PHILIPPINE INTERVENTION

on

Agenda Item 7

General exchange of views: Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALWs in all its aspects at the national level

by

H.E. MR. LIBRAN N. CABACTULAN
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of the Philippines
to the United Nations

On the Occasion of the

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UN 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

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Thank you, Madam Chair.

My delegation congratulate you on your election as Chairperson of this meeting, the importance of which warrants vigorous stress in the face of continuing threats to international peace and security posed by illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. My congratulations likewise go to the members of the Bureau on their well-deserved election.

I also wish to laud you Madam Chair and your team for your highly dedicated efforts in making this meeting a very successful one. Let me also assure you of my delegation’s full support.

My delegation fully associates with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Madam Chair,

The Second Review Conference of the Programme of Action (PoA) to be held at the end of August this year will provide the international community a key opportunity to restate and reinforce its commitment to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and to prevent its negative effects on people, communities and societal structures.

The Philippines respectfully submits that the best way to solve the problems caused by illicit SALWs is through the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA), which is the main framework for addressing the illegal trade in these arms. The Philippines therefore is fully engaged on the national, bilateral, regional, and international levels in the effort to prevent, combat, and eradicate the illicit trade in SALWs.

The Philippines recognizes the special responsibility of producer States and calls upon them to strictly apply the legal restrictions that prevent the illicit trade of SALWs and to supply only responsible Governments and their authorized entities.

The Philippines firmly believes in the importance of preventing the illicit trade in SALWs and views their movement across borders as a grave threat to peace and security and in fact contributes to destabilizing situations. As regards the Philippines efforts for national implementation, I wish to draw the attention of Member States to our national report which we have submitted online. It explains in detail the control measures taken by the relevant Ministries and other authorities on SALWs. Let me just highlight here that the Philippines uses authenticated end-user certificates and does not re-export or retransfer previously imported SALWs. The Philippines also has pending bill in Congress entitled “An Act Regulating the Proliferation of Strategic and Dual-Use Goods and Services, Providing Penalties for Their Violation and For Other Purposes”. This bill contains provisions on the regulation of the flow of dual use goods, especially related to WMDs, and maybe used as parallel legislation to create even stronger import/export
control system on SALWs. Furthermore, the Philippines is strengthening its current legislation on firearms, through increasing the scope of our firearms law to include SALWs as prescribed by international standards. This is espoused in a bill entitled “An Act Providing for a Comprehensive Regulation of Firearms, Light Weapons and Ammunition, Penalizing Violations Thereof”.

Imported SALWs in the Philippines are inspected by the Bureau of Customs and the Firearms and Explosives Office of the Philippine National Police (FEO-PNP) at the point of entry and are securely kept in a storage facility until licenses to possess firearms are processed and approved. This negates the possibility of SALWs being pilfered and transferred across Philippine borders.

On the export of SALWs, authorized arms manufacturers in the Philippines can only export their products to countries with which the Philippines has diplomatic relations and are prohibited if such export would have an adverse effect on Philippine foreign relations. In addition to stringent export laws, the government also regulates the volume of firearms being produced by manufacturers.

The Philippines strongly believes that military transfer of arms should be monitored more closely and it is imperative that States abide by arms embargoes established by the UN and prevent the transfer of arms to non-State actors that are engaged in terrorism, organized crime, and other illegal acts.

On a final note, the Philippines actively cooperates with the international community to help stem the flow of these weapons across borders and adheres to all relevant international agreements including UN General Assembly and Security Council Resolutions.

Thank you, Madam Chair.