

**DRAFT
STATEMENT**

**by the Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Cooperation on behalf of the OSCE at
the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to consider the implementation of the UN
Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms
and Light Weapons in All its Aspects**

New York, 14-18 June 2010

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, continues to play an important role in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The changing security environment causes a variety of new threats in the politico-military area. The OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the XXI Century, adopted by the Ministerial Council in December 2003, identifies main guidelines to address, among others, threats of politico-military nature. In this regard illicit trafficking and uncontrolled spread of conventional weaponry, including Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) was identified as one of the areas, on which the OSCE States should focus their special attention.

The problem of illicit SALW is not new to the OSCE region. Since the end of the Cold War large stocks of SALW, conventional ammunition and other conventional weaponry became surplus. The need to address the issue was evident to the OSCE participating States in view of the threats posed by these weapons. Moreover, the OSCE area includes major producers and exporters of SALW. Along with criminal and terrorist groups that use arms for acts of violence, but also to finance and enable related crimes, including human and drug trafficking, the availability of arms has sadly contributed to the rise and escalation of ethnic tensions, prolongation of civil conflicts and higher toll of victims as a result of domestic conflicts. The OSCE response to the problem was the Document on SALW, agreed in 2000.

From 2000 onwards, the OSCE has developed a comprehensive set of measures covering each stage of life of SALW. At the same time, the OSCE, as regional organization under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, seeks to complement and reinforce commitments and action undertaken globally. Since the adoption of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in 2001, the organization has promoted its implementation taking into account the special needs of the OSCE region that includes 56 participating States in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Most recently, the OSCE has organized a special meeting to raise the awareness on the importance of the timely submission of national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action ahead of BMS-4.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite the considerable success achieved by the OSCE in fighting illicit SALW proliferation, the issue is still important to OSCE States and has remained high on its agenda.

Since 2008, the OSCE has taken a dual approach on SALW seeking on the one hand the full implementation of agreed political commitments, including greater focus on practical assistance projects, and on the other hand further enhancing SALW controls.

In the past two years, OSCE participating States have taken steps to revisit the SALW export control package. Firstly, in 2008, OSCE States exchanged information with regard to their brokering activities related to SALW. The replies were analyzed to assess the level of implementation of OSCE commitments. Based on the results of the overview, that was also presented to the United Nations in 2008, the OSCE participating States committed themselves to establish or reinforce a legal framework for lawful brokering activities within the national jurisdiction by the end of 2010. OSCE participating States will review the implementation of this decision by September 2011 by exchanging relevant information on national legislation and conducting a specialized meeting.

The OSCE takes particularly seriously the problem of the proliferation of Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS) due to the threats they pose to civil aviation. Starting from 2003, the organization has seriously dealt with the issue promoting more stringent export control and effective stockpile management and security of such weapons. Most recently, following the Wassenaar Arrangement, the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) adopted an updated decision on MANPADS, which further enhances their export control.

End user certification is considered to be a key measure in preventing transfers of illicit SALW. Since authentication often presents a challenge for the export licensing authorities, the OSCE has developed a list of minimum elements that an End-User Certificate (EUC) should contain. As a follow-up to this initiative, in 2009, OSCE participating States exchanged sample EUCs. All samples submitted by States are now available on the OSCE restricted website and can facilitate the authentication process by national authorities.

Taking into account that most illicit SALW is transferred by air, the issue of effective controls of SALW transport by air is an important aspect in preventing proliferation of illicit SALW. The political deliberations on the topic that started at the OSCE back in 2006 resulted in the adoption of Best Practices in 2008 and information exchange on the national control of the of air transport of SALW transported by Government, military or government-chartered aircraft.

Mr. Chairman,

The review process that started in 2008, culminated in the experts' Meeting to Review the OSCE Document on SALW and Its Supplementary Decisions in September 2009. The meeting has produced a number of ideas of how to take the OSCE region further in effectively controlling SALW. In order to follow-up on many new ideas expressed during the meeting and earlier, at the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Athens in December 2009, the participating States decided to develop an OSCE Plan of Action (PoA) on SALW by May 2010. On 26 May 2010, the FSC adopted a decision on the Plan. The Plan is concrete, measureable and contains deadlines for implementation thus making it operational for the OSCE.

While further enhancing and fine-tuning of SALW control commitments is one of the OSCE's priorities, commitments alone will not fulfil the job without effective national

implementation. Therefore, the OSCE PoA on SALW includes both elements. Measures agreed under the action plan include more rigorous monitoring of the implementation of agreed norms and active assistance through targeted projects, possible expansion of the scope and strengthening export and brokering controls and facilitating implementation of the International Tracing Instrument (ITI).

However, the Plan is not an end in itself. Rather it is a beginning of a process leading up to the review of its implementation by May 2012 in order to measure the success of the work done ahead of the UN Review Conference on the PoA.

In the context of the OSCE's efforts to establish effective norms to fight illicit SALW, the participating States have developed an assistance mechanism that was updated in 2009 to enable the organization to provide assistance and support to States in need in meeting the high standards that the OSCE has set. From 2003 onwards, the OSCE has helped countries requesting assistance on a broad range of measures, including SALW collection, small arms and conventional ammunition stockpile management and security as well as destruction of their surpluses. Starting from 2003, the OSCE has received 33 requests for assistance on SALW and/or conventional ammunition from 14 participating States. Over 11,5 million euro has been provided to fund such programmes.

Recently completed projects in Cyprus and Tajikistan serve as examples of the important work done by the organization to remove danger in an environmentally sound manner and contribute to the climate of lasting peace.

- In Cyprus, the OSCE, in co-operation with Ministry of Defence of Cyprus and with help of donors' expertise, destroyed over 300 MANPADS and associated grip stocks in June.
- In summer 2009, the organization finalized a very successful Comprehensive Programme on SALW and Conventional Ammunition in Tajikistan that strengthened national capacity on SALW, conventional ammunition control and anti-drug-trafficking throughout the territory of the country.
- Jointly with UNDP, the OSCE is finalizing phase I of the capacity building project that is aimed at enhancing SALW stockpile management and security in Belarus. Finally, presently the OSCE is considering options to help the Kyrgyz Republic organize SALW collection, and in the long term, improve stockpile management and security standards and capacity in the country.

Mr. Chairman,

Before concluding I would like to reiterate the importance that our Organization attaches to promoting co-operation among participating States and achieving synergies with the work of other international organizations.

Following the well established tradition, the OSCE organizes regular training and awareness-raising events that are aimed at ensuring the full implementation of OSCE, UN documents as well as other relevant international instruments. Furthermore, we seek to participate in international processes where the OSCE could provide contribution. More specifically, as a member of the Expert Reference Group, the OSCE provided feedback on draft modules of the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) established by the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism. In 2009, the OSCE also initiated a

mechanism that enables closer co-ordination among various international organizations involved in providing assistance on SALW and conventional ammunition in the OSCE region by establishing regular co-ordination meetings with them.

A lot has been done in the past 10 years at the OSCE in order to establish and advance effective SALW control mechanisms. Despite the success that we have achieved, gaps still exist, and they make possible irresponsible SALW transfers. The OSCE will retain its focus on SALW, especially with regard to ensuring the full implementation of the agreed commitments and closing the existing loopholes so that the OSCE continues to contribute effectively to the implementation of the UN Programme of Action.