Delegation of the Russian Federation

Implementation of a possible ATT

The Final Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2012 UN Conference on ATT
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We would like to commend the PrepCom Chair, Ambassador Roberto Garcia Moritan for the working paper on implementation issues as his contribution to the discussion. The document gives all of us food for thought, though, as I noted in my first intervention, it is not easy to discuss implementation when measures to be implemented are far from being agreed. Nevertheless, we would like to make some comments.

First of all, the Russian delegation fully supports an idea of establishing, and, where necessary, further updating national legal systems and practices in the area of conventional arms. However the practical steps on its implementation contained in the Chair’s document require, in our view, serious consideration and correction.

Firstly, in regard to national systems, the document lacks key word – control. We are convinced that we should speak of national control systems, including strict governmental controls over all activities related to conventional arms transfers.

The Russian delegation respects the point of view expressed by a number of states that domestic arms circulation should not be subject to a possible instrument. Nevertheless, we are convinced that this aspect must be taken into account, since risks of diversion to illegal markets exist at all stages of arms’ “lifecycle” and are not limited to the field of international transfers only.

Secondly, the Russian delegation means under title of “implementation” a set of concrete obligations and measures that should be jointly elaborated and adopted by consensus in the framework of an international instrument and later on introduced into national legislations and practices. The Chair’s document contains paragraphs with a general reference to measures aimed at preventing diversion to illicit markets or
unintended users. We fully support this idea, but Chair's paper lacks the list of such measures. For that reason we proposed and still consider it necessary to jointly develop measures aimed at addressing a specific task of preventing arms diversion to "grey and black markets".

Here I would like to draw your attention to the Russian document that was made public and distributed at the previous session. It specified a number of suggestions on measures that, in our view, should be discussed as a priority. We expect the Chair to take our opinion into account, as well as we expect substantial reaction from the PrepCom participants.

We also paid attention that secondary aspects or elements that have little to do with an idea of an ATT are reflected in the Chairs' document in much greater detail. Such detailing seems excessive. Among those there are such as record-keeping, law-enforcement practices, even not mentioning corruption that for some reason is linked exclusively to brokering. We also need to consider thoroughly the issues of transparency, as well as organizational and financial aspects of creating an implementation support unit, not leaving out the question whether we need it at all.

We can not agree either with the proposed rationale of dividing states to importers and exporters. An important issue of re-export is ignored here while we cannot neglect the fact that any importer is in practice a potential exporter, or, to be more exact, re-exporter of acquired armaments. Besides, re-export is one of the areas, where lack of due controls on part of the governments of both the importer and the initial exporter, paves way to higher risks of diversion. The Russian side proposed more than once to deal with issues related to re-export. Our invitation to discuss it remains in force.

In general we approach an idea of an ATT on the premise that it should not divide states, but rather be a factor of consolidating international efforts, uniting the PrepCom participants for solving true problems related with uncontrolled proliferation of conventional arms and their diversion to illicit markets.