Statement by H.E. Mrs. Kitty Sweeb, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of SURINAME on behalf of the CARICOM

At the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider 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, 6 June 2016

Agenda Item 6

Mr. Chairman, I have the honor to speak on behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on agenda item 6.

We offer congratulations to you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. We are pleased that a member of our sub-region is in the Chair and you can be assured of our support throughout our work during this BMS6.

For CARICOM, agenda item 6, as reflected in draft 4 of the prospective outcome document, is forward looking and we are pleased that a number of issues of particular significance to the region are addressed in said draft.

Stockpile Management and Inclusion of Ammunition

Mr. Chairman, CARICOM recognizes the value of effective and proper security and management of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons, in particular, in settings of armed violence and transnational organized crime. We continue to stress that a comprehensive approach to stockpile management should include ammunition. Having listened to interventions made during the informal consultations, it is our understanding that many other States would also wish to have the issue of ammunition adequately addressed in the outcome document of this meeting. CARICOM therefore welcomes constructive efforts to advance our deliberations on this very important matter.

Cross border cooperation

CARICOM is of the firm belief that regional cooperation is a key aspect in supporting States toward fulfilling their obligations deriving from the UN PoA and ITI. We therefore take this opportunity to reiterate that the many porous borders in our region is a hindrance to our effective implementation of the POA. Such permeable borders present a strain on resources, coupled with the inadequate technical capacity to monitor the flow of SALW through these borders. In this connection, we would support firm language to address cross border cooperation, such as “effective and robust cross border cooperation at national, sub regional and regional levels”.

Reporting

Mr. Chairman, CARICOM is of the view that national reports are key to measuring and, ultimately, assessing the implementation of the UN PoA. To assist in this area, the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) will in July 2016,
through the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) donor-funding, implement a regional project to strengthen the capacity of National Points of Contact (NPCs) in implementing the UN PoA and ATT, and other related arms control instruments, through technical training programmes. One of the prospective outcomes of this project is to increase the number of national reports submitted by CARICOM Member States.

2030 Development Agenda
CARICOM welcomes the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, particularly Goal 16 and Target 16.4 on illicit arms flows. As SIDS, we are all too aware that the sustainable development of our sub region is inextricably linked to the peace and security of our people. We therefore encourage further discussion on the synergies and complementarity of the interaction between the UN PoA and SGD 16.4, bearing in mind the direct correlation between armed violence and development in the CARICOM region.

Synergies with ATT
Mr. Chairman, CARICOM is cognizant of the complementarities between the ATT and the UN PoA. In light of our capacity constraints, CARICOM is seeking to identify practical measures that allow harmonized implementation of the ATT (to which all 14 CARICOM States have signed and 12 ratified) and the PoA, to assist in fulfilling our legally-binding obligations under the Treaty.

Gender and the Role of Women
CARICOM welcomes reference to gender dimensions as it relates to the impact of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We support the reference in draft 4 of the prospective outcome document which encourages the collection of disaggregated data on gender and small arms and light weapons.

In addition, we believe that women possess unique experiences, skills and perspectives to bring to policy-making tables, which can ensure that their needs are addressed in discussions on arms control, and rightly reflect the needs on the ground. For this reason, we are pleased with references in the draft 4 of the prospective outcome document to General Assembly resolution 65/69 on Women, Disarmament, Non-proliferation and Arms Control and subsequent resolutions on that question, as well as Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and 2242 (2015).

Finally, Mr. Chairman, CARICOM will continue to actively engage in this process and we look forward to work toward building on the agreements made at the 2012 Review Conference, BMS5 and MGE2 as we look ahead to a successful Third Review Conference in 2018.

Thank you.

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY.