
BIENNIAL MEETING OF STATES
TO CONSIDER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
UN PROGRAMME OF ACTION ON
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Statement by H.E. Ambassador John Freeman
Head of the UK Delegation to the Biennial Meeting of States
on behalf of the European Union

THEMATIC DEBATE INTERVENTION

Marking and Tracing

NEW YORK
13-15 July 2005

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Marking and tracing

Mr Chairman,

1. I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Croatia and Turkey, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro, the members of the European Economic Area, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Moldova and Ukraine, align themselves with this statement.
2. The EU welcomes the hard work done by the Open Ended Working Group on Marking and Tracing, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Thalmann.
3. The EU regrets that no operational provisions on ammunition and peacekeeping operations were included, and that the instrument is not legally-binding. We hope that it can be strengthened at further review meetings. The EU will be strongly committed to promoting further the issue of ammunition, thus taking up the recommendations of the Chairman's procedural report. It is however a first and important step in the implementation of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. In that sense, it represents a positive Signal from the international community to those countries most affected by this scourge. If it is applied by states with the necessary political will, the content of the instrument will help to discourage, and thus reduce, the illicit trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons. This is the very least we owe to victims of illicit SALW.