STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR NICOLAS RIVAS, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COLOMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE THEMATIC DEBATE ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS ON THE INTRODUCTION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/59/L.43 “THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS”

First Committee
59th session of the General Assembly
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Mr. Chairman,

It is an honor and a pleasure for my delegation to introduce the draft resolution contained on the document A/C.1/59/L.43 under the title “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects”. I do it on behalf of Japan, South Africa and the other 27 delegations that appear on the document. As of yesterday they were joined by the delegations of Andorra, Belize, Cambodia, Congo, Djibouti, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Liberia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Republic of Moldova and Sierra Leone.

As resolutions 56/24V, 57/72 and 58/241 did, this draft resolution L.43 emphasizes the importance of early and full implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. It also welcomes the efforts by Member States to submit, on a voluntary basis, national reports on the implementation on their implementation of the Programme of Action.

2006 Conference, Preparatory Committee and 2005 Biennial Meeting

As the distinguished delegates can note, this draft resolution builds upon resolution 58/241 of 23 December 2003 that was coordinated by South Africa and decided:
1. To convene a United Nations Conference to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action in New York for a period of two weeks between June and July 2006.
2. To hold in New York a session of the Preparatory Committee for the conference for a period of two weeks in January 2006 and, if necessary, hold a subsequent session.
3. To convene in 2005 the Second Biennial Meeting of States to consider the national, regional and global implementation of the Programme of Action.

Building upon that base, draft resolution L.43 sets dates for each one of these events as follows:
1. The 2006 United Nations Conference to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action will be held in New York for a period of two weeks between 26 June and 7 July, 2006.
2. The Preparatory Committee for the 2006 Conference will hold a two-week session in New York from 9 to 20 January 2006 and, if necessary, a subsequent session of up to two weeks duration may be held.
3. The Second Biennial Meeting of States to consider the national, regional and global implementation of the Programme of Action will be held in New York from 11 to 15 July 2005.

Regional Efforts

As a development from preambular paragraph 5 of resolution 58/241, which notes with satisfaction regional efforts being undertaken in support of the implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action, draft resolution L.43 contains preambular paragraph 4, which adds subregional efforts and commends the progress that has already been made in this regard. An operative paragraph 6 is also included to reaffirm the importance of these regional and subregional efforts.

Working Group on Marking and Tracing

Regarding the open-ended working group to negotiate an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons, draft resolution L.43 welcomes the convening of this Group and the realization of its first substantive session in New York from 14 to 25 June 2004 (Preambulary Paragraph 6).

L.43 also expresses appreciation by the efforts undertaken by the Chair of the Group, encourages the continued active participation of delegations in the remaining sessions of the working group, and stresses the importance of making every effort to ensure that a positive outcome is achieved by the Group (operative paragraph 4).

Illicit Brokering

As the distinguished delegates may remember, in Section IV of the 2001 Programme of Action the States participating in the Conference recommended to the General Assembly
“to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons” (Paragraph 1d).

Last’s year resolution 58/241 for the first time decided an action on this issue by requesting the Secretary-General to hold consultations on further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons. In his Report A/59/181 the Secretary-General informs the outcome of his consultations.

Draft resolution L.43 welcomes this consultations (preambular paragraph 7) and requests their continuation (operative paragraph 5). As all distinguished delegates know, informal consultations among delegations on the final content of this paragraph are still been undertaken. That is why at the end of operative paragraph 5 the words “to be further discussed” appear between brackets.

Mr. Chairman,

It can be noted that draft resolution L.43, like resolutions adopted in 2001, 2002 and 2003 on this issue, is action oriented with the purpose of making an effective follow-up of the 2001 Conference and the implementation of the Programme of Action. It’s essentiality a procedural resolution that make operative the agreements reached by consensus at the 2001 Conference. Therefore, it encapsulates the priorities of the international agenda on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons until 2006.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.