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Provisional

President: Mr. Bessho. (Japan)

Members:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
China	Mr. Wu Haitao
Egypt	Mr. Awad
Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
France	Mr. Delattre
Italy	Mr. Lambertini
Kazakhstan	Mr. Sadykov
Russian Federation.	Mr. Iliichev
Senegal	Mr. Ciss
Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Allen
United States of America.	Ms. Sison
Uruguay.	Mr. Bermúdez Álvarez

Agenda

Small arms

Report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons (S/2017/1025)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Small arms

Report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons (S/2017/1025)

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/1025, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons.

I now give the floor to Ms. Nakamitsu.

Ms. Nakamitsu: At the outset, please allow me to express my gratitude to Japan for convening this meeting on the issue of small arms and light weapons and for giving me this opportunity to brief the Security Council. I welcome the Council's commitment to considering small arms on a regular basis.

At a time of deepening regional tensions, expanding terrorist and criminal networks and traditional and non-traditional conflicts wreaking havoc on communities, it is indeed important that Council members are meeting to discuss one of the key determinants of crises — small arms, light weapons and their ammunition. In that context, I am pleased to offer some remarks this afternoon, including some reflections on the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/1025) just circulated to Council members.

Given the wide-ranging impact of the misuse and illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons, an earlier report of the Secretary-General from 2015 (S/2015/289) recommended that the Security Council consistently address the arms situation when considering both geographic and thematic issues on its agenda. I can only reiterate that recommendation here today. The issue of small arms and light weapons is so essential to the full spectrum of the Council's work, that this organ requested the Secretary-General, through resolution 2220 (2015), to include in reports and briefings on country-specific situations more comprehensive and

detailed information and recommendations relating to the impact of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. I would certainly support that practice and encourage broader and deeper mainstreaming of relevant arms and ammunition considerations into the Council's work.

While the Council has addressed small arms in the framework of its thematic and country-specific agenda items, its decision to take up this matter as a stand-alone agenda item, first in 1999, has created a new avenue that allows for an inclusive and comprehensive approach to small arms. This inclusive approach is vital given the relevance of small arms to a range of contexts — from arms embargoes, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), child soldiers and counter-terrorism, to the protection of civilians in armed conflict and transnational organized crime. The multidimensional and cross-cutting nature of small arms is indisputable. The biennial reports of the Secretary-General, issued in 2008 (S/2008/258), 2011 (S/2011/255), 2013 (S/2013/503), 2015 and now 2017, offer a wealth of reflections that demonstrate just how critical small arms, light weapons and their ammunition are in the context of threats to international peace and security.

While the focus of the report of the Secretary-General and my remarks here today is on small arms, recent Council discussions on the use of heavy weapons and their impact on civilians are also demonstrative of the increasing salience of addressing conventional arms more broadly in contemporary conflicts. Furthermore, in many countries, attacks using improvised explosives now kill and injure civilians and combatants more than any other type of weapon. Effectively dealing with this growing threat requires a comprehensive approach, including action by the Security Council. I would encourage Council members to continue considering the role of all types of conventional arms in perpetuating conflict and in contributing to its humanitarian toll.

I would now like to turn to the substance of the Secretary-General's report and highlight some salient points he raises in the substantive trends and developments section. The Secretary-General describes various trends and developments organized by substantive theme, inter alia, the protection of civilians and human rights; terrorism and violent extremism; and United Nations support for weapons and ammunition management. He offers to Council members a useful

reflection on how small arms and light weapons, as well as their ammunition, impact threats to peace and security, and notes the various actions taken, including by this very body, to address these challenges. Like previous ones, this report paints a vivid picture of how extensive the implications of small arms and light weapons can be in the context of the Council's work.

While the report notes some successes achieved in the past two years, the global picture of small arms is nonetheless sobering. The impact of the wide availability, misuse and destabilizing accumulation of small arms is vast and well documented. A significant portion of direct-conflict deaths are attributable to the use of small arms, and nearly half of all violent deaths are nowadays caused by firearms. Significantly, firearms-related homicides in post-conflict societies frequently outnumber battlefield deaths.

Small arms are force multipliers whose availability, ownership and use contribute to the initiation and sustainment of conflict, and they can facilitate all forms of conflict, including civil wars, inter-State conflict and the perpetration of violent crimes. They are key determinants in the lethality and longevity of conflicts.

There are three key observations.

First, arms flows into conflict-affected and violence-ridden societies exacerbate already fragile circumstances. It is important that the Council remain cognizant of the destructive effect of weapons and ammunition flows into these settings. By way of example, I note the decision of the Security Council to empower the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei to confiscate and destroy weaponry and report on possible arms movements into the Abyei area through resolution 2287 (2016). This mandate is an effective response to the previous recognition by the Council of the threat to peace and security in the Abyei area arising from the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

Secondly, high levels of illicit arms and ammunition in circulation also contribute to violations of international humanitarian and international human rights law. Small arms are often used in the commission of human rights violations such as killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, torture and the recruitment of children. More human rights violations and abuses are committed with them than with any other weapon, from the recruitment of children as soldiers to acts of sexual

violence perpetrated in conflict. Small arms are often a common denominator in such circumstances. United Nations personnel are not immune from such tragedies. Small arms frequently play a role in the deaths of United Nations employees and peacekeepers, as well as workers from humanitarian and non-governmental organizations. The human cost of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms runs very deep.

Thirdly, of growing concern are the increased links between transnational organized crime, illicit small-arms trafficking and terrorism, as well as the mounting use of the Internet, including the "dark web", and of emerging technologies for illicit trafficking and production. The use of illicit previously deactivated firearms in the terror attacks in Paris in November 2015 is evidence of the need to restrict the supply of all types of weapons to terrorist groups.

In this context, I welcome the work of the Council, including the adoption of resolution 2370 (2017), on denying terrorists access to weapons and urging States to undertake the national measures necessary to eliminate this supply. The issue of improvised explosive devices is, of course, of relevance in this regard, and I would underscore in particular the potential diversion of ammunition and explosives for the manufacture of such devices.

On a positive note, weapons and ammunition management has become a critical component of United Nations peacekeeping operations and in Security Council activities to address conflict-affected situations more generally. Attention to this issue was often reflected in DDR programmes or physical-security and stockpile-management activities. For example, in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali, DDR components have established weapon-registration and marking systems to ensure the traceability of all weapons and ammunition collected during the DDR process. This is a welcome trend. The United Nations stands ready to continue supporting States in this regard. I would like to point out the table on pages 5 and 6 of the report of the Secretary-General, which provides several examples of United Nations support to managing arms and ammunition in peacekeeping settings.

