



BRAZIL

"Statement at the 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"

New York, January 9-20, 2006

Mr. Chairman,

May I express my delegation's satisfaction with your designation to preside over the work of this Preparatory Committee. We want to assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Delegation of Brazil towards the goal of enabling this Committee to achieve satisfactory results, in the context of our preparations for the First Review Conference of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Mr. Chairman,

The adoption of the Programme of Action by the 2001 UN Conference on the Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects confirms the unequivocal

importance of multilateralism in addressing global challenges through globally coordinated responses. It lays an important framework for action against the problems caused by the widespread circulation of illicit small arms and light weapons, which has been causing profound human, social and economic losses around the globe.

Brazil fully supports the Programme of Action, and is committed to contribute to its effective implementation. With that goal in mind, our Country has launched a series of initiatives in all areas related to the fight against illicit flows of weapons and ammunition, as well as cooperative ventures with other governments at the regional and sub-regional levels, which have been reinforced by important contributions from organized civil society.

Brazil believes, however, that throughout the five years of existence of the Programme of Action, our collective experience in implementing it at the national, regional and global levels has clearly revealed some of its shortcomings. The ambitious goals of the Programme are still far from accomplishment, and it is our perception that this is due in great part to the lack of clarity and specificity of some of its dispositions, and also to the fact that some vital areas have not been dealt with by the Programme in any substantive manner whatsoever.

As a consequence, Mr. Chairman, Brazil wishes to highlight the need for the Review Conference to address these "weak spots", and to adopt substantive decisions aimed at strengthening the Programme of Action and at improving national, regional and international frameworks for their implementation.

In particular, Brazil considers that the Review Conference must deal with the problem of **ammunition** as an issue of utmost priority. Despite its notorious absence from the Programme of Action, the illicit trafficking of ammunition is clearly and indissociably connected with the problems caused by small arms and light weapons. Brazil believes it is time for the Programme of Action to be brought in line with established jurisprudence set by regional and global instruments, which recognize the need to deal with small arms and light weapons and their ammunition in a coordinated manner.

In this respect, we wish to recall that this understanding was pervasive throughout the discussions of the recently concluded Open-Ended Working Group which negotiated an international instrument on marking and tracing of Small Arms and Light Weapons, and while it was not possible to reflect such understanding in the instrument finally adopted by the Group, the report of the Chairman contains a clear recommendation "that the issue of small arms and

light weapons ammunition be addressed in a comprehensive manner as part of a separate process conducted within the framework of the United Nations".

Another area in which Brazil would like to see substantive agreement is the issue of **regulation of possession** of small arms and light weapons by civilians, which, despite not being nominally referred to by the Programme of Action, is indirectly referred to by paragraphs 3, 8 and 9 of its Section II.

There is widespread consensus that the loss, theft or unlawful re-sale and transfer of legally acquired weapons are among the sources of the illicit market. The absence or inadequacy of national regulations on weapons acquisition and possession contributes to these flows, as well as to the negative consequences of mis-use of legal weapons. In Brazil, the adoption in 2003 of a new Law on firearms with stricter penalties for violators, coupled with a massive nation-wide arms buy-back programme responsible for the collection of almost 450.000 weapons, has led to an unprecedented 8,2% decrease in the number of deaths caused by firearms.

Another important issue is the one of **transfer controls**. Brazil has also been actively supporting and participating of discussions aimed at the adoption of international controls on transfers of small arms and light weapons. We believe that the Review Conference should adopt clear procedural and operational guidelines for the enforcement of national regulations on exports, imports and transit of small arms and light weapons, for the harmonization of such regulations in the regional and global levels, as well as for a reinforced information-exchange and cooperation mechanisms, with a view to combat the diversion of transfers to the illicit market.

Measures aimed at reinforcing transfer controls may also include the adoption of common criteria to be taken into account by States in authorizing transfers of small arms, light weapons and ammunition, provided that such criteria are objective, transparent and non-discriminatory. In this context, one of the most urgently needed measures is an effective ban on transfers of weapons to non-State actors not duly authorized by the competent authorities of the receiving State.

We remain convinced that the United Nations is the sole legitimate forum for the adoption of such controls, so as to guarantee the necessary support and involvement of all States in this matter of highest priority for the international community.

Brazil wishes to welcome the decision of the General Assembly to establish a Group of Governmental Experts to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation against illicit **brokering** of small arms and light weapons.

As regards the topic of **international cooperation and assistance**, which we deem as an essential pillar of the Programme of Action, there is a clear need for the reinforcement of bilateral, regional and global initiatives related to capacity building and training. From the experience of the Americas Region and of the MERCOSUR sub-region, Brazil believes that such initiatives should also be guided by the need to enhance mutual contacts between national authorities of different countries, and to promote active exchange of information and joint actions.

Brazil has been imparting its contribution to this goal, in the measure of its possibilities. In 2004, the Brazilian National Public Security Secretariat, in cooperation with UN-LIREC and UNDP, created the Regional Public Security Training Center, through which Brazil has been offering training courses and capacity-building activities to government officials and civil society representatives directly involved in public security issues from fellow Latin American and Caribbean Countries. One of the priorities of the Regional Center is capacity-building in the area of small arms and light weapons control.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, we would like to offer our view as to what the final outcome of the Conference should be. In line with our interest in securing substantive results and clear guidelines for action, we support your proposal of adopting a "Strategy for Implementation", which would include a reaffirmation of principles and list of concrete measures for action in the next five years. Brazil also believes that the Conference should establish an effective follow-up mechanism able to safeguard the implementation of such measures.

Thank you.