2012 Declaration

A shared commitment to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects

1. We, the States participating in the Second Review Conference of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, gathered here in New York from 27 August to 7 September 2012, reaffirm our support and commitment to implement all the provisions of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, with a view to ending the suffering caused by the illicit trade in and uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Principles and Objectives

2. We emphasize that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects continues to sustain conflict, exacerbate violence, contribute to the displacement of civilians, undermine respect for international humanitarian law, fuel crime, terrorism and piracy, and impede the provision of humanitarian assistance to victims of armed conflict.

3. We reaffirm the validity of the Programme of Action as a global framework to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, and remain convinced that its full implementation is essential for furthering peace, securing lives, and improving livelihoods of people often living in deprivation and fear.

4. We also reaffirm our respect for and commitment to international law and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

5. We remain mindful of the primary responsibility of Governments for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

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6. We welcome the considerable progress that has been made in implementing the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument since their adoption, including on the establishment, strengthening and enforcement of laws, regulations and administrative procedures on small arms, the development of national action plans, the establishment of national points of contact and the strengthening of regional cooperation; as well as progress made in implementing a wide range of specific measures such as on stockpile security, the collection and destruction of small arms, the provision of marking equipment and technical training.
7. We stress, however, that challenges and obstacles still remain to the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

8. We underline the need to follow up on the discussions held and recommendations made at previous meetings on the Programme of Action, including the Third Biennial Meeting of States (2008), Fourth Biennial Meeting of States (2010), and Meeting of Governmental Experts (2011), and on related topics taken up by the General Assembly in the past decade such as the negative humanitarian and development impact of the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons (A/Res/60/68) and the reduction and prevention of armed violence (A/Res/63/23, A/64/228).

9. We support the further development and implementation of norms and measures at the national, regional and global levels to reinforce and coordinate efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

10. We reaffirm the continued necessity for international cooperation and assistance, including the provision of technical and financial assistance, to support the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

11. We underscore the pressing need to further integrate gender perspectives into relevant aspects of Programme of Action implementation and the importance of evidence-based research to include gender and age aggregation.

12. We highlight the benefits of partnerships between all stakeholders, including civil society organizations and industry.

13. We resolve to further strengthen the linkages between combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and issues such as counter-terrorism, fighting organized crime, human trafficking, drug trafficking, piracy, armed violence and the illicit exploitation of natural resources.

14. We renew our pledge to rid the world of the scourge brought upon it by the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons. We renew our commitment to the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, and aim to achieve clear and tangible results by the third review conference in 2018, in accordance with the implementation plans that accompany this declaration.

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