I would like also to highlight the table of recommendations included as annex I to the report under the Council's consideration. The table reflects

an effort to assist States in the operationalization of many of the small-arms-related recommendations that have been previously made to the Council through the four previous reports of the Secretary-General on this topic. While the majority of actions are directed towards States, either Security Council members or the broader United Nations membership, the Secretary-General also identifies actions for the United Nations system and relevant entities. Forty eight concrete recommendations have been made to the Council on how best to address small arms, light weapons and ammunition in the context of this organ's work. Many of those recommendations remain highly relevant. While not all 48 recommendations are included in the table, the table represents a solid mix of suggested actions on the key areas of concern for the Council, including weapons and ammunition management, peacekeeping, arms embargoes, community safety and law enforcement, the protection of civilians, and armed violence. Consideration is also given to gender mainstreaming and to the value of applying international standards and guidelines. The actions suggested are intended to be as concrete and specific as possible. I would encourage Council members to review the suggested actions identified by the Secretary-General and consider their operationalization.

Annex II of the report is submitted to the Council pursuant to the request made in resolution 2220 (2015) for the Secretary-General to compile best practices and arrangements that could be used by United Nations peacekeeping operations and other relevant Council-mandated entities to guide the implementation of tasks related to arms embargoes. The Secretary-General has examined various mechanisms that the United Nations has instituted in its field missions and drawn best practices from those experiences for the consideration of Council members.

I would be remiss if I did not underscore the particular significance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its relationship to peace and security. In a 1999 presidential statement, the Security Council acknowledged that "the challenge posed by small arms is multifaceted and involves security, humanitarian and development dimensions." (*S/PRST/1999/28*) That statement could be seen as a foreshadowing of the critical acknowledgement in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the inextricable link between peace and development. The report of the Secretary-General on small arms and

light weapons notes the significance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) because of their explicit recognition of the link between arms regulation and development, as well as between the illicit trafficking in arms and organized crime. As members are aware, one of the targets under Goal 16 includes a significant reduction in illicit arms flows.

As the Secretary-General points out in his report, the significance of target 16.4 is threefold. First, it closely connects adequate arms regulation with proper functioning institutions, which thereby ensure the sustainability of implementation over the long-term. Secondly, by virtue of that target, States have acknowledged that arms regulation is not only relevant for national security and defence sectors, but it also benefits communities by mitigating the proliferation of illicit weaponry, thereby creating the security conditions conducive to social and economic development. Thirdly, the new development agenda demonstrates that arms regulation, more than ever, should be pursued through policies and actions anchored in a measurable way. The Secretary-General encourages the integration of measurability in all small arms-control related activities and has suggested that the development of indicators on that topic in the context of the SDGs is an excellent means of monitoring concrete and demonstrable signs of progress towards a specific goal.

While Goal 16 is the most explicit in recognizing the relationship between peace and development, the entirety of the 2030 Agenda can be viewed in the framework of peace. At the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, States noted that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has implications for the realization of several SDGs in addition to Goal 16, including those related to poverty reduction, economic growth, health, gender equality and safe cities. As the development agenda was intended to be a comprehensive and inclusive framework, the mainstreaming of security-related issues into implementation efforts is most logical.

Before I conclude, and with your permission, Mr. President, I would like to say a word on the Secretary-General's approach to conventional weapons, including small arms. The Secretary-General is deeply committed to crisis prevention, which he has placed at the centre of his reform agenda. We believe that investing in the effective management of small arms and light weapons, including their ammunition, is to

invest in conflict prevention. Disarmament and arms control are key enablers of sustainable peace, and have long played a role in preventing conflict, easing international tensions and creating space for dialogue. Owing to the breadth and depth of their impact, adequate controls for small arms and their ammunition are vital. When armed conflict rages, effective arms and ammunition management is imperative. When international security is challenged, that is precisely when such control efforts should be pursued with even greater urgency.

The President: I thank Ms. Nakamitsu for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Lambertini (Italy): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Japanese presidency on taking the initiative to convene today's briefing on these crucial topic. I also wish to commend Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu for her insightful contribution to our discussion.

I reiterate Italy's unwavering commitment to participating in multilateral forums to fight the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We attach the utmost importance to the universalization of the relevant multilateral instruments.

Illicit trafficking constitutes a very serious threat to peace and security throughout the world. The international community is well aware of the devastating consequences resulting from the widespread illicit availability of such weapons, which contributes to instability, violence and insecurity and undermines the effectiveness of States' development efforts.

As the Secretary-General points out in his latest report (S/2017/1025), only peaceful societies will achieve their desired level of sustainable development. That is also why the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets target 16.4, which calls for a significant reduction in illicit arms flows. The illegal flow of arms is constantly evolving, and nowadays trafficking in weapons is not only associated with transnational organized criminal groups, but is increasingly fuelled by terrorist entities. The use of the online market, including the dark web, to sell and acquire weapons and their components poses further challenges for law enforcement agencies and national Governments. The anonymity enabled by that platform makes preventing the illegal trade and linking it to specific individuals increasingly difficult.

Furthermore, over recent years, non-State actors have improved their capacity to design and manufacture improvised explosive devices out of commercially available dual-use components. In an effort to mitigate the threat of weapons falling into the hands of malicious actors, last August the Security Council adopted resolution 2370 (2017), which not only represented a remarkable step forward in the fight against the scourge of terrorism, but also a substantial commitment to prevent and detect the illicit supply of arms. The resolution, the first of its kind, underscores the urgent need to adopt comprehensive measures aimed at, *inter alia*, enhancing Member States' strategies to ensure the safe management of ammunition stockpiles, the implementation marking and tracing processes for weapons and the development of adequate judicial and border control capabilities.

Addressing the disposal of small arms and excess ammunition is critical in a post-conflict context. I recall, in that regard, the ongoing efforts carried out in the Western Balkans by national authorities in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, the European Union and the Regional Cooperation Council. Illegal arms trafficking is a fundamental driver of violence, and it contributes to eroding institutional stability and the rule of law. The Security Council has often addressed this scourge by mandating that peacekeeping operations assist national authorities in controlling the flow of small arms, developing a proper legal framework and improving policy capacity and practices.

There are many crucial actions that Member States should take with the support and expertise of the United Nations, and several tools that should be effectively deployed to tackle the illegal flow of arms. In that regard, I would like to draw attention of two important initiatives.

