UK Statement at the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States on the UN
Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in
Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects

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Strengthening of the follow-up mechanism and preparations for the 2011
Experts Group meeting and the 2012 Review Conference

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Check against delivery
Mr Chairman, the UK remains committed to the full implementation of the UN Programme of Action and with this in mind we very much welcome the opportunity to discuss follow-up mechanisms as a key element of PoA implementation. The UK fully supports the statement made by the EU and would encourage all states to use this session as an opportunity to discuss concrete proposals for strengthening the follow-up mechanism, and how we can use the 2011 Experts Group meeting and the 2012 Review Conference to achieve this goal.

The EU statement covered many of the points raised in your excellent non-paper, so I will keep my intervention brief and focus on two issues which we believe merit discussion in this afternoon’s session for possible inclusion in the outcome document as potential agenda items for the 2011 Experts Group meeting and 2012 Review Conference.

The first is measuring not only the impact of PoA implementation on the illicit trade in SALW but also the impact that PoA implementation has had on the humanitarian and socio-economic consequences of this illicit trade. The second is the integration of SALW control into broader conflict prevention, armed violence reduction and development strategies and interventions.
The UK has supported, and continues to support, work to combat the illicit trade in SALW predominantly through a cross-government strategy and funding mechanism. A number of SALW control activities undertaken by a range of agencies, organisations and individuals have been funded by the UK in support of this strategy.

Successes have been achieved but there are also considerable challenges that we still face and lessons we can learn. One such challenge is how to measure the achievements we have made against the illicit trade through implementation of the PoA and in turn how this has affected the key concerns outlined in the PoA, including *inter alia* conflict, human suffering, terrorism, organised crime, poverty and underdevelopment.

Furthermore, the complexity and inter-related nature of such problems and the multi-sectoral responses required to tackle them highlights that SALW control efforts alone may struggle to have a sufficient impact on such deep and multi-faceted problems.

Consideration therefore needs to be given to how the positive outcomes of SALW control efforts can be maximised, by linking them with other interventions that are taking place in related areas, such as conflict prevention, security and justice sector reform, and wider development programmes. Such integration and coordination is, however, challenging and
would require considerable attention. We would be interested to hear states’ views on how the follow-up mechanism and in particular the 2011 Experts Group meeting could consider how PoA implementation relates to these broader issues.

Mr Chairman, we believe these two issues - that of measuring the impact of PoA implementation on the consequences of the illicit trade in SALW, and that of integrating SALW control efforts into broader security and development strategies - are challenging yet necessary issues which warrant further attention. As such we would welcome their inclusion in the outcome document as potential agenda items for the 2011 Experts Group and 2012 Review Conference.

Finally, I would like to reiterate the UK’s continued commitment to a robust and effective Arms Trade Treaty, to regulate the international trade in conventional arms. By the inclusion of SALW within the scope of an ATT, such a treaty could make a major contribution to combating the illicit movement of these weapons and to reducing the humanitarian and socio-economic consequences of their misuse.

Thank you.