Madam President,
Distinguished participants in the Meeting,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Since the adoption of the Programme of Action in 2001, there has been consistent progress in the area of control of SALW. A lot has been and is being done in that area at the national, regional and global levels.

However, problems related to SALW trafficking still persist in various regions of the world and even become more pressing in some of them. Russia fully shares concerns of the international community about uncontrolled SALW proliferation. It is illegal arms used by illegal paramilitary groups, terrorists and criminals that is often a cause of many evils, such as violations of human rights, crimes against civilian population and even acts of genocide.

Hence, the continued relevance of our common objective of combating that threat. The leading and coordinating role in countering SALW trafficking in the world should, by all means, continue to belong to the UN as the only universal international forum providing a framework for devising agreed measures to address the problem. In that context, the Programme of Action, as well as the International Tracing Instrument can play even greater role than they play now.
It is essential to establish clear priorities with regard to what else can and should be done in order to implement those documents and what additional joint efforts should be undertaken to make the world we live in a better and safer place. This is the only way we can succeed in combating SALW trafficking.

To ensure the right choice of priorities, we propose to follow the approach envisaged in the Programme itself, that is to focus on the aspect of prevention of the illicit trade in SALW. It is much easier to prevent the "leakage" of arms to grey and black markets than to remove them from those markets. Besides, that does not require any significant additional resources.

There are a few simple rules which most of you, if not all, are aware of. There is no need to list them here as they were repeatedly articulated by the Russian delegation. I will refer to just one of them which we consider of critical importance. Let us agree on a ban on access to SALW by all non-state actors in the hands of which such arms and weapons become a cause of numerous sufferings for innocent people.

We have in mind, first of all, illegal paramilitary groups, terrorists and criminals. But we also oppose the practice of buying and selling SALW without a proper State control in general.

Specifically, we stand for transforming the aforementioned rule into a global political obligation to be observed by all. Of course, that will not solve all the problems related to SALW trafficking but will render the illegal access to arms much more difficult.

Our efforts will be even more effective if they are complemented by appropriate steps at the national level. We firmly believe that primary responsibility for controlling the trade in SALW and preventing their diversion must rest with the governments of countries where those arms and weapons are located.
In that context, attention should be focused on strengthening domestic SALW controls. If each country makes, individually, every effort to reduce the risk of arms falling into the wrong hands, we all benefit from that.

Such efforts should, of course, be complemented by collective steps in bilateral, regional and multilateral formats.

We stand ready for a joint constructive work on various aspects of the problem of uncontrolled SALW proliferation on both a bilateral basis and at international fora. We can also provide, upon request, an expert advice and assistance on all aspects of control of arms in question and to share our experience in creating an effective legal framework in that area.

Regarding the activities of the Russian Federation related to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the Tracing Instrument, they are described in detail in our national report for the year 2011 submitted earlier to the UN Secretariat.