First, I wish to recall the relevance of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the third Review Conference of which will be held in New York in June of next year. The Review Conference will provide an opportunity to achieve concrete progress in countering the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons, including by increasing the mobilization of all stakeholders in the security arms control development sector and by exploiting all the potential synergies among existing instruments.

Secondly, I would like to underscore the importance of the INTERPOL Illicit Arms Records and Tracing Management System. That tool enables information exchange and investigative cooperation among law enforcement agencies in relation to the international movement of illicit firearms, as well as legal firearms that have been used to perpetrate crimes. In that vein, let me underscore the crucial importance of the implementation of international tracing instruments, in keeping with the requirement of marking, record keeping and ensuring international cooperation in tracing illicit small arms and light weapons.

It is important to recall that illegal arms usually start off as legally produced and traded weapons. However, diversion and irresponsible exports can produce damaging effects and facilitate the spread of illegal flows. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a crucial instrument that has the potential to mitigate that risk by regulating international trade in conventional weapons and making it more responsible and transparent. In addition, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, is a very powerful tool for achieving our common objective, since its States parties commit to adopting and implementing serious crime-control measures against the illicit manufacturing of, and trafficking in, firearms, their parts and components and ammunition.

Italy stands ready to actively contribute to the efforts of the international community to curb the destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, and will continue to offer its cooperation to interested States and partners. In that regard, we welcome the review and update of the European Union small arms and light weapons strategy, with due regard to cross-cutting issues such as an analysis of the regional dynamics of small arms and light weapons, trafficking and new technological developments to secure small arms and light weapons and their ammunition and mitigate the risk of diversion.

Lastly, I would like to speak specifically about Africa. The African continent is particularly affected by armed violence fuelled by illicit small arms and light weapons. In that regard, we support any initiative taken and owned by the States of the region, like the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and

Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly. We encourage the signatories to fully implement the Convention, which provides a unique framework for addressing the specific issues of the Central African region. We also fully support the Group of Seven-African Union initiative on small arms and light weapons control in the extended Sahel, as well as the Africa-wide action plan aimed at implementing the 2018-2020 road map for “Silencing the guns by 2020”.

Mr. Sadykov (Kazakhstan): I thank the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Nakamitsu, for her briefing and for highlighting the threat to peace and security posed by illicit trading in small arms and light weapons. The Secretary-General’s report (S/2017/1025) also indicates that the poor regulation of such weapons is a key enabler of armed conflict and a means of sustaining it.

Small arms and light weapons must therefore be seriously considered by the Security Council so that multilateral efforts aimed at preventing and combating the uncontrolled circulation of such weapons can be strengthened to reduce their excessive and destabilizing accumulation throughout the world. The spread of illicit weapons impedes the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all other global processes aimed at achieving a sustainable and safer world.

Therefore, action must be taken to prevent the illegal diversion of small arms and light weapons into the criminal sphere. The following measures must be applied in a universal manner: improving stockpile management, with adequate monitoring in terms of protection; controlling the sales, exports and imports of small arms and light weapons and related mediation; protecting military arsenals; disrupting the network of transnational organized syndicates and eliminating their weapon- storage sites; improving border control and customs mechanisms; and enhancing vigilance over the storage conditions of weapons. The age of booming digital technology requires greater control of trade in arms and arms trafficking on the Internet, in particular through the trading platforms of the dark web. In that context, we must fully support the Secretary-General’s recommendations to overcome the multidimensional challenges encountered.

Kazakhstan calls for closer collaboration, transparency, enhanced legislation and stricter control — not just at the

national and regional levels but also at the international level. The ability to implement the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in each country will determine the global success. We also underscore the gender-based implications of the illegal trading in small arms and light weapons, which results in conflict-related deaths — with several thousand men, women and children killed each day.

The small arms and light weapons dimension should become an integral part of the mandate of all peacekeeping missions of the United Nations and of the African Union. An adequate response to the issue will mitigate the impact that those weapons have on conflicts and will allow us to prevent unnecessary deaths and reduce terrorism and extremism.

Peacekeeping operations should also include a comprehensive long-term programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. That will require work on harmonizing the relevant legal instruments, export-control programmes, mutual information-exchange and implementing joint law enforcement activities, including cooperation between customs and border guard units. Likewise, small arms and light weapon considerations should be an integral aspect of all sanctions committees, so as to prevent the illicit flow of weapons in and out of specific countries under sanctions regimes.

Kazakhstan is constantly implementing strict control measures over manufacture, export and supply to mitigate any possible illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. We are also focusing on the region of Central Asia, with the aim of enacting regional inter-State legislation in the area of exports control, as well as focusing on a regional approach and collaboration with specialized organizations, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and INTERPOL.

We consider the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to be the most important component of the export-control system, and therefore provide data on military expenditures on a regular basis. Kazakhstan recently ratified the Arms Trade Treaty and we will implement it on the national level. In that effort, I assure the Council of Kazakhstan's full commitment to other Member States and to the United Nations in order to achieve our common goals.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her briefing.

The international security situation is currently undergoing profound and complex changes, with traditional and non-traditional security threats intertwined and the frequent occurrence of regional conflicts and hotspot issues. The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons fuels regional armed conflicts in peace, peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction, facilitates the spread of terrorism and transnational organized crime and is detrimental to efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

In recent years, the international community has taken a series of measures to address the problem of small arms and light weapons and to achieve progress in that regard. The Security Council has adopted resolutions 2117 (2013) and 2220 (2015) and issued relevant presidential statements, thereby demonstrating the political will of the international community to address this problem. In order to further prevent and combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, China wishes to make the following proposals.

First, we must eliminate the cause of the problem of small arms and light weapons through efforts to achieve peace, cooperation and development. The international community must adhere to political and diplomatic ways as a means to settle disputes and maintain international and regional peace and stability. At the same time, there is a need to strengthen peacekeeping in post-conflict reconstruction in order to help the countries concerned resume economic development, restore social stability as soon as possible and realize sustainable development. Only by taking a multi-pronged approach to address both the symptoms and the root causes can it be possible to eradicate the problem of small arms and light weapons and build a peaceful and prosperous world without guns and violence.

Secondly, we should give full play to the important leading role of multilateral institutions, including the United Nations. The United Nations has successively adopted the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, thereby providing a policy basis for

the international community in its efforts to respond to the problem of small arms and light weapons. It is necessary for all parties to comprehensively and effectively implement the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument to push for further progress in the combat against illicit trade in small arms and light weapons at national, regional and international levels. China pays great attention to the Secretary-General's latest report on small arms and light weapons (S/2017/1025) and supports the Secretary General, various United Nations agencies, INTERPOL and other multilateral organizations in playing an active role in addressing the problem.

