

30 August 2012
English
Original: Spanish

**United Nations Conference to Review Progress
Made in 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, 27 August to 7 September 2012

**Working paper submitted by the Southern Common Market and
associated States in connection with the second United Nations
Conference to Review Progress Made in 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**

1. The member and associated States of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) recognize the contribution and qualitative difference made by the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects to providing a comprehensive and multidimensional response to the problems arising from these illicit activities.
2. Nevertheless, we remain concerned about the effects of illicit production, transfer and circulation of firearms and ammunition, and their proliferation in the hands of civilians, which, in many regions, have various consequences and pose a challenge to the sustainable development of our societies.
3. We also reiterate our concern at the close link that exists between the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and organized crime.
4. We therefore believe that the Review Conference should reaffirm the objectives of the Programme of Action, come to a reasonable conclusion on their implementation in order to identify those areas that need to be strengthened and to ensure that the mechanism complements other existing instruments and the negotiation of additional instruments. To ensure the effective implementation of the Programme of Action, it is also important to establish precise objectives for follow-up mechanisms, with a clear mandate for meetings, which can provide substantive results reflected in final documents with specific measures or recommendations for States.
5. We consider it important to continue promoting the consolidation of international cooperation and assistance and national capacity-building, as their



cross-cutting and multidimensional nature make them essential tools for the effective implementation of the measures recommended in the Programme of Action.

6. While we recognize the contribution made by the Programme of Action, the MERCOSUR member and associated States wish to reiterate the position stated on previous occasions regarding the Programme of Action, namely, that by referring to the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons “in all its aspects”, it must necessarily include ammunition and explosives. We therefore consider that one of the remaining challenges for the implementation of the Programme of Action is the comprehensive consideration of the issue. MERCOSUR and associated States consider ammunition to be an integral part of small arms and light weapons, which also include explosives. We have also reiterated that the non-legally binding nature of the Programme of Action is an obstacle to its effective implementation.

7. This conference is a unique opportunity to reaffirm the commitment to implement fully the recommendations of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We reiterate the importance that MERCOSUR and the associated States accord to the question of broadening the scope of the Instrument to cover ammunition, and to making it legally binding.

8. We understand that there is a need to strengthen the follow-up mechanisms, such as national reporting and information exchange: these will allow work to be coordinated and information provided by each State on progress made in internal controls of small arms and light weapons to be analysed and will be essential decision-making tools for the adoption of measures to combat the illicit trade in these weapons and their serious consequences.

9. In turn, we draw attention to the need for greater and more effective coordination, complementarity and synergy between stakeholders involved in efforts at all levels and recognize the importance of continuing to strengthen strategic alliances, involving the Programme of Action, between States, international organizations and civil society organizations, since the latter have contributed both to the national implementation of the instruments’ recommendations and to channelling regional and global resources.

10. Among the outstanding issues, we reiterate the importance of mainstreaming gender and age perspectives into the implementation of the Programme of Action, addressing the most vulnerable sectors of society.

11. Similarly, we believe that promoting dialogue and a culture of peace, prevention of crime and conflict, and social inclusion are actions necessary to complement and advance efforts to prevent and combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

12. MERCOSUR member and associated States agree with the approach outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/255), in which he reports to the Security Council on a number of issues that require particular attention, including trade and brokering, marking, record-keeping and tracing of weapons, stockpile management, armed violence, the misuse of small arms and also the trade in ammunition, problems connected with storage and the importance of tracing ammunition found in conflict settings. We also agree with the report’s six final recommendations.

13. Finally, the MERCOSUR member and associated States, while reiterating our commitment to continue working to strengthen the Programme of Action, consider it pertinent to highlight the work being done by the MERCOSUR Working Group on Firearms and Ammunition since 2001, with the aim of sharing national experiences, harmonizing national legislation and coordinating policies on the issue, as an example of regional cooperation providing effective and comprehensive responses to the problem of the illicit trade in firearms.
