. Such diversions keep fuelling violent conflict, armed crime and terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

We fully agree that the main idea of this paper, that emphasis that *"decision-making on stockpile management and surplus disposal is a purely national prerogative"*

For its part, it should be noted that Israeli State stockpiles of SALW are carefully guarded and physically secured 24 hours a day. All the SALW in storage are counted regularly and recorded. Surplus SALW that were designated for destruction are secured and monitored in the same manner as the other regular SALW.

I would like to mention that there are several private companies in Israel that have special expertise in the physical security and inventory management of SALW storage installations.

Israeli authorities ensure the destruction of improvised SALW that were confiscated, seized or collected during and after an armed conflict or in the course of counter-terrorism operations. The destruction of these SALW is conducted at specifically designated facilities. It is done pursuant to accepted procedures and standards (e.g. filling the barrels by welding, cutting the main components). Seized and confiscated SALW, if intended for re-use, will be checked, marked, and recorded in the same manner as a new weapon.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that some elements that relate to the issue are very much already agreed upon in the Marking and Tracing Instrument, for example the provisions that relate to record keeping based on the marking provisions. We would therefore call for enhanced implementation of those provisions.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.