

**Fourth 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**

Statement by the Delegation of Japan

Follow-up Mechanisms

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you very much for preparing the paper on the PoA's follow-up mechanisms. My delegation considers it important and opportune that we are dedicating specific time to the discussion of how best to strengthen the existing follow-up mechanisms to ensure the relevance and continuity between the various PoA meetings with a view to achieving the objectives of the Programme of Action.

Your paper, Mr. Chairman, contains some interesting ideas and suggestions in this regard. Before going into the particular items, I would like to share with you my delegation's basic views on this issue.

Firstly, it is important that we focus on the ways to reinforce the existing follow-up mechanisms – namely, national reports, biennial meetings and the Review Conferences – while recognizing the synergistic relationship among all these different processes.

Secondly, building an Implementation Roadmap and linking various meetings could only be meaningful if substantial input is provided by States, in particular, in the form of national reports and active participation in the related meetings.

Thirdly, it is necessary for States to implement faithfully the Programme of Action. However, I would like to emphasize that mechanisms to be developed or reinforced should be flexible enough to allow each State to prioritize its needs and to accommodate regional specificities. Uniformly applied, rigid, prescriptive mechanisms will only be counter-productive.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me now touch upon some of the specific ideas laid out in your paper.

Japan considers both national reports and the PoA Implementation Support System (PoA-ISS) as essential tools to strengthen the implementation of the PoA. We need to further consider effective and efficient ways of encouraging States to submit their national reports regularly and to make use of them to communicate assistance needs and information on available resources. UN Regional Centers for Peace and Disarmament can also play an important role as a regional focal point to assist States in preparing national reports.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to the UN ODA for developing and enhancing the functions of the PoA-ISS by integrating a web-based tool for matching needs and resources and by developing an electronic reporting function for national reports.

Linking the substantive work of the various annual meetings of States can also help strengthen the implementation of the PoA, provided that the Chair-designate is given the necessary flexibility to conduct business. As mentioned in your paper, the outcomes at this BMS can provide useful guidance to the upcoming 2011 Open-Ended Meeting of Governmental Experts and lay the groundwork for the 2012 Review Conference.

Japan believes that the ultimate goal of implementing the PoA is to reduce the number of small arms victims, and therefore the related meetings could focus more on this aspect. While Biennial Meetings conduct focused debate on different themes, an expert-level meeting could focus on the practical issues of implementation, in particular the difficulties and obstacles faced on the ground when carrying out various projects. In order to encourage a frank exchange of views, the meeting could take the form of an informal seminar. Chairs must be identified well in advance in order to facilitate the necessary preparations.

Lastly, on a Progress Report, my delegation thinks that it could serve as a valuable reference. In this connection, we need to consider carefully how to prepare and develop such a report so that it could be used to promote effective implementation of the PoA. .

Mr. Chairman,

These are my delegation's preliminary comments. Continuing to address this issue at the subsequent meetings is important and my delegation is ready to engage in further discussions.

Thank you for your attention.