



PERMANENT MISSION OF TURKEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**STATEMENT BY
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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, 27 JUNE 2006

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me join other speakers in congratulating you and the members of the Bureau upon your election. Let me also commend your tireless efforts and those of the UN Secretariat (DDA) for the excellent preparation of this Review Conference. I am confident that your able leadership will lead us to a successful outcome.

Mr. President,

Turkey has already aligned itself with the statement made by Austria yesterday, on behalf of the European Union. I will therefore briefly elaborate on some issues which we believe are important on the way forward in the implementation of the UN Programme of Action (PoA).

Mr. President,

Proliferation of the illicit trade and use of the small arms and light weapons pose a significant threat to global, regional and national peace and security, as well as to the social and economic development of many countries. The statistics of death tolls resulting from Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) are increasingly frightening. There is also a close linkage between the illicit trade in SALWs and terrorism, organized crime as well as drugs and human trafficking. Turkey's recent history is witness to bitter memories of human suffering from the accumulation of small arms and light weapons in the hands of terrorist organizations.

In view of this reality, Turkey has always been and will continue to be a staunch supporter of international cooperation to combat and eradicate illicit trade in SALWs. Turkey's strong support to develop such cooperation is not only extended to the efforts in the UN but also to those of other international organizations, such as, the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Wassenaar Arrangement, NATO and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative.

Of all these and other regional efforts, the UN Programme of Action plays a crucial role as it constitutes a comprehensive starting point for the only global action to fight against the illicit trade and use of SALWs. Much progress has been achieved since its adoption in 2001. Yet we are still far from achieving its full implementation and that requires us to redouble our efforts and make best use of this Conference.

It is obvious that our goal in this Conference is not to renegotiate or re-open the UN PoA. Nonetheless, Turkey believes that the Conference, while focusing on implementation, would also be able to identify new measures that could complement or enhance the PoA.

Mr. President,

At this point let me focus on some specific issues:

Improved controls over the transfer of SALWs, without prejudicing the legal transactions between states, is among the areas where further substantive work is required. We support the idea of the further elaboration of the PoA in this area in order to provide adequate guidance for all member states. We believe that such guidance would be helpful in fostering international cooperation to prevent shipments from being diverted to illegal markets. The experience of many regional organizations, including that of the OSCE could be instrumental in drawing up common standards.

Transparency could also contribute to efforts for a more effective international control. The UN Register of Conventional Arms might be used more effectively for this purpose. Transfer of small arms and light weapons could be considered as one of the reporting categories of the Register.

Turkey also supports, in principle, initiatives aiming at concluding an arms trade treaty, which would complement international efforts to eradicate illicit trade in SALWs.

The end-use certificates is another issue which merits attention and should be dealt together with transfer controls. Some individuals and companies benefit from loopholes in international control

regimes and diversities in national legislation. An international and regional harmonization of legislation regarding SALWs could be an important step forward in preventing the abuse of legal gaps by smugglers. In this framework, Turkey believes that a study on the feasibility of developing an end-user certificate system at regional and global levels, as well as an information exchange and verification mechanism, could be useful.

Turkey also welcomes and fully supports the establishment of a Group of Governmental Experts to study global regulations on brokering, hopefully after this Conference. The Review Conference would be able to give its blessing to this important issue which is one of the main elements fuelling the illegal trade, around the world.

Turkey recognizes the close link between illicit small arms and their ammunition and supports the efforts to find a coordinated response to this issue.

The issue of the transfer of arms to non-state actors is another area which, in our opinion deserves due consideration by the Conference.

Marking and tracing of SALWs is an issue which requires enhanced international cooperation. Turkey welcomes the adoption of the international instrument: last year in New York and calls for its full implementation. We continue to believe that this instrument, despite its shortcomings, lays the ground for furthering international cooperation and helps the implementation of the UN PoA.

Proliferation and unauthorized use of Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS) is a matter of serious concern in connection with the SALWs. Turkey believes that the international community should act decisively to improve stockpile security and strengthen export controls in countries that import and manufacture MANPADS.

International and regional cooperation should be fostered in assisting countries in need of ensuring effective management and physical security of their SALWs stockpiles. Small arms and light weapons seized or in surplus must be destroyed in accordance with internationally accepted standards and with the technical and financial assistance of the donor countries, international organizations and NGOs.

Cooperation schemes and exchange of information on combating trafficking in small arms and light weapons should be included in the framework of regional and bilateral confidence and security building measures.

Turkey strongly urges Member States to consider innovative strategies to address the close interrelationship between the illicit trade in SALWs and terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and the illicit exploitation of natural and other resources.

Mr. President,

Allow me to inform the Conference that in accordance with the UN Programme of Action, Turkey has made significant improvements over the last five years, particularly in its national marking system, the national procedures for the control of manufacture and the techniques for the destruction of small arms. These improvements are reflected in our 2005 National Report.

Mr. President

In conclusion, let me reiterate once again Turkey's readiness and resolve in contributing to all efforts within the UN and other fora to foster international cooperation and the establishment of effective norms and rules, to combat and eradicate illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, in all its aspects.

Thank you.