



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

Summary Report: Plenary Session: Afternoon – 20 March 2012

Delegations Making Statements: **Algeria, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belize, Cuba, Egypt, the European Union, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Madagascar, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, United States** and **Venezuela**.

The future of the UNPoA was the topic of this afternoon's discussion. Follow-up mechanisms and the scope of UNPoA were frequently discussed in this session. **Bangladesh, Armenia, Tunisia, and Madagascar** reminded member States of the devastating effects of illicit SALW on political and economic development, security and human rights. **Belize** stressed that illicit SALW was a complex problem with many dimensions and emerging aspects, highlighted the link between illicit SALW and transnational organised crime and asserted that this needed further attention from the international community. The provision of financial and technical assistance to States affected by illicit SALW was called for by **Tunisia** and **Madagascar**. Further, **Madagascar** reported that it is hosting Interpol to investigate strategies to combat SALW and strengthen national capacities. **Sweden** noted that assessing progress includes considering how to strengthen UNPoA, as well as addressing its shortcomings.

Most delegations expressed support for the submission of a working paper on follow-up mechanisms and stated that its proposals warranted further discussion. The key proposals were explained by the delegation of **Japan** in its statement. **Italy** supports the current follow-up mechanism. **Cuba** stated that the mobilisation of resources to enhance international cooperation was more pressing than discussions on follow-up mechanisms.

An area of disagreement centered on the amount of meetings to be planned in the future. While many delegations expressed their desire to schedule additional meetings focused on specific, technical topics, the **United States** was the most outspoken opponent of this strategy. The **United States** took to the floor a second time to further explain its position of limiting the amount of meetings on UNPoA, reasoning that both the UN and member States suffered from "meeting fatigue" and that this placed an unnecessary burden on delegation. The **United States** recalled that the Meeting of Governmental Experts (MGE) was created as a response to the inadequate progress made at the Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) and, therefore, should not simply be added in addition to the BMS. Instead, the BMS should be the proper forum for government experts to explore specific topics. Additionally, the progress and effectiveness of regional meetings on UNPoA was cited as a reason that these meetings should be further utilised.

Regarding the scope of UNPoA, many states supported widening it to include other critical elements, while a few (**Egypt, Cuba, Venezuela, Pakistan**) reiterated the need for consensus and stated that UNPoA, as it currently exists, should be effectively implemented before looking to expand its purview. Stockpile management and surplus disposal was cited as a priority by **The European Union, Sweden, Japan, France** and **Norway**. **India** specifically stated that stockpile management may be more of a regional concern and was something that should not necessarily be addressed in UNPoA.

The inclusion of ammunition to UNPoA was deemed critical to its effectiveness and enhancing security by **Mexico, Norway** and **Sweden**. **Mexico** specifically stated the second Review Conference should consider annexing ammunition to UNPoA, but noted that a great amount of political will was needed to accomplish this. The **United States** specifically stated that UNPoA was not the proper forum for regulating the transfer of ammunition.

Venezuela specifically took the floor to respond to calls for additional elements to be included in UNPoA, which they termed a “serious debate.” For **Venezuela**, the Review Conference went far beyond simply reviewing UNPoA and now focused on the suggestion of new implementations. This is problematic specifically for developing countries that already have difficulties implementing existing UNPoA elements. The concern is that by striving to include too much, the UNPoA is destined to be ineffectively implemented. **Venezuela** concluded by stating it fully supported the implementation of UNPoA as it exists and that the way forward consists of full implementation of these prior commitments.

Further statements of interest made by delegations:

- Supports the inclusion of SALW in the UN Register of Conventional Arms (**Netherlands, Sweden**)
- Supports the six-year cycle (**Netherlands, United States, Switzerland**)
- Welcomes the participation of NGOs and civil society (**Armenia, Netherlands**). For the **Netherlands**, the role of women in UNPoA related issues is important and their inclusion should be enhanced at all levels
- Supports implementation of the International Tracing Instrument (**European Union, Bangladesh, Cuba, Norway**)
- Expressed the need for the inclusion of practical benchmarks to monitor future progress (**Germany, France, European Union**)
- Self-assessment and peer review mechanisms should be explored (**European Union**)
- Coordination should be improved in order to eliminate waste (**Sweden**)
- **Armenia** reported it had adopted several national measures to combat SALW and now has a strong legislative base. Their delegation asserted that other States should take similar measures and reiterated the importance of regional cooperation.
- **Russia** stated the importance of regulating MANPADS

The afternoon session was adjourned early. Delegations were asked to make statements in regards to the International Tracing Instrument. Both **Mexico** and the **United States** stated in response that they would like to, but were unprepared to deliver their statements today (and suggested the same may be true for other delegations).