



**THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**UNITED NATIONS 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**

GENERAL DEBATE

S T A T E M E N T

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Check against delivery

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**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all allow me to express my sincere condolences to the people of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the tragic events of July 7 in London. These barbaric and cowardly attacks proved once again that terrorists have no respect for human life and are ready to murder regardless of age, color or religion. The London explosions reconfirm the need for joint efforts on behalf of the entire international community aimed at fighting terrorism and aggressive extremism.

Mr. President,

It is a special honor and a privilege for me to address this Conference on behalf of the Republic of Moldova. Mr. President, I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election to the presidency of *the United Nations Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on SALW*. I am convinced that your recognized ability and extensive experience will enable you to lead the work of the Conference to a successful conclusion.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While the international community is trying to eradicate the threats imposed by the nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, the problem of the small arms and light weapons has never reduced from its intensity, as hundred of thousands of people are killed every year by SALW. The easy access to these weapons also aggravates conflicts, facilitates violent crimes and generates terrorist acts, impedes post-conflict reconstruction and undermines long-term sustainable development.

In this context, the Republic of Moldova is strongly committed to 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 and would like to stress the importance of full and early implementation of this document.

Also, my country welcomes the result of the activity of the Open-Ended Working Group to negotiate the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons and views this document as a considerable effort of the international community towards the eradication of the illicit SALW scourge.

Another important aspect of the fight with the threat posed by SALW is regional cooperation and the role played by various regional organizations. In this regard I would like to mention the South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), the activity of which has a significant impact in this region. One of the projects coordinated by this organization is to be launched in the Republic of Moldova in the nearest future. This project, generously financed by the Swiss Government,

has the aim to destroy the superfluous stocks of SALW owned by the Ministry of Interior of Moldova. Thus, in the framework of this project, some 1725 SALW are to be melted down.

Distinguished audience,

Despite the efforts undertaken by my country, the Republic of Moldova cannot implement the measures stipulated in the UNPoA on its entire territory due to the presence of a separatist region, controlled by a mafia-type regime supported from abroad. The achievements that are to be mentioned in the Regional Statement of South Eastern Europe that Moldova has subscribed to, are unfortunately also invalid for the transnistrian region of my country.

Moreover, the existence of this separatist regime enhances considerably the problem of SALW not only in Moldova but in the whole region too, since one of the main sources of its existence is the illegal production of and trade with arms and ammunition, especially SALW. There is no national or international control over the manufacture of small arms in this region of my country. We do not have information on the marking and records of these arms, which makes it impossible to trace them. In this context, I would like to reiterate, from this tribune as well, the importance and necessity of an international inspection mission to the enterprises from the transnistrian region that are involved in the illicit manufacturing of weapons.

Also, a great concern for the Government of the Republic of Moldova remains to be the 25.000 tones of weapons and ammunition stockpiled in the transnistrian region at the Cobasna depots and belonging to the Russian Federation. According to a research conducted by the Academy of Science of the Republic of Moldova, an eventual explosion of these stocks could generate the same impact as did the explosion of the nuclear bomb in Hiroshima in 1945. My country has emphasized on many occasions that illegal foreign military presence is a factor which impedes the settlement process and destabilizes the security in the whole region. The transnistrian regime feels at safe under the protection of the Russian army which, along with the mentioned quantity of weapons and munitions, must be withdrawn from my country in compliance with international commitments. In this context we call on the Russian Federation to complete without delay the withdrawal of its troops and military equipment from the territory of Moldova in accordance with its 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit commitments.

Mr. President

This conference represents another important opportunity for the States Parties, including the Republic of Moldova, to reaffirm its commitments to the principles laid out in the United Nations Action Plan on SALW. From this stand point, Mr. President, my delegation is ready to bring its contribution to achieving the aims of this Meeting.

Thank You, Mr. President