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 - Implementation, international cooperation and assistance

by

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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

19-23 March 2012
UNHQ New York
The illicit transfer of SALWs is an international problem and can best be solved through international cooperation and assistance.

The Philippines is a party to the UN sponsored convention on transnational organized crime and abides by the resolutions of the UN General Assembly and Security Council concerning terrorism and transnational crime. It actively participates in relevant international fora, including discussions on the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in SALW and the Arms Trade Treaty. We are also a party to the Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the purpose of identification.

We actively cooperate and coordinate with parallel law enforcement agencies and INTERPOL. Specifically, the Philippines coordinates with INTERPOL on tracing illicit arms through the latter’s International Weapons and Explosives Tracking System database.

On a regional level, we have forged the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime and heightened awareness on the illicit transfer of SALWs. We have also entered into multilateral agreements with other Southeast Asian countries such as the “Agreement on Information Exchange and the Establishment of Communication Procedures.”

Bilateral cooperation has also been enhanced. The Philippines and Indonesia have a Memorandum of Understanding that facilitates information sharing and the sharing of best practices and expertise on transnational crimes, including arms smuggling.

While there has been global momentum on this important issue, we need to enhance cooperation in the critical areas of tracing, information exchange, and in the investigation and prosecution of those involved in the illicit trade of SALWs.

Capacity building in records-keeping processes is also crucial. This way, States can exchange knowledge and expertise, especially between those with well-established records keeping mechanisms and those whose systems are not as updated.

Aside from the UN and its regional centers for cooperation and assistance, States, especially those with the resources and expertise, can also specify what type of assistance they can provide to others who would need it.

This is where national reports become essential in the sense that in such reports, States can outline their national programs, which can be studied by others.

It is my country’s hope that States and relevant international and regional organizations would consider extending more technical and financial assistance in areas such as capacity building, training for law enforcement authorities and conduct of public awareness programs on the problems brought about by illicit SALWs.

In this regard, the Philippines subscribes to the Working Paper presented by the Non-Aligned Movement which focuses on enhancing international cooperation and assistance in the full and effective implementation of the Program of Action. Thank you Madam Chair.