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Statement

by

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**At the High Level Segment of the UN Conference to Review
Progress Made in the Implementation of the
Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate
the Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons
in All Its Aspects**

New York, 28 June 2006

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Mr. President,

Allow me to join others in offering our heartfelt congratulations to you Mr. President on your election as President of this important Review Conference and to commend you for your tireless efforts and patience that you have demonstrated during the preparation leading up to this event. My delegation also wishes to congratulate all members of the Bureau on their election.

My delegation associates itself with the statement previously delivered by the distinguished representative of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and also the statement previously delivered by the distinguished representative of the Republic of Slovenia on behalf of the members of the Human Security Network.

Mr. President,

Small arms and light weapons continue to destroy communities and threaten peace and security. We have heard repeated highlights by delegations during the past two days that there are over 600 million small arms and light weapons in circulation worldwide and that the impact from small arms violence alone continues to claim over 500,000 deaths per year or approximately 10,000 victims per week. By simple calculation, 20,000 people would have been direct casualties of small arms violence by the time we concluded our two weeks Conference.

The problem of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons cut across multidimensional issues. It is inextricably linked with the issues of national and transnational crimes. It also has major implication on a wide range of human security issues such as human rights, development and economic security. These issues

are serious challenges to peace and security and that is why Thailand attaches great importance to the prevention and suppression of the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons.

Mr. President,

My government is fully committed to the UN Programme of Action as a significant multilateral framework to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and thus supports international efforts to prevent the illicit trade of these weapons and values international meetings and conferences supportive of that goal. Thailand has participated in all regional seminars pertaining to small arms and light weapons held in Southeast Asia. Most recently Thailand was the host country to the United Nations Workshop on SALW for South Asia and Southeast Asia entitled "Towards the Review Conference on the Implementation of the Programme of Action" organized by the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific held in Bangkok. The overall objective of the Workshop was to assist the South and Southeast Asian countries to better prepare for the Review Conference. As a result of the Workshop two working group reports were adopted by the Working Group for Southeast Asian States and the Working group for South Asian States respectively. The reports have also been introduced in the Review Conference as Official Document.

Mr. President,

Five years after the Programme of Action was agreed to by member states in 2001, considerable progress has been made in the implementation of the Programme of Action. Now it's time for us to take stock of the progress achieved to-date and to look forward for ways ahead on how we can further build upon this progress.

For Thailand, several steps have been taken to implement the Programme of Action. As the initial step and in accordance with section 2 para 5 of the Programme of Action, the National Security Council under the Office of the Prime Minister was designated as a National Point of Contact to act as co-ordinator on matters relating to small arms and light weapons. To this end, the National Security Council has developed border strategy which covers the problems of small arms and light weapons smuggling. Furthermore, Thailand has also submitted the National Report on the Implementation of the Programme of Action in 2005 and is in the process of submitting an updated version later this year.

At the national level, steps have been taken to address the issue of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons by putting in place adequate laws, regulations and administrative procedures to exercise effective control over trade in small arms and light weapons to prevent illicit activities. Most activities pertaining to small arms and light weapons in the Programme of Action are covered. This legal framework ensures that those who are engaged in illegal activities can be prosecuted under relevant national penal codes. At the regional level and international level, Thailand continues to render its full cooperation with its neighbours within the bilateral and ASEAN framework and continues to give its full support to international efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Mr. President,

Despite the limited resources, the Thai government was able to achieve satisfactory progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action, however there are states whose progress require technical and/or financial international assistance. In this regard my delegation acknowledges the important role of the UN agencies, international organizations and civil society in supporting

capacity building activities in countries facing difficulties in their implementation of the Programme of Action.

Though the level of progress achieved since the adoption of the Programme of Action may varied from state to state, there seems to be a broad agreement that overall progress has been made. At the same time we were also reminded that there are much more that needs to be done. The fact that we have showed progress demonstrated to the world the significance that Member States attached to this issue and our firm commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action. The Review Conference gives us the opportunity to reaffirm that commitment, and more importantly an opportunity for us to build upon that momentum. Though differences remain in many issues, my delegation hopes that it would not hamper further progress on the issues that we already have broad agreement.

Mr. President,

You have a challenging task ahead of you during the next two weeks. My delegation wishes to assure you of our full cooperation and wishes you a successful outcome. Thank you.