Statement by

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on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

at the Preparatory Committee for 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

New York, 19 March 2012
Madam Chairperson,

1. I am honored to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

2. At the outset, I would like to congratulate you and other officers on your election to the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee, and assure you and all Member States of the constructive engagement of the NAM Member Countries in the deliberations of the Committee meeting towards a successful Second Conference to Review 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.

3. While reaffirming the total validity of the Programme of Action as the main international framework to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects, the Movement underlines the mandate entrusted to the Review Conference by the UNGA Resolution 66/47.

4. In the context of the effective implementation of the Programme of Action, NAM urges all States to fully respect the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter, inter alia, the sovereign equality of States, refrain from the threat or use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of any State, the peaceful resolution of international disputes, and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

5. NAM further reaffirms the right of each State to manufacture, import and retain small arms and light weapons for its self-defence and security needs, in exercising its inherent right to individual or collective self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Madam Chairperson,

6. As we commence our preparations for the Second Review Conference, NAM is of the view that progress has been made in the implementation of the Programme of Action at all levels since 2001. NAM is also of the view that more concerted efforts are required for the full implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and global levels.

7. NAM considers however that the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action is linked to an enhanced level of international cooperation and assistance.
8. The Movement, while expressing concern over the growing magnitude of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and the danger it continues to pose, is of the view that the existing level of international assistance to support the effective implementation of the Programme of Action is still neither sufficient nor commensurate with the real needs of the affected countries.

9. NAM therefore emphasizes that international cooperation and assistance is an essential enabler in the full implementation of the Programme of Action. The Movement calls upon all States and international and regional organizations to render further cooperation and assistance, including technical and financial assistance to developing countries, upon their request.

10. While the UN, bilateral and multilateral partners need to increase their assistance to developing countries, upon their request, for curbing illicit trade in SALW, and such assistance should not be at the expense of support for developing countries in the execution of their national plans to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

11. NAM emphasizes that Governments bear the primary responsibility for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. Accordingly, they should intensify their efforts to define the problems associated with such trade and find ways of resolving them. In this context, the Movement stresses in particular the importance of combating this illicit trade simultaneously from both a supply and demand perspective.

12. The Movement recognizes the need to establish and maintain controls over private ownership of small arms. The NAM Member States call upon all States, in particular major arms producing States, to ensure that the supply of small arms and light weapons is limited only to Governments or to entities duly authorized by Governments and also to take all necessary measures at national level to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in such arms in all its aspects.

13. The Movement considers the International Tracing Instrument as a manifestation of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action and calls for its full implementation. NAM underscores the critical role of international assistance and cooperation in the effective implementation of the ITI.

Madam Chairperson,

14. I would like to draw the attention of all present that the Movement is presenting its detailed views in a Working Paper which focuses on enhancing international
cooperation and assistance in the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action. The working paper also contains some proposals for the consideration of the Preparatory Committee and their incorporation into the outcome document of the Second Review Conference.

15. In closing, NAM reiterates its commitment to working actively to achieve a positive outcome of the Preparatory Committee with a view to reaching agreement in the upcoming Conference and to ensuring the full implementation of the Programme of Action.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.