Statement

by

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Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations

at the Second United Nations Conference
to Review the 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

27 August 2012, New York

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Madame President,

1. Allow me to join others in offering our congratulations to you on your election as President of this important Review Conference and to commend you and all the facilitators for the drafting of the outcome documents and for your tireless efforts during the preparation leading up to this meeting. My delegation also wishes to congratulate all members of the Bureau on their election.

2. The Thai delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Madame President,

3. The illicit trade, proliferation, and trafficking of SALW pose a serious threat to peace, security, stability and development. Such weapons are linked with transnational crime, drug trafficking, terrorism, human rights violations and incur devastating humanitarian and social-economic costs. Thailand therefore values the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW (UN PoA) as well as the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) as the main multilateral frameworks to curb the proliferation of SALW and promote responsible action by States to this end.

4. To implement the Programme of Action, it is exceedingly important for countries to have an effective domestic mechanism. As an importer of SALW, Thailand has always strived to exercise effective control over the transfer, especially the import, of such weapons. Recent developments include a revision of the national inter-agencies coordinating committee, which serves as the main policy coordinating unit to address illicit SALW. The revision aims to streamline the policy-making and information-sharing process in order to enhance the efficiency of our implementation of the Programme of Action.

5. Significant progress has also been made on the legislative front, particularly in the revision of the Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosive Articles and Fireworks and Imitation of Firearms Act, B.E. 2490 (1947), Thailand's key legislation regulating the transfer of SALW. The proposed revision includes an update of definitions, increased penal sanctions and more specific details on marking procedures. When the revision process in completed, Thailand should be much more effective in implementing the Programme of Action.

6. On record-keeping, Thailand expects to complete by the end of this year the creation of an electronic database of privately-owned small arms. This effort
is part of our long-term project to fully integrate the databases of SALW records amongst relevant agencies to assist in tracing illicit weapons.

Madame President,

7. Effective implementation of the Programme of Action, especially the ITI, requires not only strong commitment but considerable resources. As an importer, Thailand urges exporters to engage more actively in enhancing the implementation of such mechanisms. In particular, exporters should contribute more to the marking process. For example, if manufacturers could provide samples of bullet characteristics, or include the information required for national record-keeping with original factory markings, the marking and tracing process at all levels would be greatly enhanced.

8. Realizing the importance of capacity-building for experts, we would like to emphasize the important role the UN Regional Centers for Peace and Disarmament can play in strengthening capacity through regional or country training programmes customized for the specific needs of each region or country.

Madame President,

9. Owing to the transnational nature of this illicit activity, Thailand strongly believes that the way to effectively address the impact of illicit trade in SALW is to work in a concerted manner, both regionally and internationally. At the regional level, we have been cooperating closely with other ASEAN countries in implementing the Programme of Action through the ASEAN Ministerial and Senior Official Meetings on Transnational Crime and the ASEANAPOL. We believe that these frameworks provide ample room for ASEAN countries and their partners to improve regional cooperation in this area. We also wish to encourage the member countries of ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to explore further ways and means to strengthen our close cooperation within existing frameworks, including the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Trans-National Crime and ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy.

10. At the global level, Thailand commends the PoA ISS's website, a one-stop resource which includes a comprehensive database and serves as a networking tool to match needs and resources to support implementation of the Programme of Action. Thailand hopes this website will facilitate closer coordination between multilateral and regional frameworks in implementing the Programme of Action. The full utilization of all such mechanisms, we believe, would contribute greatly to the success of the Programme.
Madame President,

11. Although the First Review Conference in 2006 ended without an agreed outcome document, Thailand shares the view of many countries that the Conference did succeed in recalling the issue of small arms and light weapons to the attention of the international community, which clearly remains committed to the Programme of Action as the main framework for measures to curtail the illegal trade in these weapons. Now is an opportune time for us to take stock of the progress achieved to date and discuss how to build on such progress. Thailand wishes, once again, to reaffirm its full commitment to implementing the UNPoA as well as to translate the action plans contained therein into real action and practices, so that we may see concrete results on the ground.

12. My delegation looks forward to actively participating in this two-week Conference.

Thank you, Madame President.