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STATEMENT

by
H.E. Mrs. Byrganym Aitimova
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Kazakhstan
to the United Nations

at the Preparatory Committee
of the Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of
Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small
arms and light weapons in all its aspect

19 March 2012
New York
Madam Chairperson,

I wish to congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of the PrepCom and thank you for the well-drafted indicative non-paper to guide our discussions. I take this opportunity also to congratulate Ms. Angela Kane for assuming the position of High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and looking forward to work closely with you and your Office. I thank the delegation of Japan for the clear delineation of the step for an effective implementation of the Programme of Action.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW), with its many new threats and manifestations, has reached enormous and complex proportions. The Programme of Action (PoA) therefore assumes a central role in our collective response. However, serious gaps remain regarding its implementation at all levels, especially, the national. Hence, to move forward, the Outcome Document has to include a clear mandate with well delineated structures.

The PoA has to effective at the global, regional and national levels, it is difficult to sharply demarcate one from the other, and so interventions at any one level will promote gains in the other two. We have before us a vast array of very vital issues but I will address only the most critical ones.

First of all, we propose that Member States submit more specific data on how the PoA has been implemented at the national level, than they do presently in their country reports. Many have yet to develop their own SALW PoAs in a comprehensive way, and those that have done, must ensure their effective implementation. Both can be achieved through an exchange of best practices, capacity building, technical assistance, improving measurability and the use of web-based information platforms, as well as, matching assistance needs with available resources.

We call for strengthening legislative regimes and border control mechanisms by improving training programmes and updating equipment. The special challenges presented by extensive and isolated borders, oblige us to bolster coordination at regional and sub-regional levels with timely and reliable exchange of information. We presently need to be more vigilant about the smuggling of SALW through air transport which is most difficult to combat. Illicit SALW trade is impacting security and development in literally all regions of the world. Hence the RevCon should outline how regional organizations can be more actively involved than hitherto. This calls for greater collaboration between defense and security forces, across regions because of the very strong nexus between terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and the illicit trade in SALW at all levels.

The task before us is to also implement the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We propose that the Group of Experts continue to develop norms for
measuring effectiveness. The brokering of small arms and light weapons continues, and therefore the curbing of the illegal manufacture, import and export of these weapons will have to be reviewed. Though the PoA is valuable, we see the necessity of an overall legally binding treaty to regulate arms trade. Hence, the SALW component should be firmly included in the content and modalities of the Arms Trade Treaty.

What will bring results is accelerated mutual trust among governments, working with the relevant entities of the UN through a system wide coherence. The Security Council will have to address challenges posed by small arms and light weapons in relation to human security, with special attention to women and children, who are the most affected victims, but often overlooked by Member States. Likewise, the Peacebuilding Commission must be fully engaged in carrying out its task together with civil society.

Kazakhstan rigorously implements measures to tighten established controls over the export, manufacture and supply of SALW. The transfer of all weapons is executed in accordance with strict national regulations. Annually, the government implements efficient preventive measures to uncover crimes involving the use of fire arms and explosives. Thousands of small arms have been taken out of illegal circulation through strict measures. Today, the country is trying to enact national legislation on export control, as well. As OSCE Chair, Kazakhstan has held regional meetings and worked relentlessly to prevent proliferation of illegal circulation of such weapons. My country supports the UN Register of Conventional Arms, and provides information on a regular basis. We also support the OSCE Document on SALW, hoping that it will make a considerable contribution to global efforts.

To conclude, the PoA remains the global framework for cooperative efforts to combat illicit arms. Kazakhstan stands ready to join the multilateral action to improve global, regional and national security, as well as social, economic and sustainable development through combating this scourge of illicit trade of SALW.

I thank you for your attention.