

Statement by the Japanese Delegation

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Cekuolis, on your appointment as the chair of this meeting. Japan is prepared to cooperate with you and also with facilitators as well as the members of bureau for the success of this meeting.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the comprehensive as well as in depth presentation delivered by Ms. Maze from UNIDIR. Her presentation and discussion paper have enriched our understanding of the challenges to international cooperation and assistance.

Mr. Chairman,

For Japan, we believe that it would be extremely beneficial to examine in this session more effective assistance from the perspective of matching needs to resources, while deepening the mutual understanding of the donor and recipient States on the provision of support. Ms. Maze mentioned national reports, the PoA Implementation Support System and discussions to best make use of available resources. We support these tools and, indeed, consider all of them indispensable for strengthening the implementation of the Programme of Action.

In particular, we would like to emphasize the importance of information related to the actual conditions on the ground in affected countries. Since the extent of damage caused by SALW and the state of PoA implementation differs considerably from country to country, it is vitally important to grasp with as much accurate detail as possible the reality on the ground when studying assistance needs. Such country-by-country information could include, *inter alia*: the number of SALW casualties; whether casualties are due to conflict or ordinary crime; whether there are differences between each locality; and from where small arms are entering circulation.

Japan is adamant that information on such issues would make more precise and effective assistance possible, and a compendium of this information would be to all our advantage. For that purpose, one suggestion could be to conduct, in a manner that does not create any clerical or budgetary burden, a very simple one-page survey with each country. This information could also be included in national reports. Of course, we understand some developing countries may have difficulty conducting an investigation of this kind, but we should encourage them to do so in order to contribute to enhancing ownership of the small arms problem in each country. What is more, the gathered information can be utilized as yardsticks to assess the progress of the PoA. A decrease in the number of casualties especially is the most relevant as a measurable goal of PoA implementation.

In addition to this, it is important for experts that specialize in peace building, human security and small arms and light weapons, to set themselves firmly in place on the ground in affected countries while working closely with recipient governments and local communities. It is also vital that these experts design flexible projects and national plans matched to the affected country after jointly investigating and gaining an understanding of the circumstances on the ground with that country. Japan believes that utilizing these experts will also greatly contribute to the promotion of capacity building and ownership in affected countries, and lead to the sustainable strengthening of the PoA.

Recently, the relationship between small arms and development has been discussed. There are two sides to this discourse: poor security causes no development, or conversely, there is no development because poverty causes the deterioration of security. We consider that development and security mutually interact with each another, and since security sector reform (SSR) is a part of development, strengthening the relationship between the SALW field and the development field is important.

Japan has provided financial, technical and human resources to some affected countries in order to support their efforts in tackling SALW problems. The examples of such assistance are: (1) a comprehensive SALW management program in Cambodia, (2) a Small Arms control program in ECOWAS states, (3) a DDR and DIAG program in Afghanistan, and (4) a capacity building program for SALW management at Kofi Annan PKO Center in Ghana.

I would like to share the lessons learned in our project in Cambodia where a comprehensive SALW management program was implemented based on the needs of the country. In order to ensure effective implementation of the program by donors, the political will of recipient states for the solution of SALW problems is crucial. SALW issues have strong influence on the security and defense sectors and politics of the said state. We have witnessed the strong political will of the Government of Cambodia. Cambodia identified the area where assistance was most needed, and established close cooperation with Japan for implementation of the program. It is a judgment that the key to the success of the program was support from Japan in the form of financial, technical and human resource together with the determined political will of the Government of Cambodia to address the SALW issues.

In addition to the afore said activities, Japan hosted TICAD IV for the African countries in this May in Yokohama. At the conference, the “Yokohama Declaration,” which includes a reference to the SALW problems, was adopted. The declaration states that the TICAD Process will support efforts on the disarmament of armed groups, de-mining, destruction of unexploded ordnance, stockpile management and collection of small arms which will contribute to both the restoration of safety, security and good governance and humanitarian and reconstruction efforts. Japan and participating African states, where SALW has caused serious problems, reaffirmed the importance of taking action against the SALW problems.

Thank you.