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

Draft final document on the establishment, where appropriate, of subregional or regional mechanisms with a view to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons across borders, including transborder customs cooperation and networks for information-sharing among law enforcement, border and customs control agencies

1. States recognized the urgent need to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons across borders because of the harmful effects of those activities on the security of each State, subregion and region and the world as a whole, endangering not only the well-being of peoples but also their social and economic development and their right to live in peace.

2. States reiterated that Governments bore the primary responsibility for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects across borders, in accordance with the principle of the sovereignty of States.

3. Furthermore, States also underlined the transnational nature and dimension of such illicit activity and therefore recognized the need to address the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons across borders through an approach of shared responsibility among them.

4. States also acknowledged that the porosity of borders was an aggravating element of illicit arms trafficking at all levels and that it led to the prolongation of conflicts, exacerbated violence, undermined the internal security of States, increased the activities of transnational organized crime, corruption, drug trafficking and in some cases even terrorism at the same time that it undermined development and allowed criminals and weapons traffickers to have free access to armaments through poor border control.
5. States pointed out that some border control problems could be a consequence of the geographical nature of the border itself. The inaccessibility of some border areas, including maritime borders, posed challenges and difficulties in controlling cross-border activities, including illicit arms flows.

6. States emphasized the need to enhance cooperation and coordination among border, customs control and police authorities in order to make it easier for competent authorities to identify and seize weapons illegally transported by air.

7. States underlined the need to address the lack of means, technology transfer, human resources and institutional capacity to deal with this problem.

8. States expressed the importance of several subregional and regional instruments, mechanisms and initiatives on this topic, as well as the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the guidelines for international arms transfers, as a useful means to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons across borders.