



**Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) on the UN Programme of Action on small arms (PoA)
19-23 March 2012**

**Side Event Summary
Group of Interested States (GIS) in practical disarmament measures
21 March 2012**

This meeting was designed to offer practical examples on how the international community can cooperate to implement UNPoA.

To start, an update on matching needs and resources on small arms was provided by Daniel Prins, the Chief of the Conventional Arms Branch, UNODA. He reported that there a new cycle of national reports on UNPoA implementation are forthcoming. In the current cycle, which requires that States identify needs regarding SALW, 30 States have submitted reports and more are expected. Of these, 10 have requested funding. All of these requests are compiled within "Matching Needs with Resources," a UNODA service publication that is intended to help facilitate financial assistance to these States. As all needs are identified in one document, it makes it easier for donor States to find and identify which programs they find fit their foreign policy and would like to contribute to. Mr. Prins finished by encouraging States to contact UNODA in these endeavours.

Claire Elias of the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations introduced the next section of the event, which was a report on implementation of UNPoA assistance programmes in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia. She reported that Australia was proud to support these programmes and they are representative of the type of gains that can be made in stockpile management and surplus destruction.

Dr. Jose Ikongo spoke of the measures taken to implement the UNPoA in the Democratic Republic of Congo. DRC has been involved in armed conflict for decades and had suffered 500 million deaths over the past 20 years. As its 10 neighbouring countries also host armed conflicts, illicit SALW constitutes a major threat to peace and security in the region (and these threats are not kept isolated by borders). The objectives of the assistance programme in the DRC are: stockpile management, surplus destruction, strengthening the capacity of law enforcement, assessment and repair of armouries, construction of new armouries, marking of small arms and the creation of local branches of the National Commission on SALW in all provinces. Photographs accompanied the presentation, showing work done in DRC towards these objectives. So far, the programme has achieved tangible successes at a cost of \$720,000 USD over 8 months, but Dr. Ikongo calls on donor states to consider funding the project to ensure its continuation.

Chris Loughran from the Mine Advisory Group (MAG) spoke of efforts his NGO made in support of UNPoA. In DRC, he identified work done towards the objectives outlined above. In Somalia, they are working on armory assessments, armory rehabilitation and construction, destruction of surplus weapons, and building state capacity. In these projects, one of the goals is to avoid duplication of efforts. Mr. Loughran finished by reflecting on their work. Some of the conclusions: NGOs are providers of technical support; there great value in technical needs assessments conducted by experts and, when properly identified, there is an enhanced impact; and, longer term projects are more effective.

Eric Berman and Kerry Maze of the Small Arms Survey finished the event by reporting on their work on regional organisations. At the Review Conference, Small Arms Survey will launch a handbook on regional organisations. Currently, they have identified 50 regional organisations that address small arms and are working with them to accurately characterise their contributions for the handbook. They want States to know which regional organisations they will be able to work with on small arms issues. Some of the considerations that are being looked at in the continued refinement of the handbook: commitments versus competencies; projects versus progress; and competition versus cooperation.