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**Third 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**

New York, 14-18 July 2008

Draft language for outcome document

**I. International cooperation, assistance and national
capacity-building**

1. States discussed the efforts undertaken by recipient and donor States to promote information exchange, practical cooperation, national experiences, best practices and lessons learned, as well as the role played by international, regional, subregional and civil society organizations in providing assistance to States in building national capacity for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

2. States considered steps to enhance understanding of the existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms for addressing assistance needs and for matching needs with the available resources. In this regard, they welcomed the establishment, by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, of the Programme of Action Implementation Support System as well as the database for matching needs and resources established by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), which, together with the Implementation Support System, will form a “one-stop shop” for information on the implementation of the Programme of Action and an integrated clearing house for international cooperation and assistance for capacity-building in the area of small arms and light weapons.

3. States underlined that while the specific format for presenting assistance needs was the prerogative of States, the value of assistance proposals would be enhanced if they were formulated as concrete projects with measurable goals as part of national small arms action plans and broader poverty reduction strategies, where applicable, and posted on the Programme of Action Implementation Support System. It was also emphasized that national reports could be used as a tool for communicating assistance needs and information on the resources and mechanisms available to address such needs. States also noted that the task of preparing national



reports could be made easier through the further development of elements of standardization in reporting.

4. States noted that national coordinating bodies could play an important role in facilitating and furthering the assistance and cooperation process. States in a position to do so could provide assistance to such bodies, as appropriate, in order to improve the capacity of States to formulate project proposals, mobilize resources, share information and coordinate and implement programmes for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action.

5. States noted that assistance and cooperation could take various forms, including technical and financial support, the provision of expertise, networking and information-sharing on good practices.

6. States stressed the importance of regional approaches to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the usefulness, therefore, of convening regional meetings sponsored by interested States and international, regional and subregional organizations in a position to do so. They welcomed a coordinating role by the United Nations, where needed, in setting up such regional meetings, in particular in the years between the biennial meetings of States. They also encouraged the active involvement of civil society organizations in such meetings.

The way forward

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II. Illicit brokering

7. States noted the negative impact of illicit brokering on security, stability, conflict resolution, development, crime prevention, drug trafficking, humanitarian assistance and the implementation of arms embargoes and reaffirmed that illicit brokering in small arms was a serious problem that needed to be urgently addressed by the international community.

8. It was noted that, although 50 Member States had reported that brokering was already covered by existing export control legislation and 30 Member States reported that they were developing national brokering controls, much more needed to be done in order to ensure that all States put adequate legislation and controls in place.

9. States considered the current state of national legislation and regulations on brokering and reaffirmed their commitment to develop and implement such legislation and/or regulations where it did not yet exist. They underlined, in this regard, that laws, regulations and administrative procedures would be more effective if they were to be integrated into national export control systems and also acknowledged that, although profound regional differences exist in the character and frequency of illicit brokering, it was, by definition, a global problem since the lack of adequate legislation and controls were factors that facilitated the activities of unscrupulous arms brokers.

10. States recalled that the report of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons (A/62/163 and

Corr.1) had provided a set of key recommendations to address the challenges posed by illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons. Underscoring the need to take further steps to implement those recommendations, States stressed the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach to the issue of illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons, which should include associated activities, such as financing and transportation, in relevant regulations.

11. States also discussed: the effectiveness of existing brokering controls in national legislation, in particular whether and how controls had contributed to combating illicit brokering activities; the benefits and costs of such controls; and the possible additional regulatory burdens on legal brokering activities.

12. States acknowledged that little was known regarding the extent to which States cooperated in exchanging information on illicit brokers, or on whether such information exchange might have effectively contributed to addressing illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons.

13. States discussed relevant international assistance programmes, taking note of the important role of regional and international meetings and activities, the adherence to and implementation of relevant regional agreements and cooperation with subregional, regional and international organizations such as the World Customs Organization and INTERPOL in preventing illicit arms brokering and in further international cooperation, assistance and national capacity-building in this field.

14. States also considered the use of Internet resources in effective national reporting on the implementation of the Programme of Action, including actions taken to address illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons, and reaffirmed the role of the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in enhancing information-sharing on national reporting.

The way forward

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III. Stockpile management and surplus disposal

15. States recognized that poorly managed and inadequately secured stockpiles of small arms and light weapons posed a serious security threat, since they could constitute a significant source of diversion of small arms and light weapons into illicit trade.

16. States stressed that decision-making on stockpile management, including the identification of surplus small arms and light weapons and measures regarding surplus disposal, was a national prerogative.

17. States stressed the need for raising awareness among relevant national authorities of the critical importance of putting in place adequate systems and procedures for stockpile management.

18. The meeting noted that the identification of surplus small arms and light weapons was facilitated by the existence of effective stockpile management systems and that the existence of adequate marking and record-keeping and tracing systems were factors that enhanced the effectiveness of stockpile management.

19. States acknowledged that the proper management of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons and ammunition could be both efficient and cost-effective. It could help to prevent accidents and to reduce the risk of diversion and proliferation and could help to reduce surplus accumulation and replacement rates. Such management also served to improve the reliability of stocks of small arms and light weapons and ammunition.

20. States further acknowledged that effective stockpile management and surplus disposal required corresponding national laws, regulations and administrative procedures, including provisions for enhanced safety and security. Establishing effective regulations, standards and procedures for the management of stocks implied expending resources for, inter alia:

- (a) Setting up measures and infrastructure designed to improve the physical security of stockpiles, including control of access to stocks;
- (b) Relocating existing stockpiles, where necessary;
- (c) Procuring information technology and equipment required for inventory management;
- (d) Staff recruitment and training;
- (e) Building capacity to detect and punish breaches of established standards and procedures;
- (f) Inter-agency and interdepartmental cooperation and information exchange to determine appropriate locations for stockpiles and facilitate the sharing of best practices on stockpile management;
- (g) Bilateral and multilateral exchange of information on best practices.

21. States also noted that the proper identification and responsible disposal of surplus stocks, preferably through destruction, required resources, inter alia, to:

- (a) Assess each State's stockpile requirements through inter-agency cooperation and information exchange;
- (b) Procure and operate destruction equipment;
- (c) Develop systems and procedures for the secure transport and safeguarding of stocks prior to their destruction;
- (d) Recruit and train staff;
- (e) Minimize the environmental impacts of destruction programmes, in particular, removal and clean-up;
- (f) Develop measures to record destroyed items;
- (g) Finance destruction;
- (h) Exchange information on best practices bilaterally and multilaterally.

22. States recognized that the full and regular review of existing management, safety and security measures was the first step towards improving stockpile management and also recognized that technical reviews could be conducted only by well-trained personnel.

23. States noted that it was important for competent national authorities to have accurate information on the condition and size of the national stockpile of small arms and light weapons and the State's requirements in this regard. To that end, comprehensive inventory and accounting systems needed to be established in order to enable States to effectively classify, account and record stockpile movements.

24. States acknowledged that the physical condition of stockpiles needed to be regularly assessed to prevent deterioration. In this regard, they further noted that a technical inspection system and the training of personnel to conduct the necessary surveillance would be required.

25. States emphasized the need to enhance information exchange on implementation challenges and opportunities relating to stockpile management and surplus disposal/destruction, including best practices in those areas. They encouraged each other to provide detailed information on the stockpile management and security measures they had adopted as well as on challenges and problems encountered in this area.

26. States agreed to provide more comprehensive information on the scale of their surplus destruction activities, including on disposal of surplus by methods other than destruction, and on assistance provided and received in this regard, and undertook to report on the acquisition of surplus small arms from other States.

The way forward

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