



PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Statement by H.E. Ambassador Zhang Yishan
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at the Second Biennial Meeting of States
to Consider the Implementation of the PoA to Prevent, Combat and
Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All Its Aspects

(11 July 2005, New York)

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, please allow me, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the 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 (PoA). I am convinced that with your wisdom and rich diplomatic experience, you will surely guide this meeting to a success. You and other members of the Bureau can rest assured of the full cooperation and support from the Chinese delegation for the success of the meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

As an important milestone and roadmap for the multilateral efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW), the PoA represents the consensus and determination of the international community on fighting the illicit trade in SALW. It also represents a brand-new stage in the multilateral process to address the issue of SALW.

In recent years, the international community has achieved a series of progress in the implementation of the PoA.

At the national level, many countries have established national points of contact and coordination agencies, developed and improved national legislation, and enhanced efforts in the institution and capacity building.

At the regional level, regional and sub-regional organizations have launched various initiatives and taken concrete measures to address the illicit trade in SALW within the framework of regional cooperation. Regional initiatives such as the ASEAN Plan of Action and the Nairobi Protocol have laid a solid foundation for the implementation of the PoA at the regional level. Regional endeavors have become an important part of international efforts against the illicit trade in SALW.

Guided by the roadmap of the PoA, efforts at the global level against the illicit trade in SALW are also proceeding smoothly. In 2003, the UN successfully convened the First Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the PoA. Last month, the

International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit SALW was successfully concluded, which provides a whole series of guiding principles and measures for the marking and tracing of SALW. A resolution was adopted at the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly to set up a group of governmental experts on illicit brokering no later than 2007, thus putting the issue of illicit brokering high on the agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

There is an old Chinese saying, “Constant reviews make constant renewal”. The purpose of the Second Biennial Meeting of States we are convening today is exactly to review past experience for renewed efforts in the future.

The past few years have witnessed remarkable achievements as well as room for further improvement in the field of SALW. The domestic legislation in this regard in some countries needs to be improved. There are still loopholes in the management by some countries of such areas as marking and record-keeping of SALW. The law enforcement in some countries needs to be strengthened. And the information-sharing and cooperation among law enforcement authorities of different countries need to be further enhanced. Some countries are still short of resources in institution and capacity building in legislation, law enforcement and control, confiscation and destruction of illicit SALW.

Looking ahead into the future, the Chinese delegation believes that the international community needs to work hand-in-hand in promoting the comprehensive implementation of the PoA, particularly in the following aspects:

First, States should bear the primary responsibility. States should, in light of their national situation, enhance their own institution and capacity building, establish and improve their legal system, strengthen their law enforcement, firmly crack down the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in SALW and enhance stockpile management so as to prevent SALW lawfully manufactured and transferred from ending up in the illegal channels.

Second, international and regional coordination and cooperation should be enhanced. Each region should, in accordance with its specific situation, identify its priorities and enhance communication, coordination and cooperation among countries in the region,

particularly in the field of information exchange and cooperation among law enforcement bodies.

Third, the United Nations should continue to play a leading role in this field. Currently, it is the common aspiration of the international community that the United Nations shall pay more attention to development issues. It is therefore of great significance to consolidate the role of the United Nations in combating the illicit trade of SALW.

Fourth, a comprehensive approach should be adopted to address both the symptoms and underlying causes. All possible resources need to be mobilized throughout the international community to provide financial and technical support to developing countries in their capacity and institution building. At the same time, it is necessary to assist countries concerned in their economic development as well as their efforts to achieve peace and stability, which will help root out the breeding grounds in which the illicit SALW propagate.

Mr. Chairman,

The Chinese Government, committed to the principle of “putting people first and governing for the people”, attaches great importance to the fight against the illicit trade in SALW, and plays an active role in relevant international efforts. The Chinese Government has taken a series of earnest steps to implement the PoA.

As to legislation, China, taking into account its specific situation and common international practices, has been developing and improving its laws and regulations. It has promulgated the *Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Control of Firearms*, the amended *Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on the Administration of Arms Export, Arms Export Control List*, and etc.

As to law enforcement, China has carried out strict administration according to its laws and regulations on manufacturing, stockpiling, transportation, trade, use and confiscation of SALW, and has adopted a series of export control measures consistent with international practices including the licensing system. In recent campaigns to confiscate illicit firearms, more than 4 million pieces were seized and destroyed in China.

China is constantly enhancing efforts in its capacity building. The *Information*

System for Firearms Regulation developed by China's law enforcement authorities is now ready for broader application. Efforts to optimize the marking system for SALW and develop anti-counterfeiting techniques have been carried out smoothly. The establishment of a nation-wide information management system for the manufacturing, possession and trade of SALW has been put onto the agenda.

As to international exchange and cooperation, China's police, customs and other law enforcement bodies have kept regular contacts with their foreign counterparts. China also renders help within its own capacity to relevant countries and regions in their effort to solve the problem of illicit SALW. China donated US\$21,800 this year to the Organization of American States through the China-OAS Cooperation Fund, earmarked for financing meetings in the region on prohibiting the illicit trade in firearms.

I would also like to take this opportunity to brief you on the UN Workshop on SALW held in Beijing from April 19 to 21 this year. It was co-sponsored by the UN, China, Japan and Switzerland. Participants in the workshop shared their experience on the implementation of the PoA, making useful preparations for our meeting today. Participants also had in-depth discussions on issues concerning the negotiations of an international instrument on marking and tracing of SALW, which played a positive role in promoting the negotiations and conclusion of the instrument. Participants from Central Asian and ASEAN countries and some regional organizations also shared their progress in combating the illicit trade in SALW and held in-depth exchange of views on further steps to promote relevant efforts. This has contributed to enhanced mutual understanding and extended cooperation. Please allow me, on behalf of the Chinese Government, to express our appreciation for the participation and support of all delegates to the workshop. Our gratitude also goes to the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia as well as the Japanese and Swiss governments for their efforts and contributions.

As required by the PoA, China timely submitted its national report this year. The report comprehensively introduces the measures, achievements and experience of the Chinese Government in implementing the PoA. The printed version of the report will be distributed during the Meeting together with the *Compilation of Texts and Documents Distributed at the UN Workshop on SALW in Beijing*

To conclude, I wish the meeting a complete success.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.