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**Second Biennial Meeting of States  
to Consider 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**

**Statement by  
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Head of Delegation**

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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

First of all, let me join other delegations in congratulating you on your election as chairman of the Second Biennial Meeting of the Programme of Action and also allow me to thank you, Mr. President, on behalf of my delegation, for the groundwork that you have laid for the benefit of this conference. I would also like to thank DDA for the excellent organization.

Austria wishes to associate herself fully with the statement made by the United Kingdom on behalf of the EU. Since Austria currently holds the Chairmanship of the Plenary of the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA), allow me to briefly make several additional observations on the important contribution that the WA makes to the fight against illicit SALW through export controls.

Austria considers export controls an essential tool for dealing with the problems we are addressing during the course of this conference. Accordingly, we attach great importance to the efforts of the OSCE and the *Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies* (WA). I understand that the OSCE will give a presentation of its own activities in this field. I regret, however, that there was no consensus for the WA to be present at this meeting. Let me, therefore, briefly outline the contribution of this multilateral forum to the fight against illicit SALW.

The WA is working hard to promote responsible export policies towards, and effective export controls over, small arms and light weapons in order to prevent their uncontrolled proliferation, destabilising accumulation and diversion.

In 2002, further to the commitment to strictly control transfers of SALW which had always been on the WA Munitions List, the WA adopted a document setting out detailed "best practice" guidelines and criteria for exports of such weapons. At the 2003 Plenary, WA Participating States approved a number of additional important initiatives. These include tightening controls over *Man Portable Air Defence Systems* (MANPADS), agreeing to enhance transparency of SALW transfers and establishing elements for national legislation on arms brokering.

The positive contribution of the WA to the fight against illicit SALW has been publicly acknowledged. Most notably by the UN Secretary General, in the "*Progress report of the Secretary General on ways to combat subregional and cross-border problems in West Africa*" (document S/2005/86 of 11 February 2005) to the Security Council where he cites the formal cooperation agreement entered into by WA Participating States and West African States as an example of the cooperation which is necessary between importing and exporting states.

More detailed information on these initiatives is contained in the compilation of WA documents which can be found at the back of the room.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would like to assure you of Austria's full support for your endeavours for a successful outcome of this meeting.

Thank you.