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BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK**

**ON BEHALF OF
THE ASEAN MEMBER STATES**

AT

**THE 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
26 JUNE 2006**

Mr. President,

I have the pleasure to take the floor on behalf of the Delegations of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own delegation, Myanmar.

At the outset, I wish to extend our warmest congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency of this important Conference. Our tribute also goes to other members of the Bureau. We are fully confident that, under your able guidance, this Conference will achieve a fruitful outcome. We also pledge our full support and cooperation in your efforts to make this Conference a success.

Mr. President,

At the 2005 World Summit, world leaders, fully realised the negative effects posed by illicit trade of small arms and light weapons, reiterated their support for implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arm and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

During the Second Biennial Meeting of States held in in July last year, Member States reaffirmed their strong commitment to the full implementation of the Programme of Action and recognised the progress achieved in national, regional and global implementation since 2003. The Meeting also recognized the need for further action to fulfil the commitments made in the Programme of Action.

In January this year, a preparatory meeting for this Review Conference was held in New York. It is regrettable that the Prepcom which was originally aimed at setting an outline for the Review Conference failed to agree both in terms of process and substance.

Since its adoption, ASEAN noted that Progress has been achieved 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 Aspect. The Protocol

against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition (The United Nations Firearms Protocol that supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime), entered into force on 3 July 2005. Furthermore, an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December. These are encouraging developments but we must continue to strive to gain further achievements.

Mr. President,

ASEAN shares the view that excessive accumulation, uncontrolled spread and misuse of small arms and light weapons have the potential to destabilize national, regional and global security. Furthermore, the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons including to, non-state actors, has caused adverse effects on security, economy, development and societies in various parts of the world. ASEAN maintains a framework for political and security cooperation among its ten member countries. In dealing with the issue of transnational crimes including arms smuggling, ASEAN has established mechanisms such as ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat transnational Crimes, the ASEAN Centre for Combatting Transnational Crimes (ACTC) and ASEAN Chiefs of Police (ASEANAPOL), as well as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Transnational Crimes (AMMTC) and its Senior Officials Conference (SOMTC) are the main forums dealing with the fight against the diverse transnational crimes including trafficking of small arms and light weapons.

At the 25th ASEAN Chiefs of Police Conference held in Bali, Indonesia, in May 2005, the ASEAN Police Chiefs agreed to encourage member countries to enhance strict control over both legal and illegal firearms and explosives, and to conduct backtracking investigations to identify the source of manufacture. They also agreed to call upon member countries to strictly control entry and exit points to prevent smuggling of firearms and explosives.

At the 5th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), held in Hanoi in November 2005, Cambodia was endorsed as a Lead Shepherd country- namely a country which coordinates among ASEAN on countering arms smuggling.

Furthermore, workshops were also conducted in the region to enhance the effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on SALW and to strengthen cooperation to collectively address the issue. Cambodia and EU Jointly hosted ASEAN Regional Forum workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) from 2 to 4 November 2005. Matters including transfer control, legislative process, illicit brokering, management of state-owned and private weapons, treatment of surplus weapons and the need for external assistance and regional cooperation were addressed during the workshop.

A United Nations Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) for South Asia and Southeast Asia was successfully held in Bangkok from 17 to 19 May, 2006. In this regard, ASEAN is grateful to the Governments of Canada, Japan and Thailand and UNDP for jointly sponsoring the workshop with the active participation from governments and non-governmental organizations from South and Southeast Asia. The workshop was conducted in advance to lay necessary groundwork for this Review Conference.

At the end of the workshop, the Working Group for Southeast Asian States issued a report on 19 May 2006. In the report, the participants, including from some ASEAN countries, affirmed their continuing commitment to fully implement the UN Programme of Action and to cooperate with other States, within Southeast Asia and beyond. They acknowledged the important inter-relationship in national, regional and global-level implementation of the Programme of Action. Participants underlined the importance of assistance, including technical and financial assistance where needed, to their implementation of various aspects of the Programme of Action in relation to weapons, their ammunition and explosives.

ASEAN countries will continue to work within the framework of

international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons. In this regard, we call upon all Member States of the United Nations to step up efforts to further strengthen international cooperation and assistance in this field.

Mr. President,

ASEAN countries uphold the view that the efforts towards the full implementation of the Programme of Action are closely associated with other disarmament efforts, especially towards the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, which should also be accorded adequate attention by the international community.

In conclusion, ASEAN member countries would like to reaffirm the need for closer international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and urge the participating Member States to work more closely to achieve a successful outcome of this important Conference.

Thank you, Mr. President.