SOUTH AFRICA: PrepCom for the Review Conference on the Implementation of the UNPoA

Talking points

Implementation, International Co-operation and Assistance

20 March 2012

- We believe that this is one of the central pillars to our implementation efforts.
- In this context, South Africa, like others, wishes to draw the attention of delegations to the paper submitted by Indonesia on behalf of the NAM on international co-operation and assistance.
- My delegation recognises the fact that there are co-operating partners who have done much work in this field.
- However, assistance provided needs to be practical, measurable and have an impact on the ground.
- This is why my delegation in our intervention yesterday highlighted the importance of national implementation measures, in particular in the field of stockpile management. We continue to hold the view that such technical and practical assistance is much needed in the fields of marking, record-keeping, effective safe storage of State-held SALW and on border controls.
- Workshops and seminars create awareness and can contribute to capacity building, but while we do not want to down-play their importance, if these are not complemented by adequate follow-up, they do not add much except for ticking the “assistance provided” boxes and going beyond being a feel-good exercise.
- South Africa does not view international co-operation and assistance purely as a North-South one way street. There is much that we as developing States can offer and provide to each other and in this manner, South-South co-operation and assistance adds an important dimension to this issue.
- In the case of South Africa, like many other developing States have also noted, we have and will continue to provide our neighbouring countries with international co-operation and assistance. This is done mainly in the field of capacity development and training.
- Two factors that greatly assist such co-operation and training is the fact that the issue of co-operation is firstly dealt with from the perspective of the need to combat crime in our sub-region, which is why we value the importance of the full implementation of the UNPoA so highly. We are fortunate in Southern Africa that we do not have to contend with the issues of conflict and terrorism to the extent that other States have to deal with those issues.
- The second factor is that because we deal with the illicit trade in SALW from a crime perspective, it brings together law enforcement experts who have a natural ability to
co-operate with each other and speak the same language, very often beyond what we can achieve in the corridors of the UN.

- What countries like South Africa cannot often offer is financial and technical assistance to our neighbours, but we have had instances where we have been able to and will continue to work in partnership with States in a position to offer assistance to third countries in our sub-region in the fields of capacity-building and training, as well as in the destruction of surplus SALW.

- Finally, we wish to emphasise the need that assistance needs to be sustainable and come from dedicated funding. It should not be expected of developing States to use these funds from development funding, as not all States see this issue as a development one.

- In concluding, I wish to emphasise that South Africa views efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit SALW as a collective one in which we all need to assist each other, thus making this component of the UNPoA an integral part of our implementation efforts.