

Position Paper submitted by Chinese Delegation at the Sixth Biennial  
Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of  
the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade  
in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspect

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The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is a hot issue in the field of conventional disarmament. The international situation continues to undergo complex and profound changes. Regional turbulence, terrorism, transnational organized crimes, IT application and new technology revolution have further complicated the issue of illicit trade of small arms and light weapons (SALW), posing new challenges to peace, stability and development of relevant countries and regions.

China supports the unremitting efforts made by the international society in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, welcomes the positive progress on the implementation of relevant international instruments as the *Firearms Protocol*, the *UN POA on Small Arms and Light Weapons* and the *International Tracing Instrument*. China believes that complete elimination of the adverse consequences induced by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons remains an arduous task and calls for further joint efforts by the international society.

**I. China's positions on combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons are as follows:**

China believes that the cause of illicit trade of small arms and light weapons is complex and diverse, including but not limited to the lack of progress in disarmament, regional turmoil and the uneven socio-economic development. The problem is manifested differently both in forms and severity in different countries and regions. Some countries are in dire need of resources in terms of legislation, law enforcement and capacity building. In order to properly tackle this threat, we should adhere to the following principles:

(i) National responsibilities should be highlighted. Governments bear the primary responsibility in the fight against the illicit trade in small

arms and light weapons. All countries should establish and improve its national legislation and strengthen its law enforcement effort pursuant to its national conditions, consolidate domestic control of SALW. In the meanwhile, all countries should adopt a responsible attitude toward arms export and refrain from selling arms to regions in conflict, with a view to preventing the diversion of small arms into illicit channels.

(ii) All countries should view and handle the issue of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in a comprehensive and balanced manner. While effectively implementing POA and ITI, we should also ensure that the national security and legitimate interests are not to be undermined.

(iii) The international society should, by drawing on historical experience, resolve disputes through diplomatic and political means, so as to safeguard international and regional peace and security, and assist relevant countries in achieving economic development and social stability. The elimination of the root causes of wars, conflicts, terrorism and organized crimes will pave the way for a fundamental solution to the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

(iv) The law enforcement agencies of all countries should enhance coordination and maintain closer links with multilateral institutions including INTERPOL. All countries should enhance bilateral and multilateral practical cooperation on an equal and voluntary basis. Developed countries should redouble their efforts in providing assistance to developing countries in the area of institutional building, funding, technology transfer and personnel training.

**II. Based on the above-mentioned positions, the Chinese delegation proposes the following measures:**

(i) All countries should strengthen stockpile management, take rigorous security measures to safeguard the storehouse, conduct comprehensive and strict inspection, make complete and detailed records, and strengthen personnel training, with a view to preventing the diversion of small arms into illicit channels.

(ii) All countries should fulfil the obligations of POA and ITI in a complete and effective manner. Meanwhile, we should also take full account of the differences of economic and technological development

among different countries, as well as the specific requirements of the relevant instruments.

(iii) All countries should establish record-keeping mechanism of small arms and light weapons, and choose appropriate record-keeping methods according to their own condition, so as to enable their competent national authorities to trace illicit small arms and light weapons in a timely and reliable manner.

(iv) All countries should take rigorous measures to strengthen national control, inter alia, promulgating sound laws and regulations, strengthening firearms supervision, and strengthening export control.

(v) All countries should enhance international exchange and cooperation and make good use of bilateral and multilateral channels to strengthen information exchange and practical cooperation. The UN should play a bigger role in this regard.

(vi) Developed countries should assume their due responsibilities in helping developing countries to strengthen capacity building, and provide more support in terms of funding technology transfer, personnel training and infrastructure building, so as to assist recipient countries to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.