



AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**SECOND BIENNIAL MEETING OF STATES TO CONSIDER THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ACTION
TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL
ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

11 July 2005

National Statement

**Statement by H.E. John Dauth,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Australia to the United Nations, New York**

(Check against delivery)

Mr Chair

Let me first extend my thanks to you and the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs for your tireless efforts in preparation for this second Biennial Meeting of States to consider implementation of the Small Arms and Light Weapons Program of Action.

I should also say that Australia associates itself completely with the statement of the Pacific Islands Forum to be delivered by my colleague, the Chair of the PIF and Ambassador of Samoa.

Mr Chair

Australia is firmly committed to doing its part to implement the Program of Action. At the national level, Australia has in place some of the most stringent firearms laws and regulations in the world. Australia is also developing a more comprehensive *National Firearms Management System*, to provide for the national tracking of all firearms from the point of import or manufacture to the point of export or destruction.

Australia's region suffers from the scourge of small arms and light weapons proliferation. But the region has taken action.

Australia assisted the Pacific Islands Forum in developing a common regional approach to weapons control (the *Nadi Framework*), which focused on the illicit manufacture of, and trafficking in, firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials. In furthering the *Nadi Framework*, Australia co-sponsored with Japan and the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament a workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) for the South Pacific, which was held in August 2004 in Nadi, Fiji.

Australia provided \$300,000 towards the Papua New Guinea 'Goroka Guns Summit', held last week, and is well-placed to assist with the implementation of the Summit's recommendations. Australia continues to provide practical assistance to East Timor, Fiji and Samoa on stockpile security through the construction of armouries. Stockpile security is also the theme of an ASEAN Regional Forum workshop Australia and Thailand are planning to host shortly.

The region's cooperative approach to combatting the destabilising results of the uncontrolled spread of small arms is perhaps best demonstrated by the work of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). Deployed at the request of the Solomon Islands in July 2003, Australia, RAMSI partners and the people of Solomon Islands have restored law and order through, among other things, the collection and destruction of some 3,600 weapons.

Mr Chair

Australia is encouraged by recent progress at the international level since the last Biennial Meeting of States and welcomes the successful conclusion of negotiations for an international instrument on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons.

Australia is committed to building on this progress. Australia will again run a First Committee resolution on the prevention of the illicit transfer, unauthorised access to and use of man-portable air defence systems (or MANPADS). We will again be seeking consensus on this resolution. Australia also looks forward to working constructively with others on brokering and at the upcoming Review Conference of the Program of Action.