Statement of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
On international cooperation and assistance  
At the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider 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, 15 June 2010)

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

Mr. Chairman,

As it has been rightly and clearly recognized in the PoA, States have the primary responsibility for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW) in all its aspects.

At the same time, since the challenge posed by the illicit trade in SALW is multifaceted and involves other dimensions, including terrorism, organized crime and trafficking in drugs, international cooperation and assistance, including financial and technical assistance, is vital to support and facilitate concerned efforts at national, sub-regional and regional levels. Needless to say that in providing such assistances, the characteristics, scope and magnitude of the problem in each State or the region concerned shall be taken into account.

We are of the View that in the field of international cooperation and assistance, two issues are of utmost importance: 1) arrangement of specialist training on small arms stockpile management and security, 2) facilitation of transferring the technologies that improve the fight against drug trafficking as well as tracing and detection of the illicit trade in SALW.

While it has been clearly stated in the PoA that upon request, States and relevant international or regional organizations in a position to do so, should provide assistance to combat the illicit trade in SALW linked to drug trafficking, transnational organized crime and terrorism, it is sad to say that imposition of restrictions to such assistances, in particular to transfer of required technologies continue to exist.

As I proposed yesterday, our meeting should address this issue by including a paragraph in the outcome document of our meeting, reaffirming commitment to the removal of all such restrictions and stressing the need for facilitating the transfer of technologies required for tracing and detection of illicit trade in SALW.

Mr. Chairman,

Addressing the root causes of the illicit trade in SALW is an important issue. In this regard, I would like to point out the decisive role of overproduction and supply of SALW in their illicit trade and the emergence, intensification and continuity of conflicts. It is obvious that without taking into account, in a proportionate manner, the supply of and the demand for SALW, our efforts to combat their illicit trade will lead nowhere.

In view of that, while respecting the views proposing the idea of “common and shared responsibility” in addressing the illicit trade in SALW, as expressed in some non-papers presented to our meeting, I would like to take advantage of the principles of International Environmental Law and to propose the concept of “common but differentiated responsibility” in this regard. It is a common responsibility, because it deals with the common concern of humankind and it is differentiated responsibility, because it takes into account the different contributions of States to this problem, and the different financial and technological sources and structural capacity they command to tackle this problem. Indeed, it would not be fair to hold a developing country in a conflict with limited financial and technical sources, responsible at the same degree of countries that are major producers and have all required resources.

While all developing states should make their utmost efforts to combat the illicit trade in SALW, relevant regional and international organizations and other countries, in particular major producing States should assist and support those efforts. In this connection, major producers can have both “negative assistance”, through reducing their production, and “positive assistance” by extending financial and technical assistance to the countries in need.

Thank you.