Thirdly, we should strengthen and control small arms and light weapons and enhance international cooperation and assistance in that regard. National Governments bear the primary responsibility in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. They must implement the relevant Security Council resolutions to the letter, adopt responsible arms trade policies, improve laws and regulations and intensify law enforcement to prevent small arms and light weapons from flowing into illegal channels. There is a need to strengthen information exchange and pragmatic cooperation among countries and between countries and international organizations. It is particularly necessary to increase assistance to developing countries to help them enhance their capacity in stock management, marking and tracing, as well as collecting and destroying illegal firearms.

The Chinese Government has always been firmly against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We have been conscientiously implementing the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument and we have submitted compliance reports on time.

China has been steadily strengthening domestic legislation and law enforcement and has supported and taken an active part in international and regional cooperation in combating the illicit trade in firearms. China has participated in three consecutive conferences of States parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) as an observer. We hope that the ATT will help resolve the problem of the illicit trade in conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons — without prejudice to the sovereignty, security and legitimate national defence needs of countries and without affecting normal and legal arms trade among countries.

The outcome document of the Ssixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action has laid a sound foundation for the third Review Conference on the Programme of Action, to be held in 2018. China is ready to take an active part in the relevant work within the framework of the United Nations, strive with others for a positive result of the third Review Conference and contribute to the international endeavour for an early solution of the problem of small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Awad (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express my thanks to Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu for her briefing on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/1025) on small arms and light weapons pursuant to resolution 2220 (2015). I would also like it to express the great importance that Egypt attaches to the issue of the illicit trafficking and supply of small arms, which has major security, economic and social impact, especially if such weapons fall into the hands of terrorist groups or armed movements.

The Middle East and Africa, where Egypt is situated, are the most affected worldwide by the dangerous and unprecedented increase in small weapons falling into the hands of terrorists, armed groups and criminal organizations. Unfortunately, it seems that this development is supported by the Governments of some countries in order to serve rejected political objectives that run counter to some of the most important purposes and principles of the United Nations and international legitimacy, the foremost being the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of countries, respect for sovereignty and State monopoly over the legitimate right to use force.

We have recently seen a dangerous increase in the number of martyrs and injured among the ranks of civilians and security forces in different countries in our region and the world, owing to some countries that supply such terrorist and criminal organizations with weapons. We want to clarify the extent of the imminent danger of such a development, which lacks an agreement on a comprehensive, legally binding international framework to prohibit and halt it completely. That could be achieved through the precondition of an official license granted to the parties concerned by the supplier country to ensure that such imports are legitimate.

Egypt recognizes that the core of the current challenge does not lie in the lack of national control regimes on exports, instead it is due to the deliberate

direct or indirect contribution of some countries that provide terrorist and criminal groups and other armed movements with illegal weapons and the necessary funding to acquire such weapons.

We have taken note with interest of the Secretary-General's report and would like to stress that Egypt is seriously concerned about the increasing negative impact, be they social, economic or security, due to the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. In that connection, we call upon the international community, and especially the countries producing and exporting such weapons, to spare no effort and cooperate to counter this dangerous development. We would also like to emphasize that we are still committed to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We also reaffirm the need to respect the scope of both documents.

In principle, the delegation of Egypt welcomes a number of positive recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report. However, we still need some time to study in depth such recommendations. As such, we would like to make the following comments on the content of the Secretary-General's report.

First, many of the recommendations contained in the report that are directed to the Security Council should, in principle, be directed to the General Assembly and to the Review Conference on the Programme of Action on countering the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. The issues of legalizing and regulating trade in conventional weapons and the adoption of special mechanisms to counter the illegitimate trade nationally and internationally fall under the mandate of the General Assembly and the Review Conference, not under the mandate of the Security Council.

Secondly, the report does not accord the necessary priority to the security threats arising from the impact of the illicit supply of small weapons on the issues of terrorism and organized crime. Those are the most important and dangerous repercussions of the problem under review, if we compare them to the focus on the social, economic and humanitarian impacts. We do not underestimate the importance of such aspects, but we believe that focusing on the symptoms would make tackling the root causes more effective. In that

regard, Egypt looks forward to receiving more detailed information from the Secretariat on the procedures adopted to implement resolution 2370 (2017) on preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons.

Thirdly, Egypt believes that the proposal to develop an international framework to document, collect and standardize end-user certificates requires in-depth study and prior consensus on the relevant terms of reference. We must develop an international consensus on a concrete definition of what is trafficking or the illicit supply of weapons, which should be prevented and countered, versus the legitimate and lawful trade in weapons, which should not be restricted, while considering the promotion of measures regulating such trade in order to limit illicit trafficking. Egypt stresses the need to avoid renewed controversial discussions that attempt to politicize or restrict the legitimate trade in weapons.

Fourthly, we would like to stress that measures aimed at securing weapon and ammunition stockpiles and disposing of excessive such materials is in principle a purely national responsibility to be shouldered by the Governments of the countries concerned. The United Nations took great strides to develop a number of guidelines that assist countries in developing such procedures and measures and in providing international assistance based on the request of the country concerned.

In conclusion, Egypt suggests that we consider launching various initiatives or mechanisms to provide developing countries with the necessary equipment to monitor and control borders in order to counter the illicit influx of weapons, especially in the areas of the Middle East and Africa that are ravaged by armed conflicts and where there are many terrorist groups.

Ms. Guadey (Ethiopia): We would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Izumi Nakamitsu for her briefing on the report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons (S/2017/1025) issued pursuant to resolution 2220 (2015), which sheds light on the developments and trends with regard to small arms and light weapons.

The threat posed by the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and its devastating consequences for international peace and security is indeed a source of serious concern. We know its devastating consequences from the experiences of our region, which has been awash with such weapons. Small arms and light weapons are by far the most

widespread and most used weapons in different parts of the world, and they continue to be key enablers of numerous international conflicts and civil wars, which has resulted in enormous harm to civilians, including women and children. Furthermore, small arms and light weapons are creating instability and long-term governance challenges, thereby complicating conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. Such weapons also end up in the hands of both domestic and transnational terrorist groups. The increased linkages between transnational organized crime and terrorism, as well as the wider use of emerging technologies for illicit trafficking and production, is therefore a matter of growing concern that should be seriously addressed.

