

Preparatory Committee for the United Nations 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

## **Contribution to Cluster VI**

**Ambassador Dorothea Auer**

**Austria**

**on behalf of the European Union**

New York, 17 January 2006

**(check against delivery)**

## **Follow-up and reporting mechanisms**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union. The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia\* and the former , the Countries of the Stabilisation and Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

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The EU believes that there are a number of measures that could easily be taken in order to enhance the follow-up and reporting under the UN SALW process:

As of September 2005, more than four years after the Programme of Action (PoA) was adopted, almost 60 States have not created the very basis for regional and global information exchange and co-operation between States by naming national points of contact under the PoA. The European Union urges all States that have not yet done so to identify national points of contact as a matter of urgency. Sometimes, a state may not have the capacity to do so, in which case the EU stands ready to assist.

A quick glance at voluntary national reporting on the implementation of the PoA shows that States are more likely to report in a year when a major UN meeting on SALW takes place. In 2005, the year of the Second Biennial Meeting of States, 102 States submitted national reports, whilst a mere 39 States submitted reports in 2004 when no major UN event on SALW was held. This suggests that States regard national reporting as a considerable effort, to be undertaken on a not too frequent basis and when follow-up in the form of an international meeting can be expected.

As was discussed in the BMS2, the EU supports the consolidation of the review process and reporting around biennial meetings. Spacing meetings at two-year-intervals, with Biennial Meetings of States in 2008 and 2010 followed by another Review Conference of the PoA in 2012, could help reduce „reporting fatigue“ and give quite a number of States the chance to provide information that is focussed on substance rather than quantity, with a special focus on the next Review Conference.