Draft Statement
Agenda Item 7 (a) (iii) Follow Up Mechanisms
March 20, 2012

Madam Chair,

My delegation considers that adequate follow up mechanisms are a key component to be included in the outcome of the Review Conference in September. We expect that such follow up mechanisms will entail matters of substance and of process.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is a complex problem with many dimensions, and new aspects continue to emerge. The follow up mechanisms should be robust and should help us to achieve further progress on the POA, to strengthen implementation, to focus on specific areas and renew our commitments.

In terms of substantive matters, Belize supports CARICOM’s call, articulated yesterday, for consideration of the linkages between armed violence and SALW. Given also our national and regional experience that SALW accompanies the illicit trade in drugs, the nexus between SALW and other transnational organized crime warrants closer consideration. The issue of ammunition is long overdue for inclusion in the POA, the illicit trade in SALW and its ammunition is obviously inextricably linked.

In terms of process the Biennial Meetings should continue to be the deliberative forum for political and policy discussions, and my delegation supports CARICOM’s proposal that these should be thematically focused; offering Member States an opportunity to deepen our understanding and commitments in particular areas.

From our perspective the purpose and value of the Biennial Meetings are separate and apart from the Meeting of Government Experts.

My delegation views the first MGE held in May 2011 as exemplifying the pragmatic approach necessary to achieve implementation of the POA on the ground. The MGE brought together the experts and technical persons working everyday on the issues relating to small arms. The MGE provided a forum for discussing implementation challenges, for sharing best practices, for highlighting emerging concerns and for building linkages among the experts themselves.

In this scheme Review Conferences would have the purpose of allowing Member States to take a comprehensive assessment of the progress of implementation of the POA, its
impact, and ways in which it could be strengthened.

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the working paper circulated by Japan on Follow Up Mechanism, which brings greater details on how a Follow Up Mechanism could be elaborated. We think the paper merits further consideration and discussion.

I thank you.