PrepCom for the 2nd Review Conference on the UNPOA on SALW

First New Zealand Intervention (Monday 19 March, a.m.)

General Points

Thank you Madame Chair.

As this is the first time I take the floor, let me congratulate you on your election as Chair, and on your skilful, transparent and inclusive stewardship of this process to date. My delegation strongly supports your proposed organisation of work and way forward, including your proposal to prepare a summary of key elements from these discussions for our consideration later this week. Let me also congratulate Ms Angela Kane for her appointment at the Secretary-General’s High Representative for Disarmament.

In the interests of time I will deliver only a summary of my delegation’s key points in each thematic session, beginning now with general comments on the Review Conference and on POA implementation at national, regional and global levels. The full version of New Zealand’s interventions will be distributed in writing.

New Zealand also aligns itself with the interventions to be delivered later in the week on behalf of members of the Pacific Islands Forum.

Madame Chair, as the High Representative has eloquently expressed, much has been achieved since 2001 in POA implementation. But the POA has also faced setbacks, both in the diplomatic process and on the ground.

Moreover, the devastating humanitarian, political, security and socio-economic impacts of illicit small arms, and of the conflict, instability and organised crime they help fuel, have not abated since 2001; indeed many parts of the world they have become more acute.

The POA is therefore as relevant and important today as it was in 2001; making a successful Review Conference vital.

To be judged as such, the Review Conference needs to do the following:

- Provide a reaffirmation by Member States of their strong commitment to POA implementation; and a consolidation of significant developments in the process since 2001;
Consider the implications of other developments since 2001; including trends in the small arms challenges on the ground, progress in related policy debates, and relevant technological advances;

Assess implementation of the POA to date, determine priorities for the coming review cycle, and set out a clear programme of work to advance these; and

Consider ways to encourage and support enhanced implementation, including tools for strengthening needs assessment, priority setting and matching needs with assistance.

None of this will be easy. The time available is short, and we need to focus on goals that are achievable and of practical use. Disciplined time-management will be crucial; and all delegations will need to approach those sensitive issues that inevitably arise in a spirit of patience, flexibility and mutual respect.

I now provide specific comments on implementation of national, regional and global-level POA commitments

Madame Chair, many states have made good progress in national implementation of the POA. But there are also areas where further attention and assistance is required. The Review Conference provides an opportunity to assess the extent to which our POA implementation has been effective and sufficient.

In this regard, further work in the following areas should be a priority:

- Developing and implementing relevant legislation, regulations and procedures;
- Management of government stockpiles, including with regard to safety and security, inventory management and surplus disposal;
- Strengthening national and regional capacities for weapons collection, storage and disposal;
- Developing national frameworks to combat illicit brokering;
- Strengthening the capacity and effectiveness of customs and law enforcement agencies in this area, and promoting enhanced cooperation and information-sharing domestically and regionally.
- Designing and implementing national action plans; strengthening the role and effectiveness of national coordinating bodies; and enhancing the utility of POA points of contact.

Madame Chair, one of the most important developments since 2001 has been the growing contribution of regional and sub-regional initiatives, instruments and institutions towards POA implementation. In this regard, we hope the Review Conference will:

- Acknowledge and affirm the importance of these regional and sub-regional initiatives and instruments, and consider further steps to support them; and
• Consider how the role of regional and sub-regional organisations in supporting POA implementation could be strengthened.

We also need to acknowledge the complementary activities undertaken by relevant international expert bodies and related processes, and to consider ways of achieving effective cooperation and coordination with these bodies where appropriate to capture synergies and avoid duplication of effort.

Civil society continues to play a vital role in the POA. The Review Conference will need to reaffirm the importance of this contribution, and consider how it can be maintained and strengthened. New Zealand also supports consideration of how greater engagement with the private sector could strengthen POA implementation.

The Review Conference must also reaffirm POA commitments regarding the effective implementation of UN arms embargoes and peacekeeping DDR programmes; and to acknowledge the impact of SALW on civilians, including women and children, and the important role women play in POA implementation.

Madame Chair, New Zealand has full confidence in your stewardship, and is committed to working with you and other delegations to make this meeting a success.