



**PHÁI ĐOÀN THƯỜNG TRỰC  
CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM  
TẠI LIÊN HỢP QUỐC**

**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT BY  
H.E. AMBASSADOR LE LUONG MINH  
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF VIET NAM  
AT THE CONFERENCE TO REVIEW PROGRESS MADE  
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM OF ACTION TO  
PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN  
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

**(New York, 27 June, 2006)**

**Mr. President,**

On behalf of the delegation of Viet Nam, I would like to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau for your respective elections. I am confident that with your skills and dedication, the Conference will arrive at a successful conclusion.

The delegation of Viet Nam associates itself with the common positions of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as presented in the Statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Kyaw Tint Swe, Permanent Representative of Myanmar on behalf of the Association

**Mr. President,**

Five years ago, at the first global conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, the international community adopted the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Lights Weapons in All Its Aspects. We were all convinced that the illicit trade in SALW poses a serious threat to peace and security since it can strain relations between nations, fuel and add more violence to disturbances, especially transnational crimes and civil wars. We were further convinced that the illicit

trade in small arms and light weapons can cause sufferings to human beings not only by possibly depriving them of their physical security, but also by undermining their opportunity for development. The Program of Action laid out numerous measures at the national, regional and global levels to deal with the different aspects of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, namely illegal acts in manufacturing, possession and stockpiling, brokering, export and use of small arms and light weapons as well as the mishaps that can possibly take place out of the legitimate acquisition and possession of small arms and light weapons.

Over the past five years, important progress has been made in the implementation of this Program. The prevention of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has become an issue of constant international concern. Last year, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunitions, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, came into force and the international community created the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. New regional arrangements have been made in accordance with the characteristics particular to each region to concretize the orientations set forth in the Program of Action and deal with the issues of immediate concerns to countries in the region. Discussions at the two biennial meetings in 2003 and 2005 and national reports have shown that remarkable efforts have been made by countries in different parts of the world to strengthen their implementation capacities and promote international cooperation as envisaged in the Program. These achievements are results of the extensive work of Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Nevertheless, much needs to be done, especially in the context of the continued conflicts in various regions of the world, the growing threats of transnational crimes and terrorism, and the lack of funds for development plans. The Program of Action points out that the fight against illicit trade in small arms and light weapons should be placed in a broader framework of action related to international security strengthening, conflict prevention and resolution, crime prevention and development promotion. The lack of success in disarmament negotiations and the failure to implement commitment to nuclear disarmament and the policies and acts of use of force or threat of use of force in their various forms seriously contradict efforts to create an international environment conducive to success of efforts in this connection. It is essential to adhere to the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, including

the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, the inherent right to individual or collective self-defense, and hence, as affirmed in the Program of Action itself, the right of each State to manufacture, import and retain small arms and light weapons for its defense and security needs. The Program of Action further points out that Governments bear the primary responsibility for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons while close international cooperation is needed in the coordination and complementarity of efforts, technical assistance, resource provision and information sharing. Experience has shown that while many measures have to take on the common challenges of transnational crimes and terrorism, many others must be suitable to the particular circumstances of each region or country. Measures undertaken in a country undergoing a civil war may be different from those in a country not in that situation. The effectiveness and sustainability of international cooperation require multilateralism.

**Mr. President,**

Over the past five years, Viet Nam has continued with its process of comprehensive reforms started back in the mid-1980s. That process has evolved around, *inter a lia*, a foreign policy of independence, peace, cooperation, development, openness, multilateralization and diversification of international relations, active economic integration and broadening international cooperation in other fields. More comprehensively, that process has evolved around Viet Nam's wish to be a friend, a reliable partner with all countries and actively participate in the process of regional and global integration. Our policy on small arms and light weapons has been formulated and implementation of the Program of Action undertaken in conformity with the nature and objectives of this comprehensive reform process.

Under Vietnamese law, the Government fully manages the manufacture, repair and transportation of weapons. The State has promulgated laws and other legal documents stipulating that small arms and light weapons and their equipments are only for the purpose of national defense and security, that the importation of weapons, except in cases permitted by the State, is prohibited and that the illegal acts of transporting, using, trading in and acquiring weapons and explosive materials constitute criminal offences. Viet Nam does not export weapons; weapons manufactured in Viet Nam are marked; there are regulations related to weapon storage management and collection and destruction of small

arms and light weapons; there are also laws and regulations related to export control and marking and tracking small arms and light weapons. Law enforcement and education are important elements of Viet Nam's policy concerning small arms and light weapons. Viet Nam participates in various regional and global schemes relating to dealing with the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. A national contact point and an inter-agency working group have been established to support the implementation of the Program of Action. The details of Viet Nam's implementation of the Program of Action are contained in the Country Report that Viet Nam has submitted to the United Nations and this conference.

Viet Nam is fully committed to the implementation of the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We will continue to take further necessary measures aimed at effective implementation of the Program as new circumstances may require and pledge to work with all other partners at this conference and in other settings to promote international cooperation in pursuit of the objectives of the Program.

Thank you for your kind attention.