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***Speech on Best Practices and Lessons Learned of SALW Projects
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Japan Assistance Team for Small Arms Management in Cambodia (JSAC) has supported the Royal Government of Cambodia in carrying out “Peace Building and Comprehensive Small Arms Management Programme in Cambodia” since April 2003. I am Yasumitsu Kida, Project Manager of the Team. Our programme aims to address SALW issues in Cambodia through “the effective collection, storage and destruction of SALW” as an implementation effort on the ground of the Programme of Action.

Demand Factors of SALW Possession

Why do people in post-conflict countries want to keep their SALW? While the situation is improving thanks to the efforts made by the Government of Cambodia as well as by donors, deepening our knowledge of demand factors by addressing this fundamental question would be valuable for formulating more effective projects. We have identified three major factors from our experience in Cambodia. First, people try to protect their families from dangers on their own due to the sense of insecurity. Second, the long conflict may have undermined a “Culture of Peace.” Finally, in Cambodia, some people still believe that SALW have economic value and expect to receive other goods or services in exchange for turning them.

JSAC's Project as one of the Best Practices

I would like to introduce three JSAC projects designed to tackle those demand factors in Cambodia.

The first project is the Weapons Reduction and Development for Peace (WDP) Project, in which, JSAC encourages civilians to voluntarily surrender SALW through educational workshops and offers development projects to communities which have surrendered all weapons. In addition, JSAC supports local police capacity by providing necessary training and materials in order to improve public security and residents' confidence in the relevant authorities. Our approach is neither buyback nor exchange of weapons, but encourages people to voluntarily surrender SALW through a series of workshops to raise awareness. For instance, in March 2006, 2,482 cached

weapons believed to be once owned by the Khmer Rouge were discovered thanks to a report by a participant at JSAC's workshop. Overall, a total of 20,493 SALW have been surrendered through the Weapons Reduction and Development for Peace Project so far. This project contributes to overcoming all demand factors mentioned earlier; removing people's perceived need to protect their own lives with SALW by improving security; building capacity of and confidence in police; facilitating "Culture of Peace" through educational workshops and the surrender of weapons; and promoting the understanding that weapons do not have any monetary value.

The second project is the Weapons Destruction Project. This project aims to burn and destroy weapons collected from civilians through the Weapons Reduction and Development for Peace Project as well as surplus weapons in police possession, so that they can never be used again. This project contributes to improving physical security by preventing the illicit flow of SALW.

The third project is the Safe Storage and Registration Project. This project aims to build a safe and proper stockpiling system for legally possessed weapons by police, and prevent their outflow to civilians' hands. JSAC supports the Ministry of Interior in managing effective stockpiling and registration systems for their weapons. This project contributes to building capacity of and confidence in police forces.

You can find information on this in the orange-colored pamphlet distributed by my delegation.

Lessons Learned

I would like to conclude by making two recommendations acknowledged through our project implementation.

First, a comprehensive approach, which covers weapons collection, destruction and stockpile management, is essential in tackling SALW problems in affected countries. JSAC is aiming to reduce, on the one hand, the number of weapons illegally possessed by civilians through the Weapons Reduction and Development for Peace Project, and on the other hand, the dangers presented by theft of stockpiled weapons of police, through the Safe Storage and Registration Project. Eventually, collected illegal and surplus legal weapons are destroyed by the Weapons Destruction Project. If a program lacks any one of the elements I have already mentioned, it may face difficulties. In that case, the illicit circulation of weapons will never be stopped.

Second, SALW programs, especially as a part of weapons collection, should be tailored to the circumstances of each affected country. In Cambodia, we try to educate people about danger and illegality of weapons in workshops and to foster a "Culture of Peace." In our view, this approach is the most effective in the Cambodian context. In some cases, when buyback schemes or weapons for development projects are in place, people may be led to think that holding weapons yields monetary or non-monetary benefits, and thus not surrender all of them. However, if a "Culture of Peace" is deeply rooted among the people, they will surrender weapons more voluntarily. In fact, as I mentioned before, a village chief who attended a workshop subsequently showed us the location of 2,482 guns. For him, what was important

was not to receive development projects in exchange for weapons, but to enhance the public safety of his village. Thus, it is clear that SALW projects should take into account the background of target countries and be designed specifically for each.

In conclusion, we believe the best practices of implemented projects, including the experience of the NGOs active on the ground, should be further shared internationally. If we share our lessons today and make good use of them, it will help a great deal in solving SALW problems in affected countries.