Distinguished Mr. Chairman,
Esteemed Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the delegation of the Russian Federation I am thankful to Mr. Chairman for giving us the floor to address such an esteemed audience on the issue of the progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects since this document was adopted in 2001.

Yes indeed, since then a certain progress in its implementation has been made. Quite a lot has been done and is being done in this regard at the national, regional and global levels.

However, the problem of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in different regions of the World still remains and poses a real security destabilization threat, and somewhere it even becomes a burning issue. The Russian Federation shares in full the concerns of the international community pertaining to uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons. These are just illegal weapons in possession of unlawful armed groups, terrorists and criminals that become a source of numerous human sufferings, human rights and international humanitarian law violations, as well as criminal offences against civil population.
Therefore our common goal to challenge this threat remains topical. And there is no doubt that the leading and coordinating role in resistance to illegal trade in small arms and light weapons should hereinafter remain with the United Nations as the only universal international forum with the capability to secure coordinated measures to resolve the said issue. In this context the Programme of Action as well as the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons are able to play much more sufficient role than they do today.

The most essential task nowadays is to clearly determine priority tasks, in other words, what can be and should be done for the implementation of these documents’ regulations, what further joint efforts should be undertaken for a more secure world. Just in this way we shall be able to succeed in combating illegal trade in small arms and light weapons.

From our perspective among these priorities there should be the measures as follows:

- prohibition on transfer of all types of small arms and light weapons to entities not authorized by Governments of recipient States;

- strict regulation and direct control by States within the territory of their jurisdiction over brokering activities related with export of arms and weapons and possible minimization of the number of licensed brokers;

- prohibition on re-export or diversion of imported small arms and light weapons without written authorization by State - their initial exporter;
- termination of small arms and light weapons manufacture under expired licenses or without licenses granted by States-owners of their manufacturing technologies including cessation of the practice of modernization of arms and weapons previously produced under license without consent of their original designer and exporting them as someone’s own product. Arms and weapons manufactured in this illicit way are mainly being exported and can be diverted to illicit markets. In case of expired licenses for production, trade or any other proliferation of small arms and light weapons such licenses should be considered null and void if anything contrary is not provided under them while being granted.

Such a measure as prohibition on transfer of small arms and light weapons to unauthorized non-state actors is worth to be considered separately.

Today there is no universal multilateral agreement providing prohibition on transfers of small arms and light weapons to the said actors.

Specified restrictions are provided just with regard to man-portable air defense missile systems (MANPADS). Relative political obligations were undertaken within the framework of OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), Wassenaar Arrangements (Wassenaar Arrangements on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual Use Goods and Technologies) and APEC (Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation).

However, from our perspective, not just MANPADS but many other types of light weapons alike: grenade launchers, portable antitank missile systems and portable infantry rocket-assisted flamethrower
systems, too, constitute a threat with regard to the great demand of them among terrorists. The reason for the latter are the characteristics of such systems – their portability, light weight, high damaging effect and accuracy. Therefore, a universal ban on small arms and light weapons supply to non-state actors and entities would cut off one of the channel of their diversion to illicit market and in practice that would meet the demands of national security of each and every State.

The above measures proposed by the Russian Federation are not burdensome financially and do not require additional allocations. The key issue in this regard is availability of political goodwill.

Thank you for your attention.