



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Statement

by

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at the

**UN Conference to Review Progress Made in the
Implementation of the Program of Action to Prevent,
Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All
Its Aspects**

**New York
28 June 2006**

Mr. President,

My delegation warmly congratulates you on your election as President of this Review Conference. We acknowledge with appreciation your skills and acumen in carrying out the consultations including on the draft final document for this Conference. I assure you of our full support and cooperation in ensuring the success of this important undertaking.

Mr. President

2. Five years ago, the adoption of the Programme of Action represented a political commitment by all States to address concerns arising from the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Today, we reaffirm that commitment to fully implement the PoA.

3. Since 2001, Pakistan has pursued a proactive policy to combat and eradicate the illicit small arms and light weapons. We have submitted two comprehensive National Reports which lay out in detail the national policy framework as well as actions and our contribution to the Implementation of the Programme of Action at the regional and international level.

Mr. President,

4. This Conference has a clear mandate from the General Assembly i.e. to review the progress made in the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in all its aspects. We shall work constructively with other delegations on the basis of this mandate.

5. The Programme of Action outlined a broad range of actions to be taken by States at the national, regional and international levels. International assistance and cooperation was determined as a key tool to promote national, regional and global efforts. As many delegations have noted before me, indeed much progress has been achieved by States in the last five years in implementing their commitments under the PoA.

Mr. President

6. Twice since 2001, more than 100 National Reports were submitted by States. Over 130 points of national contacts have been designated to coordinate activities related to SALW. A vast majority of States have reported progress in

putting together various legislative and administrative frameworks; large numbers of illicit weapons have been collected and destroyed; the security of stockpile management enhanced and record-keeping improved and controls over exports including end-user certificates strengthened. Above all, an enhanced level of public and government awareness has been achieved to understand and address the multi-faceted and complex nature of SALWs.

7. The conclusion and adoption of Marking and Tracing Instrument last year was an important indicator of the progress made in the implementation of PoA. The convening of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms indicates forward movement in PoA implementation. A number of regional initiatives have also been taken in some parts of the world to advance SALW agenda.

Mr. President

8. Yet, there are challenges as well, including in the areas where progress has been registered. One of the key challenge areas is the continuing lack of adequate provision of financial and technical assistance, particularly to developing countries. It is the lack of an effective international assistance and cooperation framework which has prevented a large majority of States to draw up necessary legislation and implement administrative procedures. It is primarily for this reason that capacity building of security and law enforcement and border control agencies of a number of countries has lagged behind and the larger issues of underdevelopment and poverty remain un-addressed. We hope that this Conference would take on board the elements contained in the Non-Aligned Movement paper on international assistance and cooperation.

9. Challenges also persist among States in the approach and modus operandi of combating the illicit trade in SALW. As we have stated before, the entire debate and policy prescriptions by many continue to be dominated by a supply perspective. The Conference would do well to pay equal attention and action to address the demand factors, particularly the existence of wars and conflicts. In our view, as long as conflicts and disputes fester, and solutions to them are not found, the demand for weapons will remain strong.

Mr. President

10. As we take up your composite non-paper which contains a compilation of views expressed by States, it would be vital for this Conference to convey a message that our priority must remain to attack the underlying causes of

conflict. In this context, reiterating the implementation of the Charter principles on conflict prevention and dispute resolution would be crucial. This would accord with the objective of eliminating a major source of demand for weaponry. It would also go a long way in fulfilling the promise of UN Charter to make our Organization a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of the common goals of strengthening peace and security in conditions of economic and social progress.

11. In addition, the Review Conference should discuss and agree on the following vital areas of PoA implementation:

One: To identify areas where States are facing implementation challenges and propose practical measures to address those challenges;

Two: Discuss possibilities of a survey by UNIDIR to assess and quantify the scope and scale of the supply and demand problems of the SALW; and

Three: Draw up recommendations to address those problems including modalities of financing, disbursement of financial and technical assistance required by States. Such measures can be recommended at all three levels identified in the PoA i.e. at the national, regional and global levels.

12. The Programme of Action affirmed the right of self-determination of all peoples under foreign occupation; it acknowledges their right of self-defence and stresses the need for peaceful resolution of disputes. We hope the Conference will appropriately reflect the progress made on these elements.

Mr. President

13. My delegation attaches great importance to keeping the consensus spirit with which the small arms issues have so far been treated and agreed. We hope that our proceedings in the coming days would be guided by this spirit. This would enable us to focus on consolidating the gains made so far by States rather than accentuating disagreements over the small arms agenda. We hope that the Conference would be able to maintain the spirit of solidarity and consensus as States fulfill their existing commitments under the PoA, the recently adopted Instrument on Marking and Tracing and the related obligations under the UN Firearms Protocol.

14. There are of course areas where more could be done. But we must temper our ambitions with perseverance and prudence. The SALW issues are complex and require further deliberations to enable all States to evolve common understanding and agreement. The PoA consensually worked out a delicate balance between humanitarian concerns and the legitimate security concerns of all States. It rightly focused on "illicit trade". This balance and focus should be sustained. We must not allow our ambitions to subject the SALW agenda to the deadlock being witnessed in the larger arms control framework.

Thank you, Mr. President
