Statement by the Netherlands

at the

Preparatory Committee for the Second 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 Aspects.

Implementation, International Cooperation and Assistance

New York, 20 March 2012

Mr. Pieter van Donkersgoed, Deputy Permanent Representative
Netherlands Mission to the Conference on Disarmament
Thank you Madame Chair,

1. The Netherlands would like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of our preparatory meeting and would like to assure you of my delegation’s full support. We align ourselves with the statements made by the European Union and have some additional national comments regarding this agenda point 7 a. ii.

2. During this Preparatory Committee we have the possibility to set a clear agenda and reach agreement on the instruments needed for the upcoming Review Conference. The second Review Conference gives us the opportunity to look back on what has been achieved since 2001, but also to reaffirm the Programme of Action and take the implementation process forward.

3. With regard to this particular agenda point 7.a. ii, the Netherlands would like to state that it is relevant to acknowledge that the responsibility for implementation of the Programme of Action lies primarily with states themselves.

4. To enable the further implementation of PoA it’s important to have improved self assessment and priority setting as a starting point. Development of mechanisms for this purpose, as a result of our second Review Conference, has the full support of my delegation. Concrete instruments, such as best practice guides and operational guidance notes, can be used to strengthen implementation capacity from states seeking assistance.

5. As a donor, the Netherlands continues to take its responsibility further by providing assistance- bilateral as well as multilateral; government to government, as well as through specialized organizations and civil society.

6. International mechanisms, such as the POA-ISS and Group of Interested States and closer cooperation with international organizations, such as Interpol and WHO can strengthen the instruments, for instance IARMS, which is under development, set in motion by these organizations.

7. The value of these mechanisms and instruments contributes to transparency and information sharing between states and thus to the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action.
8. While recognizing, as stated, the prime responsibility of states regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action, we wish to highlight the crucial role of civil society. Cooperation with civil society organizations, both as representatives of those most affected by SALW, and as implementing agencies of programmes combating the illicit trade in SALW and its effects, remains indispensable for the success of our collective efforts.

Thank you.