The role of the Security Council in addressing the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons in an integrated and holistic manner that incorporates political, security, development, human rights and rule-of-law activities is imperative. We could agree more with the Secretary-General on the need to mainstream the issue of the illicit trade, misuse and excessive accumulation of weapons into all relevant Council discussions. We also recognize that addressing the scourge of illicit small arms and light weapons requires coordinated action at the national, regional and international levels.

For us in Africa, the African Union's strategy on the control of illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, as well as corresponding action plans, is the comprehensive policy framework to carry out the fight against illicit arms. There is a need to support such regional efforts, and we appreciate the existing cooperation with the relevant United Nations entities in that regard. We hope they will continue to be strengthened.

At the international level, we note the positive progress achieved during the reporting period, which include the unanimous adoption of the Disarmament Commission's recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. We believe that will be instrumental in enhancing cooperation and confidence-building measures with a view to promoting progress in arms control.

The third Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which is scheduled to be held in June 2018, will be an important platform to encourage Member States to undertake a set of measures at the national level and to

further strengthen efforts at subregional and regional cooperation, coordination and information-sharing mechanisms, in particular transborder customs cooperation and information-sharing, with a view to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

In conclusion, we need to underscore the critical importance of addressing the resource constraints and restrained capacities that different United Nations entities and international organizations encounter in addressing those challenges.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): I thank the High Representative for her briefing on the report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons (S/2017/1025).

Sixteen years ago, the General Assembly adopted by consensus the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In that landmark achievement of the international community, we committed to concrete actions to reduce illicit trafficking in small arms. The United States remains fully committed to implementing the Programme of Action, as well as the 2005 International Tracing Instrument. We have worked, and will continue to work, side by side with other countries and international and regional organizations to combat the illicit small arms trade. Indeed, we continue to be a leading donor in this field, including through our conventional weapons destruction programme, which has provided over \$2.9 billion in assistance to more than 100 countries since 1993.

Yet the international community as a whole continues to struggle with challenges in implementing existing commitments on small arms, and we see the consequences on a range of issues before the Security Council. More needs to be done, whether it be on tackling arms smuggling in Central Africa or on small arms falling into the hands of terrorists and criminal groups. It is tempting to hold more meetings to negotiate more international commitments, but that approach misunderstands the problem. Rather than trying to identify every perceived gap in the international normative framework, we just need more countries to implement those basic commitments that we adopted back in 2001. Progress will be incremental;

many countries are only now taking first steps, such as implementing arms tracing.

The Secretary-General's report gives some cause for optimism. As noted in the report, the Security Council has adjusted the mandates of United Nations missions to tackle the problem of small arms. Côte d'Ivoire, for example, is a success story in which the Government, with United Nations support, is better securing its stockpiles and has successfully traced a weapon recovered from an illicit trafficker. We can learn from those experiences and, as appropriate, mandate United Nations missions to build capacity on stockpile security and small arms management.

Unfortunately, we have some concerns about the Secretary-General's report. When discussing issues related to domestic misuse of small arms in non-conflict settings, the report goes beyond its remit. Additionally, we are disappointed by the Secretary-General's continued advocacy for the use of the International Small Arms Controls Standards (ISACS). Despite the name, those guidelines are generally not standards. Unlike the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines, which were drafted by Government experts, ISACS were created by a small group of self-selected experts. In some cases, the authors cherry-picked from existing instruments and developed those new so-called standards in an arbitrary and opaque manner, without referring to existing best practices.

Promoting the ISACS guidelines has resulted in some unusual situations. In Somalia, we understand that a United Nations representative advised local officials not to use regional marking standards developed by States parties to the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa. Although those standards met the requirements of countries in the region, the United Nations said that they were not "ISACS compliant". Given the diversity of views, we hope that future reports will more aptly characterize ISACS as voluntary guidelines and not as practical standards.

We also note with concern references to the tracing of small arms ammunition. Although it is possible to assess the original manufacturer of a given round of ammunition from lot markings and other identifiers, that is not the same thing as tracing, which is the systematic tracking from the point of manufacture or importation to the point at which an item became

illicit. Just noting that a rifle round was produced in a given country, often legally, does not explain how that round ended up illegally in the hands of a criminal or a terrorist.

The United States takes the illicit trafficking of ammunition very seriously, but measures to combat the illicit trafficking of ammunition differ from those needed to prevent the illicit trade in the weapons themselves. That is why the United States supported a General Assembly resolution establishing in 2020 a group of governmental experts to discuss problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus.

The United States will continue to take concrete and effective steps at the national, regional and global levels to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We welcome today's discussion and urge all countries to join us in strengthening the implementation of our existing commitments and obligations in the field.

Mr. Inchauste Jordán (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the briefing on small arms and light weapons presented by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu.

Bolivia is a pacifist State that does not produce, store or export weapons of any kind. We therefore firmly believe that mitigating the use, trade and trafficking of small arms and light weapons is vital to the success of the peacebuilding and stabilization efforts of countries in conflict. We are concerned about the issue of the illegal trade of small arms and light weapons, which is an ongoing challenge that contributes to the permanent destabilization and lack of security in areas where armed conflicts are being fought. We are equally concerned to see that the great challenge to combating the illicit arms trade has not yet been overcome by the United Nations or the international community.

We believe that, in addition to being a criminal activity, illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons further exacerbates armed conflicts, accentuates tensions, encourages terrorism and transnational organized crime, and causes serious injuries and deaths to innocent civilians. We emphasize that addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is of vital importance to maintaining regional peace and stability and thereby to promoting development in the affected countries in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The gravity of the problem is rooted in the trade in small arms and light weapons, as evidenced in the figures cited in the Secretary-General's report (S/2017/1025), which estimates that the financial value of that lucrative business was worth at least \$6 billion in 2014 alone. Moreover, illicit arms trafficking generates a parallel market whose profits are then injected into the global financial system through money-laundering and tax havens, which tend to diminish or eliminate controls, especially through the investment services of the tertiary sector, which is used by organized crime groups to legitimize their profits.

When it comes to the issue of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, we are compelled to address the aspect of their illegal transfer to non-State actors. In that regard, we consider it necessary to define the concept of non-State agents, and in that regard there is a substantive history of resolutions — such as resolution 1540 (2004) — that have been negotiated, agreed and stipulated in the context of the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Non-State actors — who are illegally supplied with weapons and ammunition — provoke and deepen conflicts, destabilize States, commit crimes against humanity, war crimes and serious violations of human rights, spread destruction, and subject the civilian population to the most despicable acts.

