CZECH REPUBLIC

Statement by

Mr. René ZELENÝ
Deputy Director of the UN Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

at

the Thematic Debate on the International Tracing Instrument of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States

New York, 17 June 2014

Check against delivery
Mr. Moderator,

I would first of all like to thank you, as well as your predecessor, for your efforts in preparing our deliberations on the International Tracing Instrument, to which implementation the Czech Republic remains fully committed.

We fully associate ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

My country has a long history of manufacturing small arms and light weapons. As such, it is aware of its responsibility not only vis-à-vis its own citizens, but also towards the people of other countries across the world. Therefore, the Czech Republic pays great attention to providing and implementing effective national legislation. My country has created a robust system of registration and regulation of the arms trade, which effectively prevents the transfer of legal weapons into illicit channels. Companies that produce and trade in weapons must obtain a license issued by the state authorities and fulfill obligations imposed by the law. In the case of trade in weapons that qualify as military equipment the state authorities assess and approve every individual transaction.

The Czech Republic regularly announces amnesties for illegal weapons possession allowing for the withdrawal of thousands of weapons from the illegal sphere. During the last amnesty in 2009 almost 8,000 weapons were withdrawn. Another amnesty is planned for the second half of this year. Furthermore, my country, as a member of the Permanent International Commission for Firearms Testing (C.I.P.), has built an effective system for the marking of weapons. This system is entirely controlled by a state authority.

The Czech Republic monitors the movement of weapons not only across borders, but also within its national territory. The internal shipment of weapons amounts to some 100 pieces every year. Some trucks are already equipped with a GPS tracking system and have their movements monitored by the police. The police can thus, if necessary, instruct the truck to depart from its trajectory to prevent entering locations where an accident has happened or where other danger may be present. During this year, all trucks transporting weapons will be equipped with a GPS tracking system.

Currently, the Czech Republic is preparing an update of the system of weapons registration. Weapons held by natural persons are currently registered in an electronic register managed by the police. Weapons held by arms companies are registered by the companies themselves, and the police regularly review these records. From July 1st 2014, a single electronic arms register will be put in place, gathering data on all weapons in the territory of the Czech Republic. The unified register will simplify the method of registering weapons for arms companies and will grant the police a permanent overview of all weapons, their sales, transportation, etc., in the territory of the Czech Republic.

Thank you

(Check against delivery)