

**Statement by the United States of America on
International Cooperation and Assistance**

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U.S. Department of State

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At the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of
the *UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the
Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects*

Mr. Chairman,

The United States acknowledges the important role of international cooperation and assistance in implementing the UN Programme of Action (PoA) and stands ready to assist Member States in doing so. I thank Ms. Sarah deZoeten in composing the working paper (A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/WP.2) on this issue to help guide discussions today.

The United States welcomes a mechanism to identify, prioritize, and communicate requests for assistance in implementing the PoA. The United States has supported the UNIDIR project to match needs with resources and hopes to see the online tool become a one-stop shop for those States requiring assistance. At the same time, we must emphasize that budgetary implications need to be taken into account.

The United States also agrees that there is a requirement, as noted in the working paper, to “identify ways to address challenges such as needs identification and the matching of needs and resources,” and suggests that an informal working group of UN agencies, regional organizations, and/or Member States could further study this issue.

While progress has been made in the area of international cooperation and assistance, the United States is discouraged by the Small Arms Survey’s preliminary finding that only a little over a third of the

National Focal Points could be reached. Functioning National Focal Points for the PoA not only help coordinate implementation at the national level but also facilitate passing information on needs and resources within the international community. Therefore, the United States urges all Member States that have not yet done so to establish a National Focal Point or Commission to help them articulate offers of and/or requests for assistance.

Before closing, I would like to comment on the interpretation of “culture of peace” contained in paragraph 34 of the working paper. The United States supports dialogue and international cooperation to promote peace, but the term as used in the paper appears to encompass issues far beyond the scope of the PoA such as the training of law enforcement personnel “in the appropriate use of force and firearms.” Further, topics that are too broad in scope such as the references to "peace and security, development, human rights, and the rule of law" risk derailing progress made in implementing the PoA as participants may lose focus and move further away from specific, practical measures to prevent illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Once again, I would like to reiterate that the United States continues to support full implementation of the PoA and stands ready to help Member States requiring assistance in this regard.

Thank you.