Undoubtedly, the aspect related to the management of ammunition and weapons is a substantial component of the United Nations system, whether in peacekeeping operations or in the activities of the Security Council and other bodies that are associated primarily with programmes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, in addition to activities related to the registration and marking of weapons, which allows them to be traced.

On the other hand, inadequate arms management remains a cause for concern. We firmly believe that the specialized agencies of the Organization, such as the United Nations Mine Action Service and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, should be strengthened, as that would contribute positively to the handling, storage, removal and destruction of small arms and light weapons. Similarly, we are convinced that international and national controls must be strengthened with regard to those weapons.

Globalized arms trafficking requires global controls that significantly reduce the risk of those types

of weapons being spread and continuing to endanger the lives of millions of people. We therefore believe it essential to have mechanisms in place that prohibit the supply of small arms and light weapons to unauthorized entities in the receiving States, and to ensure the strict regulation of their trade activities and a total ban on the re-exportation of unauthorized weapons and on their production, with or without expired licenses.

It cannot be denied that violence, transnational crime and terrorism are closely linked to the illicit arms trade. The international criminal groups and terrorist groups that the Council and every member of the Organization are combating are its biggest beneficiaries. That is why, in relation to the principles that govern the activity of this organ in the context of threats to international peace and security, it is vital to lay concrete foundations to tackle that scourge, which endangers human rights and life itself.

Mr. Orrenius Skau (Sweden): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu for her important briefing and the Secretary-General for his report (S/2017/1025). We welcome the inclusion in the report of recommendations that offer means of implementation for Member States and the Secretariat and provide a clear road map for the future. We also welcome the initiative of the Secretary-General to address past recommendations.

Today's discussion is particularly timely and important as we approach the third United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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 and its International Tracing Instrument, which will take place in June 2018. The humanitarian consequences of the illicit flows of those weapons are devastating, resulting in civilian casualties and hampering development. Weapons and ammunition flows have a particularly destructive effect in vulnerable and fragile settings. Preventing armed conflict and building sustainable peace cannot be achieved without addressing the wide-reaching harm caused to civilians by small arms and light weapons.

For that reason, it is necessary to mainstream the issue of small arms and light weapons into all relevant discussions on the Council's agenda. That includes the mandating of peacekeeping operations and efforts to sustain peace throughout the conflict cycle. Sweden will continue to support efforts to prevent the flows of

small arms and light weapons and ammunition as an integral part of our work to sustain peace and prevent conflict, including through our current membership of the Council.

We are encouraged to see that significant developments and trends in weapons and ammunition management in peace operations and conflict-affected settings are addressed in the Secretary-General's report. It is vital to tackle the complex linkages between transnational illicit trafficking in weapons and the resilience of conflict-affected and post-conflict States, especially in our discussions on peace operations.

The effective control of small arms and light weapons requires the effective control of ammunition, since those weapons can be operated and misused only if ammunition is available. Significant efforts to further regulate and control ammunition is therefore needed.

The illicit spread of small arms and light weapons enables and fuels armed conflicts that are having devastating effects on sustainable development. We welcome the call for improved controls and regulation as a means to reduce armed violence and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We also welcome the fact that the relationship between the international trade in arms and the Sustainable Development Goals is a theme in the Arms Trade Treaty.

We strongly welcome the focus on gender in the report of the Secretary-General. Mainstreaming gender issues in arms control efforts is of the utmost importance to addressing the consequences of illicit arms flows. Armed violence affects women, men and children differently. While recognizing that women and men alike can be victims and perpetrators of armed violence, cases where small arms contribute to acts of sexual and/or gender-based violence are of particular concern. We must also promote the role of women in preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

This has been a long-time priority for Sweden. One example of Sweden's support is a project of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament, which actually commences today and which aims to improve the contribution and participation of women in disarmament work. The project focuses on the prevention of acquisition of small arms, light weapons and ammunition by terrorist groups in the Lake Chad basin and countries of the Sahel. While the strength of

Boko Haram has been severely weakened, the threat of attacks and the prevalence of terrorism remain all too real for the people of the region. As members of the Council witnessed and concluded during their visit to Lake Chad, the recognition of women as agents for change is central to countering radicalization and building a sustainable future.

The European Union (EU) is currently in the final stages of developing a revised EU Strategy to Combat Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their Ammunition. The new Strategy presents a shared vision on how to address the threat of those weapons and their ammunition. It also presents common actions to be implemented by the EU and its member States.

The human, economic and social toll from the use of illicit arms and light weapons is immense. Preventing, combating and eradicating that destructive trade is urgent and essential if we are to achieve both the 2030 Agenda and the sustaining peace agenda. We will continue to do all we can to that end.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): I thank our briefer, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Nakamitsu.

Last year, 560,000 people died at the hands of small arms and light weapons. That is more than one death every minute of every day for an entire year. That is the tragic reality that the report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/1025) brings to life. Illicit small arms are tools of daily destruction. There is never a shortage. They are easy to acquire and they have an unparalleled impact on lives and communities. The Saferworld organization estimates that the majority of deaths from direct conflicts in the developing world are the result of the use of small arms.

The hundred and thousands of deaths are just the tip of the iceberg. Illicit small arms add fuel to the fire of armed conflicts around the world. They facilitate the most heinous human rights violations and abuses. They are the preferred instruments of war for those who carry out mass killings and rape. They equip terrorists and violent extremists. And where we find transnational criminals dealing in human lives, illicit drugs or illegal wildlife products, there is little doubt that we will also find small arms.

Nowhere is that more apparent than in South Sudan. It is no longer soldiers who carry weapons. Small arms

have become the norm. When they become violent, local-level disputes are resolved not with homemade, traditional weapons, but with guns. Even children herding cattle must carry arms to protect themselves and their livelihood. In that culture of weapons, local disputes now escalate faster and increasingly result in large-scale casualties. For a country torn apart by a national level conflict, this is a price that South Sudanese communities cannot afford to pay. Armed fighting widens rifts between groups and trenches issues, and community conflict-resolution is far less effective because of heavily armed groups.

And the problem does not stop at the borders of conflict zones. Transfers of weapons and trained fighters spread the threat to neighbouring countries. We have seen that in Somalia, Syria and elsewhere. If we are to make any progress in tackling that challenge, we need to work collectively to strengthen arms control, destroy excessive stockpiles and tackle the drivers of instability and conflict that fuel the demand for illicit weapons. It is for those reasons that we were proud to adopt resolution 2220 (2015) and continue the Council's focus on that important issue.

