Statement by H. E. Ambassador Eshagh Al Habib
Chargé d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
Before the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
New York, 28 August, 2012

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Madam President,
I would like to congratulate you on your election to preside over this important conference and assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation. I am confident that under your able leadership this conference will be crowned with success.

I wish to associate myself with the statement made yesterday by distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the Program of Action (PoA) as the global framework to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and renews its respect for and commitment to its purposes and principles.

We also strongly support full, effective, balanced and non-discriminatory implementation of this Program of Action, as well as the International Tracing Instrument (ITI).
In line with the Program of Action, we believe that preventing and combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, including identifying and solving the problems associated with such illicit trade is exclusively the responsibility of each State.

While taking into account the close link between terrorism, organized crime and trafficking in drugs and the illicit trade in small arms, we also underline the need to combat this illicit trade simultaneously from both a supply and demand perspective.

We are convinced that as long as the situations nurturing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and problems associated with such illicit trade continue to exist, the demand for illicit weapons will increase.

In view of that, in order to find a viable long-term solution to this multifaceted challenge, adoption of a comprehensive and non-discriminatory approach is not an option, but a must.

It is also evident that over-production and supply of these weapons facilitates their entry into regions of tension, and accordingly, any measure in combating illicit trade in such weapons would be futile without a sharp reduction of arms production by major arms-producing and supplying countries.

Likewise, and taking into account the nature and scope of the illicit trade in SALW and related problems, it is also obvious that no country alone can confront it. Accordingly, and as emphasized by PoA, international cooperation and particularly providing technical assistance to States at the forefront of fight against the illicit trade in SALW and drug trafficking is the key to success in this campaign.

By the same token, rendering technical, financial and other assistance, in building national capacity in the areas of marking, record-keeping and tracing, and also to examine technologies that would improve the tracing and detection of illicit small arms and light weapons, as well as measures to facilitate the transfer of such technologies is essential in the effective implementation of the ITI.

For that reason and as an essential factor in the full, balanced, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of PoA and ITI, we stress the importance of technology transfer to developing countries.
We call upon the Conference to address this issue as the highest priority, aimed at ensuring non-discriminatory and unconditional transfer and availability of technologies required for the full implementation of these two important documents.

In this connection, we strongly support the incorporation of proposals contained in the NAM Working Paper in the outcome document of the Conference.

Madam President,

The Islamic Republic of Iran, because of tensions and conflicts in its neighborhood which is combined with illegal activities such as illicit trade in SALW, organized crimes, terrorism and drug trafficking, has incurred lots of damages arising from these activities.

The fact that Iran has offered more than 4000 of its law enforcement personnel as martyrs in this fight is only an example of the efforts undertaken and losses sustained by my country to combat the illicit trade in SALW and the problems associated with such illicit trade.

In order to effectively implement the PoA and ITI, we have put in place appropriate laws, regulations and administrative procedures and established necessary mechanisms for providing policy guidelines and coordination between concerned national bodies and made significant progress in combating the illicit trade in SALW and the associated problems, in particular drug trafficking.

In this connection, the Islamic republic of Iran, in addition to creation of a Central National Commission, as the national coordinating body responsible for policy guidance, research and monitoring the efforts to prevent and combat the illicit trade in SALW, has established and designated a National Point of Contact to act as liaison between my government and other States on matters related to the implementation of the PoA.

Moreover, Iran has also established bilateral and trilateral arrangements with some neighboring countries in order to cooperate in the effective prevention, combating and eradication of the illicit trade in SALW and the problems associated with such illicit trade.
In this regard, we have paid a special attention also to addressing the root causes of illicit trade in SALW and the problems associated with such illicit trade at the regional level, in particular through investing in development programs and reconstruction plans in our neighboring countries.

**Madam President,**

My delegation underlines the importance of full commitment to the spirit and letter of the PoA, ITI and the Resolution 66/47 of the UNGA, according to which, the Conference should conduct an actual review of the progress made in the implementation of the PoA and ITI; identify the challenges in their implementation; and put forward practical proposals on how to remove the impediments and how to implement them in an effective, balanced, and non-selective manner, and based on the priorities agreed upon by consensus.

In this regard, we would like to join other delegates who called for avoiding the introduction of subjects which fall beyond the scope of the PoA and ITI, and are cautious against any proposal aimed at the proliferation of PoA-ITI-related meetings and changing the voluntary nature of reporting under PoA and ITI or establishing complicated templates for the submission of national reports.

We would also like to emphasize the need for full observance of State-driven and consensus-based nature of the PoA process as its main and the most important characteristics.

As we agreed in 2001, combating illicit trade should be done in "all its aspects" and one of the most important aspects is recognizing the need to establish and maintain controls over private ownership of these deadly weapons. In our view after 11 years of the adoption of POA, now this is the right time to address this important issue.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that as we demonstrated our collective determination to prevent and combat the illicit trade in SALW through the adoption of the Program of Action in 2001, in this Conference we need to renew our commitment to mobilize the necessary political will for the full, effective and balanced implementation of this essential document.

*I thank you Madam President.*