



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC
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Statement

by

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at the

Second Biennial Meeting of the States to Consider the Implementation of
the United Nations Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicates
the Illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

New York, 12 July 2005

Mr. Chairman,

We all recognized that the excessive and uncontrolled accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons is a threat for the international peace and the stability that also reduces the chances for sustainable development in many regions of the World.

The problems arising due to the existence of the small arms indicate that there is a lack of effective action. Possible solution was sought through drastic decrease of the huge stockpiles of small arms in the crises areas and through prevention of illicit trade of such weapons. We believe that the role of the prevention is of paramount significance in addressing these problems.

What has the Republic of Macedonia done in this area?

Macedonia fully supports the implementation of the United Nations Program of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light weapons in all its aspects.

UNDP joined the Government with a preparatory assistance, which soon evolved in the full implementation of the program for voluntary surrender of small arms and light weapons and legalization of the weapons. We also started cooperating with the SEESAC Clearing house in Belgrade in the framework of the Stability Pact.

During the period September-December 2003, a national campaign for public awareness was launched which according too SEESAC evaluation report reached 98% of the population. The results were surrender of 7,571 pieces of weapons while 5,204 pieces were legalized. Collected weapons were later on destroyed.

Mr. Chairman,

In pursuing the goals of the UN Program of action, the Government also adopted a new Law on weapons, which provides integrated control of the legal possession of arms, regulates trade and manufacture of SALW. At the same time a public campaign was launched in order to raise the awareness of the new provisions of the law such as the ban on carrying weapons in public places.

As a result of the new policy, last year the police have confiscated a total of 1,314 pieces of weapons, while the first six months of this year shows an increase of the confiscation rate by 37%.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs also intensified its activities with the local authorities. This approach already gave positive results in the field, illustrated with significant reduction of the crime rate.

Macedonia also adopted a National Strategy for Small Arms and Light Weapons. Last year we adopted the European code of export of weapons. Established National Commission is in charge of the implementation of the National Action Plan. Main points of its activities are:

1. Strengthened cross border control; implementation of a SALW strategy and action plan, and the integration of this strategy in the border management strategy and action plan; continuous exchange of information with the neighboring countries in

view of small arms and light weapons regulative related issues, as well as with the global networks;

2. Further development of the legal and regulative framework for the SALW issues;
3. Research and management of information which refer to the availability of weapons and its influence in the society;
4. Strategy for public awareness raising and communication, which will provide further education of the risk of SALW;
5. Further activities for Collection of weapons and ammunition; these activities will be prepared in cooperation with the civil sector;
6. Destruction of the confiscated, collected and surplus weapons in order to increase the public security;

In closing we would like, once again, to reiterate our support to all the activities that the UN is conducting in this area and to underline that we would continue with our efforts on national and regional level in order to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light weapons.

Thank you.