



המשלחת הקבועה של ישראל לאומות המאוחדות

PERMANENT MISSION OF ISRAEL TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Preparatory Committee

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 9-20 January 2006

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Thank you Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me on behalf of the Delegation of Israel to congratulate you as well as the members of the bureau on assuming your duties to chair this important meeting. We wish to assure you of Israel's full cooperation and assistance in bringing this Prep-Com to a successful outcome under your leadership.

The *UN Programme of Action* of July 2001 is one of the more important documents in the arms control field made by the international community in the past few years. As a state that faces the constant threat of terrorism, Israel has expressed in many occasions its strong support for the UNPOA. We believe the UNPOA represents clear and unequivocal determination for all states to take the necessary steps to prevent the smuggling of small arms and light weapons to and from their territory. We wish to reaffirm our support to the UNPOA and reiterate our sincere hope that this process will eventually reduce human suffering caused by this devastating phenomenon.

Mr. Chairman,

The UNPOA was designed to fulfill a significant task, namely to prevent and eradicate illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects. We are confident that the list of recommendations outlined in the UNPOA could considerably contribute to the achievement of this important goal if implemented by all states. This objective has not diminished since July 2001, but rather, in the face of the growing menace of terrorism, it has become more pressing today. This is particularly true in the complex situation of our region—where SALW continue to reach terrorists either through direct and active support of some states in the Middle East and beyond—or by states turning a blind eye. This unacceptable reality presents a clear risk to the prospect of achieving peace and security to all in the Middle East. The relevance of the UNPOA in the Middle East would therefore be determined by its ability to limit and stop the supply of arms to terrorists. Accordingly, my delegation would stress the need to find a way in which the *UN Programme of Action* will include a clear call against transfer of small arms and light weapons to terrorists or other unauthorized entities.

While preparing the coming review conference, Israel believes we should concert our deliberations on ways to improve the implementation of the UNPOA's commitments, with particular focus on the following:

1. Reiterating the commitment set out by the UNPOA to promote formation of national legislation in states still lacking such laws, in order to regulate all aspects related to small arms and light weapons. Such legislation should encompass production, possession, and export controls.
2. Addressing the need to deter and stop illegal activity, by disrupting the route of trafficking of SALW and ammunition through enhancing law enforcement, as well as improving national capabilities in securing and managing stockpiles.
3. A clear call for national policies to ban unlicensed civilian possession of SALW, as well as a clear call against transfer of SALW to unauthorized entities, especially terrorists.
4. An extended debate on national controls to curb illicit transfers of SALW components.

5. There is a special need to address specific types of light weapons such as MANPADS.
6. In addition to the positive contributions made by NGO's to this process, in order to achieve a feasible approach to curbing illicit trade in SALW there must be greater involvement of the industrial sector in our deliberations.
7. Enhancing regional initiative for improving implementation of the UNPOA.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation believes that among the many positive ideas brought to these deliberations, our efforts should focus on those suggestions that directly contribute to stopping the spread of illicit SALW. Additionally, we must give due consideration to the issue of follow up process of the UNPOA, and finding ways to create a forum for clear and substantive improvements in the process.

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to address a few specific issues relevant to the prevention of the illicit spread of SALW, which we believe contribute to the UNPOA and our deliberations on these matters, namely the *Instrument for Tracing of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons*, and Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS).

With regard to the marking and tracing instrument, we regret that this instrument was adopted in the 60th General Assembly by a majority vote and not by consensus, a symbolic gesture of universal recognition. It is our hope that the implementation of this instrument will in fact be universal, as we consider it central to the fight against terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to MANPADS, the terrorist attack on an Israeli aircraft in Mombassa in November 2002 highlighted the problem of MANPADS falling into the possession of terrorists. Hence, national safeguards must be instituted to ensure that these weapons are not transferred to non-state actors, directly or indirectly.

In this regard, Israel welcomes the UN First Committee resolution on MANPADS 60/77, sponsored by Australia. Israel is particularly encouraged by the call to prevent transfer of MANPADS to non-state actors. We believe that a comprehensive approach must be adopted in order to better address this issue. Israel is considering ways to raise the political awareness to the threat of MANPADS. We intend to work together with other interested states in order to find ways to enhance implementation of existing international instruments aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring MANPADS.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, Israel views the 2001 UNPOA as a first step in the global fight to end the carnage and devastation caused by illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In order to make a meaningful contribution to preventing this phenomenon from continuing, we must find pragmatic solutions for combating this important issue. Israel stands ready to contribute and present our views during the thematic debate.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.