

Press Release

Statement

By

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At

The Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference
To Review Progress made in 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 exchange of views

11 January 2006, New York

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,

(Introduction)

At the outset let me extend my warmest congratulations to you, Ambassador Rowe, for assuming the chairmanship of this Committee. You have already conducted several constructive consultations on an informal basis to facilitate its success, and I assure you of my delegation's full and continuous support as you carry out this important task.

(Japan's position)

Mr. Chairman,

Japan earnestly hopes that sincere and deep discussions will be held at the Review Conference from June to July this year, with regard to what issues the international community should take up and how they should be addressed in order to tackle SALW problems during the next few years, in reviewing the state of implementation at the national, regional and global level over the past five years. I believe good discussions conducted at the BMS1 as well as BMS2 will greatly contribute to that end.

The role to be played by this Prep Com is really significant. We are called upon at this occasion to fully discuss and examine a draft document which, as a recommendation from the Prep Com, should lead up to a final outcome of the Rev Con. Japan intends to actively contribute to that process.

Several important developments have been seen in the past year in the field of SALW. For instance, the negotiation on the international instrument on marking and tracing was successfully concluded last June. And the omnibus resolution on SALW was adopted by consensus again last year at the sixtieth session of the UN General Assembly. Japan is really pleased to have been able to contribute to the process of its adoption together with Colombia and South Africa. It goes without saying that the international community should tackle SALW problems as a unified whole. In the review process for the UN PoA, each Member State should reconfirm

the value of consensus and demonstrate the necessary flexibility in order to reach agreement on the future agenda for addressing SALW.

(Japan's policy and initiatives in preparation for the Rev Con)
Mr. Chairman,

In seeking solutions to SALW problems, great importance should be attached to the "two-pillar approach", which means promoting the international rule-making efforts and the projects on the ground in parallel.

With regard to the rule-making efforts, the discussion should be launched by the group of governmental experts (GGE) on brokering, which will be established after the Rev Con. For that purpose, the GGE should come to an agreement on its mandate at the earliest possible stage and hold intensive discussions on outstanding issues, in order to elaborate a specific path for the international community to follow in this field. Japan is prepared to play an active part in that process.

In addition, Japan, which never exports arms in principle, believes it is essential for each Member State to strengthen arms transfer control with a view to curbing the unregulated trade in SALW. Devoted discussion on arms transfer control has just commenced, and Japan hopes that such discussion will become increasingly active, in order that the international community may come to possess a shared recognition of the importance of this issue.

Mr. Chairman,

Concerning the projects on the ground, Japan has made a proposal requesting that we deepen our understanding of SALW problems and examine how to tackle them with a best-practice approach. In this process, the participation of the NGOs that are engaged in the activities on the ground is indispensable. In analyzing SALW problems through an analysis of the projects on the ground, the demand factor, among others, should be also covered. Japan believes that mere consideration of the political aspect will not suffice in addressing the demand factor. It is also essential to analyze

socio-economic elements which are likely to give rise to the illicit trade in SALW and to formulate an appropriate project as a countermeasure. Japan sincerely hopes that Member States will reach agreement at this session on the participation of NGOs with adequate expertise and experience in the Rev Con.

Japan would like to invite all Member States to have a look at its food-for-thought non-paper circulated in advance, which provides a detailed explanation of Japan's priorities for the discussion of the Rev Com.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.