



# MYANMAR

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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**H.E. U KYAW TINT SWE**

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK**

**ON BEHALF OF**

**THE ASEAN MEMBER STATES**

**AT**

**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**

**NEW YORK  
12 July 2005**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own delegation, Myanmar.

We would first of all like to join others in expressing our warm congratulations to you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this important Meeting.

Illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons (SALW), particularly to non-state actors has profound security, socio-economic and humanitarian dimensions. It can also exacerbate conflicts, undermine rule of law and create a culture of violence. ASEAN shares the view that excessive accumulation, uncontrolled spread and misuse of small arms and light weapons have the potential to destabilize national, regional and global security.

We therefore attach great importance on the Meeting and wish to assure you of our full support in your endeavour to have a successful outcome of this Meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

Illicit flow and uncontrolled spread of SALW have caused great human suffering. The casualties inflicted by SALW are reported to be more than half a million people each year, most of whom are from the vulnerable group of women and children. Combating illicit trafficking in SALW requires a collective regional and international response due to its intricate and transnational nature. The regional measures therefore play a significant role in our endeavour to effectively address this important issue. The implementation of the Programme of Action will thus require concerted action at the national as well as regional and international levels.

As an organization fully committed to regional peace and stability, ASEAN provides the framework for political and security cooperation among its ten member countries. In dealing with the issue of transnational crime, including arms smuggling, ASEAN has established mechanisms such as ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime, the ASEAN Centre for Combating Transnational Crime (ACTC) and ASEANAPOL, as well as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and its Senior Officials Meeting (SOMTC) are the main forums dealing with the fight against the diverse transnational crimes including trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

In view of the close links among terrorism, money laundering, arms smuggling and drug trafficking, ASEAN has been taking a comprehensive and coordinated approach in dealing with these transnational crimes. A Work Programme on the Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime, adopted by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Terrorism on 17 May 2002, covers eight priority areas, including a component of arms smuggling. The Work Programme also identified various cooperative activities such as information exchange, legislation, law enforcement, training, institutional building and extra-regional cooperation. ASEAN is in the process of establishment of a regional database for disseminating information on respective national laws, regulations, bilateral and multilateral treaties or agreements of respective countries. A close networking has also been established among the national Polices of member countries through ASEANAPOL, which deals with the preventive, enforcement and operational aspects of cooperation against transnational crime.

The issue of SALW is also being dealt within the context of ASEAN Security Community adopted by the Ninth ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia on 7 October 2003. The ASEAN Security Community among others envisages the utilization of the existing institutions and mechanisms within ASEAN with a view to strengthening national and regional capacities to counter transnational crimes. The ASEAN Ministers on Transnational Crime, at their meeting in Bangkok in January 2004, reaffirmed their resolve to take a comprehensive and coordinated approach in addressing the various areas of transnational crime. They also agreed to accelerate the implementation of the Work Programme to implement the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime. A number of regional seminars were also conducted in the region to promote awareness of the UN Programme of Action on SALW and to strengthen cooperation to collectively address this issue. In addition, Cambodia and EU have proposed to co-chair an ARF Seminar on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the autumn of 2005.

At the 10<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit held in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic, in November 2004, ASEAN leaders adopted the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP). The Vientiane Action Programme gives priority to the establishment of institutionalized coordination mechanisms among relevant ASEAN bodies to strengthen cooperation in addressing non-traditional security issues and transnational crime.

Mr. Chairman,

ASEAN would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group to negotiate an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons. We believe that the outcome of this Working Group is indeed a significant step forward in the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on SALW adopted in 2001 as well as for the eventual emergence of an international instrument.

The ASEAN countries are of the view that the efforts towards the conclusion of an international instrument to identify and trace illicit SALW are closely associated with other disarmament efforts, especially towards total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, which should also be accorded adequate attention by the international community.

In conclusion, ASEAN member countries would like to underscore the need for close international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects as called for in the Programme of Action. We on our part stand ready to contribute to the implementation process.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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