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Statement

By
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Ambassador
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Before the
First Committee

On
Conventional Weapons

New York, 23 October 2007
Mr. Chairman,

Today while there has been significant progress in banning anti-personnel landmines, and while the 1997 Ottawa Convention continues to be adhered with steady progress in its implementation, 40 states have still not ratified or acceded to this convention and 13 states still produce landmines. As we welcome the tenth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Mine Ban Convention, it is hoped that countries that have not yet ratified or acceded to the convention will look into doing so and join its 155 State Parties.

This November, Jordan will have the honor to host the eighth Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention. States Parties will meet once more to reaffirm their commitments and discuss their experiences and the challenges they had encountered in implementing their obligations. It is hoped that the conference would provide an opportunity for mine-affected countries to voice out their concerns, needs and undertakings, and that the Dead Sea Progress report would bring States Parties and their partners closer towards full implementation of the Convention; thus, allowing us also to move closer towards a mine free world.

In the humanitarian efforts to ban landmines, there remains a need for the international community to complement the steady progress in the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction through the mobilization of more resources and the provision of assistance to landmine-clearance operations and rehabilitation of victims, including their social and economic reintegration, as this may be necessary in assisting many Member States to live up to their obligations under the Convention. The coming conference is an opportunity to reiterate our commitment to finding solutions in this regard.

As a State Party to the Ottawa Convention, Jordan has taken effective steps to comply with the convention's provisions. Having completely destroyed all its stockpiles of its anti-personnel mines in 2003, Jordan hopes that it will be able to satisfy its treaty obligations by May 2009 without having to ask for an extension.

Jordan attaches great importance to the attainment of the universality of the Convention and welcomes the accession of the four new States. Jordan also considers that the accession of both Kuwait and Iraq is of particular importance and hopes that it would
serve as further impetus for other States in the region to follow suit.

As President-designate of the coming review conference, Jordan has joined both the current President of the Meeting of States parties from Australia as well as the preceding President from Croatia in tabling as a "troika the annual resolution on that Convention and hopes it receives the support it warrants by the Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons continues to pose numerous threats on states and regions thereby disrupting peace, security and development and causing grave consequences. Further increasing the problem is the links these illicit weapons have with trans-national organized crime, terrorism and narcotics trafficking, thereby amplifying their danger, and making them a matter of concern for all. Combating this illicit trade and its devastating ramifications as a result necessitates a collective international and regional effort and a concerted response.

Today, the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPOA) remains the main framework through which to address the serious problems resulting from the illicit trade in such weapons. The 2006 Conference to Review the Progress Made in the Implementation (of UNPOA) had represented an opportunity to reiterate our commitment to that Programme. Earlier, the work 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 and the resulting marking and tracing instrument were additional welcomed steps towards finding new ways to strengthen our efforts in this field, as was also the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on brokering and its report.

The next Biennial Conference which is to be held no later than 2008 will hopefully provide us once more with an opportunity to examine how far we have gone in the implementation of the 2001 POA, and where we need to go from there. Progress in this area and enhanced regional and international cooperation are vital since no State alone can address the threats posed by the illicit trade in these arms and weapons.

Thank you Mr. Chairman