Outside of the Council, the Arms Trade Treaty is one of our most powerful tools in the ongoing fight to stop irresponsible arms transfers. The Treaty's vision of a globally well-regulated, legal trade in arms is one that the United Kingdom fully supports. Universalization, especially getting the right States around the table, must remain a priority. Greater participation would increase the treaty's influence, strength and reputation, and we encourage all States that have not yet done so to make ratification or accession a national priority.

Universalization must go hand in hand with implementation. That means doing all we can to stop diversion, tackle corruption, dismantle trafficking networks and strengthen information-sharing. Since the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons was adopted in 2001, we have seen more and more States take action to improve stockpile management. That is a recognition of the impact on their communities of weapons diverted from national stockpiles to criminal activity, and of the devastating consequences of explosions of ammunition depots.

As we look ahead to the third United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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 and its International Tracing Instrument next year, it is important that we continue to encourage States to prioritize resources for stockpile security and surplus destruction.

The United Kingdom is proud to provide technical and financial support both bilaterally and through regional and multilateral organizations, such as the African Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Commonwealth. Through such support, we help countries to strengthen arms control frameworks, implement better stockpile management procedures and tackle the drivers of terrorism, crime, poverty and exclusion, which fuel the demand for illicit weapons.

I would like to conclude by looking forward to 2030. A report recently published by Small Arms Survey shows us how the world could look if we all implement violence reduction initiatives. If we embrace action, quell the conflicts and realize the peaceful societies envisaged in Sustainable Development Goal 16, we could save 1.2 million lives. That outcome would benefit the body charged with upholding international peace and security.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I would also like to thank Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu for her enlightening briefing on the important issue of small arms and light weapons. The control of such weapons is without question of crucial importance for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/1025) before us today is timely in view of the persistence of numerous hotbeds of tension throughout the world, in particular in Africa and the Middle East, which shows that the maintenance of peace and stability remains a battle that is far from being won. Indeed, the consequences of the misuse and the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons continue to be a source of great concern to the United Nations and to the entire international community. West Africa and the Sahel have clearly not been spared that scourge. That region faces multifaceted threats, including the proliferation and the illicit trafficking of conventional arms and drugs, as well as the activities of terrorist groups.

The inadequate regulation of such weapons is a significant factor of conflict. Added to that is the availability or even the proliferation of weapons in the absence of adequate control systems, which fosters a wide range of human rights violations, resulting

in, among other things, increased poverty and an impediment to sustainable development. In September 2015, during the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States therefore recognized that sustainable development is impossible without peace and security and that without sustainable development peace and security will continue to be threatened. Furthermore, target 4 of Sustainable Development Goal 16, which focuses on the promotion of peaceful societies, access to justice for all and the establishment of effective institutions, provides for a significant reduction in arms trafficking.

Although many problems remain, the past two years have been marked by some successes in the area of conventional weapons. For example, we would note the adoption by consensus of the outcome document of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. There were also some recommendations on concrete confidence-building measures in the area of conventional weapons, adopted by consensus by the Disarmament Commission at its substantive session of 2017 after two decades of work without success. Those recommendations underscore the importance of conventional arms control to the maintenance and enhancement of regional and international peace and security.

For its part, Senegal wishes to recall its commitment to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the first international convention whose specific purpose is to regulate the international arms trade in order to put an end to the disastrous consequences resulting from the transfer of conventional arms between countries. We therefore again call for the universalization of the Treaty and of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition.

In addition, we encourage regional cooperation in order to share best practices and the ongoing involvement of civil society in awareness-raising actions regarding the ATT. West Africa, which has taken a number of initiatives to harmonize regional legislation with a view to promoting common actions to combat the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons, is an excellent illustration of that regional cooperation.

The proliferation, illicit transfer, accumulation and diversion of small arms and light weapons continue to jeopardize international peace and security, with devastating effects on civilian populations, particularly women and children, in conflict and post-conflict situations. That is why we should pay closer attention to the implementation of the Programme of Action and work towards strengthening physical security measures and stockpile management for weapons and ammunition.

We therefore reaffirm our country's commitment to fully implementing the Programme of Action and to strengthening cooperation and assistance. To that, we must add the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons and international cooperation and assistance for the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, in particular capacity-building and training, as well as the transfer of technology and equipment to States that have requested such a transfer.

We also call on the Security Council, as the Secretary-General does in his report, to periodically review the issue of small arms and light weapons, in particular by holding a regular debate specifically on that issue. We also encourage national authorities to use existing standards and practical guidelines, such as the International Small Arms Control Standards and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines, to strengthen the control of small arms and light weapons, as well as ammunition, in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons (S/2017/1025). While the report in general covers the broad scope of the issue under consideration, it also contains a number of questionable points, to which we would like to draw attention.

Russia has consistently supported the enhancement of the United Nations role in coordinating the efforts of the international community to address the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The illicit weapons trade remains the main source of financing for terrorist and extremist groups and a major factor in the proliferation and deterioration of local conflicts and armed violence. Despite some progress in a number of

areas, we have not yet seen a significant improvement in the fight against the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons in the world. The pace of implementing the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects remains inadequate. We have also seen slippage in the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. The black and grey markets in which such weapons are traded continue to fuel the activities of terrorists, extremists, illegal armed groups, organized crime and street crime, as well as various types of conflict. It is therefore long past time to reinforce the Programme of Action with provisions such as the following that will enable it to significantly reduce the risk of weapons moving from legal into illegal circulation.

The first would introduce a universal ban on the transfer of any type of small arms or light weapons to entities that are not authorized by the States to which they are sent. Secondly, States should be required to enact strict regulations and exercise direct control over arms-export brokering activities in areas under their jurisdiction and limit the numbers of brokers themselves to the absolute minimum. Thirdly, there should be a ban on re-exporting imported small arms and light weapons without the written consent of the initial exporting State. Fourthly, the manufacture of small arms and light weapons on expired licenses or without licenses from the countries that own the rights to the manufacturing technology should be banned. Such measures could be based on the relevant best practices of States, including Russia, which has highly refined legislation in this area. For our part, we stand ready to help States interested in learning from Russia's experience so as to strengthen their legislation and law-enforcement activities in every area related to the control of small arms and light weapons.

In the context of establishing criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the Programme of Action, it has not escaped our notice that the standardized electronic format for providing annual national reports does not allow for potentially significant information for other States Members of the United Nations regarding advanced developments in the implementation of the Programme of Action, or, on the contrary, about existing problems with it. Unlike many other countries, Russia has consistently made its national report on its

implementation of the Programme of Action available as a separate document, which provides a comprehensive overview of the full range of that implementation.

