

9 January 2006

Original: English

**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**

New York, 9-20 January 2006

Working paper submitted by the Netherlands

Preparing for the 2006 Review Conference

Focusing on implementation: a concrete but flexible arrangement

1. The value of the Programme of Action lies to a considerable extent in the promising possibilities for assistance and cooperation it contains. Some progress has been made in that regard, including cooperation on reporting, assistance on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the organization of regional seminars. There is, however, no coordination of these ad hoc arrangements and, more importantly, numerous opportunities to implement the Programme through improved assistance and cooperation have, until now, not been seized. The system of biennial meetings does not suffice if States want seriously to meet the requirement set out in the Programme of Action “to undertake to cooperate and to ensure coordination”.

2. A flexible arrangement could be introduced allowing States in a position to do so and affected States to engage in practical dialogue on experiences, needs and requirements for sustained cooperation and assistance. It is important to note that assistance and cooperation could cover, in principle, every element of the Programme of Action, from national legislation or stockpile security to marking or disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

3. The Review Conference of the Programme of Action should focus on ways to implement the generic commitments the Programme already adopted in 2001. The most important tools for operationalization would be:

(a) The establishment of intersessional meetings in between biennial meetings of States, focusing on assistance and cooperation, where States could build partnerships on the themes identified in the Programme of Action;

(b) The creation of a small, effective implementation support cell, a cost-efficient unit responsible for the management of the Programme of Action assistance and cooperation process;

(c) The creation of a simple sponsorship programme by States in a position to do so, which would enable relevant affected States to be represented at the ministerial level at these meetings.

4. *Basis in the Programme of Action:* for example, section III, para. 2: “States undertake to cooperate and to ensure coordination, complementarity and synergy ... and to encourage the establishment and strengthening of cooperation and partnerships at all levels among international and intergovernmental organizations and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and international financial institutions”.

5. *Implementation:* the system of biennial meetings does not suffice if States seriously want to meet the requirement “to undertake to cooperate and to ensure coordination”. Intersessional meetings on the level of governmental experts would fill this gap. These intersessional meetings could be structured around the themes already identified in the Programme of Action:

- Coordination (sect. III, para. 2)
- Conflict prevention (sect. III, para. 4)
- Capacity-building in legislation, law enforcement, tracing, stockpile management, destruction (sect. III, para. 6)
- Training (sect. III, paras. 7 and 8)
- Examining technologies (sect. III, para. 10)
- Links with drug trafficking, transnational crime and terrorism (sect. III, para. 15)
- Support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (sect. III, para. 16)
- National development programmes (sect. III, para. 17)
- Develop and support research (sect. III, para. 18)
- Other fields.

6. To effectively manage the process of assistance and cooperation in the field of small arms and light weapons, connecting project proposals and donors, taking care of administrative procedures and communications and organizing implementation meetings, a small, cost-efficient implementation support cell could be set up.

7. States in a position to do so could announce funding for this module, and a sponsorship programme, for a secured number of years.
