UK Statement
Sixth Biennial Meeting of States on the UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in all its Aspects

International Co-operation and Assistance for the full and effective implementation of the UNPoA and ITI
Mr Chair, the United Kingdom remains fully committed to the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects (UNPoA). We believe that international cooperation and assistance is vital in ensuring the effective implementation of both the UNPoA and International Tracing Instrument.

The UK aligns itself with the Statement presented on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. We would like to make a few additional points in our national capacity.

Since we last met at BMS5 in 2014, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) has entered into force with overwhelming support from States. We welcome the inclusion of small arms and light weapons in the scope of the ATT and remain committed to its universalisation and global implementation. We cooperate with international partners to ensure that the ATT can deliver the expected step-change in the rules-based international system governing conventional arms control.

The UK is committed to providing assistance to reduce the drivers of instability in conflict-affected countries. We are helping those countries where the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is causing the most damage. The UK Government has committed over £1 billion to be delivered through a cross-government Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF), under the strategic direction of the National Security Council. The CSSF brings together under one mechanism the UK’s contribution to multilateral peacekeeping, security and defence activities and includes a larger budget for programmes in countries at risk of instability.
The Foreign and Commonwealth Office also funds projects through the Counter Proliferation Programme (CPP), which aims to support and strengthen the international system of counter proliferation treaties, regimes and organisations and work towards their effective implementation.

Since BMS5, the CPP has provided over £600,000 towards projects focused on conventional arms control. These include:

- Efforts to address the flow of illicit small arms and light weapons in Libya, and across Libyan borders into the wider Sahel region and the Middle East;
- Building capacity for universalisation and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty;
- Looking at ways to strengthen the capacity of UN Sanctions Panels of Experts to monitor arms embargoes;
- Assisting States in strengthening conventional arms controls;
- Strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations on the Arms Trade Treaty.

This year, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is committing a further £1.2million for arms management and destruction projects in priority countries that are on the OECD DAC list of Official Development Assistance recipients.

We also continue to cooperate with regional and multilateral partners, including the Multinational Small Arms and Ammunition Group (MSAG).
Finally, Mr Chair, the UK has continued its support to the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) and recognises the importance of its role in conventional arms work across the world. We provided £50,000 for UNSCAR’s activities at the end of last year.

Thank you, Mr. Chair