

BMS3

Norwegian statement on International Cooperation and Assistance
14 July 2008

Thank you Mr. Chair,

First of all let us join others in congratulating you with the election as chair of this meeting, in thanking you and your team, the UNODA and the facilitators for the tremendous work you have done in preparing for this week. We think this morning's and this afternoon's discussions show that it is possible to have an interactive debate within this process when it is well prepared and countries choose to adhere to the chair's recommendations.

Today's theme is international cooperation and assistance and national capacity building. Even though obligations to implement the PoA rest with each member state, as many have said before us, international cooperation and assistance is an essential tool to enhance the effective implementation of the Programme of Action. Norway recognises this, and contributes in various ways to national and regional efforts, and to research and analysis projects designed to contribute to enhanced implementation. But without commitment, ownership and will on all levels in the country affected by illicit SALW, as mentioned by for instance the EU in their statement this morning, implementation will not be effective. Donors will respond to the assessed needs and priorities of affected countries, and the priorities affected countries set must be made clear to donors. We appreciate the work done to establish mechanisms within the UN to match needs with resources that was just presented to us by Daniel Prins. This should assist affected states in identifying proper funding mechanisms and possibilities, including through official development assistance. Assistance is provided through both multilateral, regional and bilateral arrangements.

Many countries affected by illicit SALW face a number of interlinked problems; armed violence, slow socio-economic development, humanitarian problems, internal or external conflict, human rights violations, high levels of crime and low levels of security. Such problems often drive the demand for SALW, both as a perceived tool for increased individual or collective security, and in some cases as a source of income through for instance criminal activity. Thus, in order for efforts to implement the PoA to be effective, a focus on root causes driving demand must complement work done to prevent the supply of illicit SALW, and we need to consider armed violence, development, humanitarian problems, gender, security and many other pressing issues. The multi-faceted nature of the problem must be recognised by affected countries, donors, regional organisations and development organisations, and must influence the way programmes are designed and poverty reduction strategies are developed. This is a challenge to both affected countries and donors, including my own government.

The humanitarian and developmental problems that illicit SALW cause remain the basis of Norway's continued assistance to affected countries. We provide funding for SALW projects from various budget lines within our ministry, including from the Section for disarmament and non-proliferation; the Section for humanitarian affairs, and from the Section for peace and reconciliation. This reflects the multifaceted nature of SALW, and the facts that we face in the field. We concur with those who have said that the relationship between armed violence and development were not sufficiently addressed in the PoA. This is one area where our understanding has increased since 2001, and we have heard various statements today that emphasise the interlinked nature of SALW issues. I would also like to remind us of the

Outcome document of the World Summit in 2005; General Assembly resolution 60/68 that same year, and the United Nations Secretary General's report on small arms to the Security Council this spring, which all emphasised the need to have a holistic approach to SALW issues. Various international efforts have emerged that look at how to integrate SALW issues into development programming on a country level. Once again, this must be prioritised by affected countries, and driven by the country to have an effect.

Mr. Chair,

Diversion of licit SALW into the illicit trade is the main source of SALW that cause humanitarian and developmental problems. International and regional cooperation, and national capacity building is essential to prevent the diversion of licit SALW. We will return to this issue when we later this week discuss brokering issues, stockpile management and destruction capacity and techniques.

Finally, Mr. Chair, we would like to support the general thrust of the draft elements for inclusion in our meeting's outcome document that you have provided us with. We do agree that the outcome document should provide as focused and concrete recommendations for enhanced implementation as possible, and will continue to work constructively with you and all member states during this week.

Thank you.