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**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**

New York, 14-18 June 2010

**Measures for implementation by Arab States members of  
the League of Arab States of the Programme of Action to  
Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small  
Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects during the  
period 2008-2010**

**Working paper submitted by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on  
behalf of the Arab Group**

**I. Background**

1. The Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was agreed at the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects that was held at United Nations headquarters in New York from 9 to 20 June 2001, and adopted by consensus by the General Assembly in resolution 56/24 of 24 December 2001.

2. At the 2001 Conference, the members of the League of Arab States affirmed that addressing this problem must not prejudice the international disarmament priorities that were established in 1978. In accordance with those priorities, the aim is to eliminate nuclear weapons first, then other weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. Those States also affirmed that it is essential to address the root causes of conflicts: small arms and light weapons do not in themselves cause conflicts. Emphasis was placed on the right of States to self-defence, as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations, article 51, and to self-determination. Arab coordination efforts during the 2001 Conference ensured that those two and other principles were included in the preamble to the Programme of Action, in paragraphs 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 17.



3. It was affirmed that the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is the basis for cooperation in this matter and that its politically binding nature does not affect the political will to implement it, but grants each State flexibility to implement in the first place the aspects thereof that it considers of greatest national priority. However, recognition by States members of the League of Arab States of the importance of dealing with illicit small arms and light weapons has led most of them to make progress in implementing the Programme of Action.

## **II. Efforts exerted during the period 2008-2010 by States members of the League of Arab States in implementation of the Programme of Action**

4. Between 2001 and 2010, 21 Arab States established national points of contact for the suppression of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and many of them established national coordination bodies.

5. Between 2006 and 2010, 17 Arab States prepared national reports on the progress made in implementing the Programme of Action. Those countries were Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

6. The focus in this paper is on the measures most commonly taken by the Arab States that submitted national reports in the period between the 2008 and 2010 meetings. Details are set forth below:

(a) At the national level:

- Most Arab countries promulgated laws and formulated relevant legislation, regulations and administrative measures. Some regulated small arms and light weapons brokering, while others updated existing legislation and regulations.
- With regard to the marking of weapons and maintenance and storage of records, most Arab countries devised ways of managing and maintaining inventories, and updated systems and technical means relating to weapons stores. They also mark weapons and regularly update records.
- Depending on their individual circumstances, some Arab countries carried out awareness-raising campaigns and cooperation programmes with civil society organizations. Djibouti and the Sudan are implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.
- With regard to measures to prevent trafficking in small arms and light weapons, most States have taken border control measures and have provided the relevant bodies with the equipment and technical means to facilitate their work. The border authorities of certain States also coordinate and interchange information. In order to ensure that there is no illicit trade, Arab States have made weapons licensing procedures more stringent and maintain records of all licensed weapons.
- Some States have organized training courses and participated in specialized seminars, with a view to building the capacities of national staff working in the

sphere of suppressing illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. They also take part in relevant international conferences.

(b) At the regional level:

- Within the framework of the League of Arab States, all Arab States take part in meetings arranged by the League on the suppression of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Most of them have ratified the Arab Counter-Terrorism Convention, which entered into force in 1999. That Convention addresses many matters that are related to the suppression of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In that context, in 2002, the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior published the Arab Model Law on Weapons, Ammunitions, Explosives and Hazardous Material.
- The Arab States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council hold an annual meeting during which the suppression of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and coordination between those States in that regard is considered. A model law has been formulated for that purpose.
- With regard to regional coordination with neighbouring States, certain Arab States have acceded to other regional agreements on the suppression of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

(c) At the international level:

- All Arab States have acceded to at least one international instrument concerning the suppression of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and are committed to implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Certain Arab States have concluded memorandums of understanding and cooperation in respect of security cooperation with other international bodies, including Interpol.

### **III. The positions and demands of Arab States members of the League of Arab States with regard to the priority issues on the agenda of the Fourth Biennial Meeting**

7. Being resolved to make a positive contribution to the Fourth Biennial Meeting, the Arab States have discussed the priority issues identified by the Chairman of the Meeting, as follows:

- The Arab States affirm that the end user certificate is a priority with regard to the issue of tracing weapons, as is making use of the marks on weapons in order to identify the end user. Arab regulations and legislation on firearms have made the end user certificate an official document that adopts international standards in order to detail the movement of weapons from the manufacturer to the end user.
- Many Arab States request assistance in the building of national capacities to control border entry points, in order to prevent weapons being infiltrated or smuggled into or through their territory. They require training, modern, sophisticated equipment and an interchange of expertise in order to improve efficiency in the detection and seizure of weapons.

- The Arab States believe it is important to have international cooperation and for international assistance to be increased in support of national efforts, in the form of technical and financial support in respect of the suppression of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Such support should include border controls, the interchange of information on smuggling networks, the development of marking systems and the formulation and updating of national legislation.
- The Arab States urge the regional and international organizations that are able to do so to continue to provide assistance in national capacity-building.
- The Arab States affirm that international cooperation must respect the needs of each country in accordance with their particularities and preoccupations.
- The Arab States affirm the importance of continuing action on and implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. They also stress that no further obligations should be imposed on States before the existing Programme has been completed.
- Arab States support public information and awareness-raising programmes on problems related to all aspects of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and believe that it is essential to deal with the true causes of conflicts, in order to avoid a demand being created for such weapons and prevent the destruction and waste of all the efforts that have been exerted at the national, regional and international levels.
- Most Arab States support the international efforts that are exerted with a view to implementing the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. Many of those States have formulated systems for managing, maintaining and storing records and for marking and tracing weapons, and believe that those States that are able to do so should provide the requisite technical or other assistance to developing countries, as needed by each State, in order to enable them to keep abreast of technological developments in that field.

8. Encouraged by the League of Arab States to participate in the relevant international forums, Iraq took part in the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism initiative for the formulation of international standards for monitoring small arms and light weapons.