Statement by the Government of Jamaica

During the Preparatory Meeting of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons

Monday, 19th March 2012

Madame Chairperson

I thank you for giving me the floor.

Jamaica fully aligns itself with the statement earlier delivered by Guyana on behalf of the CARICOM Member States, as well as the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Let me also take this opportunity to welcome Ms. Angela Kane as the newly-appointed High Representative for Disarmament. The Government of Jamaica stands ready to work with you in the discharge of your duties. We also extend our gratitude to your predecessor Mr. Sergio Duarte.

Madame Chairperson

Allow me to express our support for the programme of work that you have outlined for this week’s proceedings, including your intention to provide a draft outline of the elements to be included in the Outcome Document.

Our discussions throughout the morning session are indicative of the level of commitment Member States attach to this process, and to the full an effective implementation of the POA. We also believe that the transparent and inclusive manner in which you have conducted our work to date, has indeed lead to the active spirit displayed by delegations.

The process of reviewing the progress made in the implementation of the POA to date, is critical to strengthening future implementation of this vital instrument at all levels. In this regard, we also use this opportunity to thanks many delegations that have concrete ideas on the table, and we look forward in particular to the non-paper to be presented by the Japanese delegation. We also support much of what was said in the interventions of our colleagues from New Zealand, Norway and Belize.

For Jamaica, the full and effective implementation of the provisions of the Programme of action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and ammunition remains a matter of the utmost priority.

National level implementation is a central pillar for the full and effective implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action. Over the past year, Jamaica has undertaken a number of measures at the national level to strengthen the national
framework to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and in so doing, reduce the incidents of crime and other acts of armed violence committed using these weapons.

Among the recent measures undertaken are: the drafting of a national small arms policy; the approval for the establishment of a small arms committee; and the re-drafting of existing legislation. With the assistance of UNLIREC, and other partners, Jamaica has also improved its weapons stockpile management practices; and within the past two weeks, conducted the disposal of several thousand firearms, as well as assorted rounds of ammunition.

As we continue to strengthen our national efforts, the areas in which additional assistance are required include:

1. Training and capacity building in order to strengthen ballistics, forensic and intelligence gathering capacities;

2. improvements in border security capacity including maritime security, to prevent illicit small arms and ammunition from entering the country.;

3. strengthening capacities to prevent the diversion of legal small arms and ammunition from Government stockpiles as well as the licit trade into the illicit market;

4. training in the areas of criminal justice systems and first responders to better detect and respond to trends in the movement illicit small arms and light weapons; and other unlawful practices; and

5. capacity building to facilitate improvements in our legislative drafting capacity.

Additionally, we could welcome the establishment of a formal or informal mechanism that would facilitate:

6. the sharing of best practices in the establishment of national coordination agencies for the implementation of the various provisions of the PoA

7. the sharing of best practices with respect to establishing controls with respect to the activities of brokers.

In closing Madame Chair, allow me to express Jamaica’s commitment to working with you and other members of your team as you guide our work toward a successful conclusion, throughout this preparatory session and the Review Conference later this year.