From a substantive point of view, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is frankly a weak document that is not capable of fully enabling the implementation of its own provisions. For example, it does not include a direct ban on unlicensed arms production or transfers to non-State actors, and it has no provisions regulating the re-export of items intended for military use. The risk of weapons falling into the hands of criminals and terrorists therefore remains, along with potential threats to the further destabilization of situations in various hotspots.

The Treaty's practical implementation also raises serious questions. In our view it is unacceptable that individual parties continue to supply goods for military use, directly or indirectly, to areas dealing with internal armed conflict. In that regard, we are particularly concerned about the transfer of weapons and ammunition to Ukraine during the period from 2015 to 2017. On the one hand, we have been encouraged to accede to the ATT as soon as possible, since it is designed to establish general standards for regulating international trade in conventional weapons and promote transparency and responsible behaviour in that area on the part of States parties. And yet in practice we have been given to understand that those standards can be interpreted selectively. In that context, for example, how should we understand the Canadian Government's decision of 13 December to include Ukraine on a list of countries permitted to receive supplies of lethal weapons?

The process of universalizing the ATT has now been stalled for some time. To date, only 93 States are parties to the Treaty, less than half of the total number of States Members of the United Nations. The number of State signatories to the Treaty is still stuck at 131. It has been hard to miss the significant decline in the number of observer delegations at the ATT's annual conferences. Not does States' discipline regarding annual reports stand up to criticism. Of the 80 States that were supposed to submit national reports on the transfer of military goods abroad this year, only 49 complied. The number last year was 51.

The Russian Federation shares the international community's concerns about the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons and advocates the continued consolidation of international efforts to counter it, under the auspices of the United Nations.

In that regard, we view the Third Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, scheduled for next year, as very important. We hope that it will make a practical contribution to resolving the acute and urgent issue of small arms and light weapons ending up in illegal circulation.

Mr. Bermúdez Álvarez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Nakamitsu for her comprehensive briefing. I also thank the Secretary-General for his 6 December biennial report (S/2017/1025) on small arms and light weapons, which illustrates the very serious and negative consequences of the misuse and illicit circulation of small arms. We appreciate his recommendations on the issue.

Uruguay is committed to disarmament in all its forms and to that end has acceded to and ratified the various related regional and international treaties. We are therefore fully committed to combating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, as well as their misuse and destabilizing stockpiling. The proliferation of conventional weapons, including small arms, is a fundamental element in armed conflicts and a means of sustaining them. Trafficking and trading in arms with belligerent parties to armed conflicts contributes directly to the suffering and death of civilians. The acquisition of such weapons by terrorist groups and organized criminals also represents a serious threat and requires a significant collective approach and effort.

Unhindered access to small arms and the absence of adequate controls on them have adverse effects both on the humanitarian front and on human rights and sustainable development. They can also affect decisions on how to carry out individual peacekeeping operations. The statistics are overwhelming. The arms trade is undoubtedly one of the most profitable businesses in the world. As the Secretary-General's report notes, the international small-arms trade was worth at least \$6 billion in 2014 alone, with ammunition accounting for 38 per cent of all global transfers. Nearly half of all violent deaths between 2010 and 2015 were caused by firearms. Regrettably, if States do not do everything in their power to halt the illicit transfer of weapons, this will continue. If we are to eradicate this illicit trade, all States must cooperate in identifying the routes and mechanisms that enable these weapons to circulate and in strengthening border controls. International

cooperation and assistance must be reinforced, with a special emphasis on generating national capacities.

Controlling the international trade in arms is a matter of urgency. As my delegation has frequently pointed out, it is States that are primarily responsible for adopting national standards for strengthening regulation of the possession and use of weapons as well as controlling their export, import and transit with a view to preventing and combating illicit trafficking. We believe that every State has a shared responsibility to cooperate in confronting this global problem. However, States that produce and sell weapons also bear a differentiated and primary responsibility, since the source of the problem lies in the production and trade of such arms.

Uruguay is convinced that the historic Arms Trade Treaty was an important step towards international regulation and a more responsible international trade of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons and their parts and components, as well as ammunition. The regulation of that trade would have fundamental consequences in armed conflicts, especially for the civilian victims of armed violence, in particular women, children and other vulnerable groups. It would also promote peace and security by eradicating the transfer of arms to conflict zones.

The ratification of and accession to international instruments aimed at protecting civilians, such as the Arms Trade Treaty, would contribute greatly to civilian protection. Similarly, the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects is an instrument of vital importance and an international benchmark in advancing the fight against the illicit trafficking of these weapons.

Finally, as a country committed to disarmament, Uruguay calls on all States — particularly those that produce, sell and possess arms — to comply with their obligations in accordance with the international legal framework.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Japanese presidency for convening this important meeting and the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Nakamitsu, for her very enlightening briefing.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons today poses a grave threat to international peace and

security. As has been noted, these weapons claim the highest number of victims in the world by far, as the headlines never fail to remind us. They are responsible for almost 90 per cent of the victims of armed conflict and for more than 500,000 deaths a year. The stakes and challenges involved are enormous and lie at the heart of all topics, as the Secretary-General emphasizes in his report (S/2017/1025).

The illicit trade in these weapons continues to fuel conflict, exacerbate armed violence and incite organized crime and terrorism. France, like many other countries, has experienced this first hand during the terrorist attacks that have struck its territory in recent years. Beyond that, the stability and development of entire regions — the Sahel and the Levant, for example — are threatened. I recall that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development seeks a world free from corruption, illegal trafficking and the illegal circulation of weapons, all of which threaten the political stability and development of humankind.

In the face of these extreme threats, we must be able to mobilize in unison. Given that we can respond effectively to these challenges only if we do so together, in 2016 France took the initiative to issue a political declaration on this subject, supported by a cross-regional group of 63 countries. The effort for the political mobilization of all countries of all regions must continue. It is also important to turn this commitment into reality by seeking to achieve the robust implementation of existing instruments through concrete measures. We can do so first through the provisions of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, which remains the cornerstone of our work. France will have the honour of chairing the third Review Conference, to be held in New York in June 2018. France is also mobilized in the context of the Arms Trade Treaty and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Various kinds of action — upstream of weapons trafficking to prevent their spread, and downstream to interrupt trafficking flows — must be pursued. Among these, I would highlight the development of adequate national legislation, the reduction of illicit stocks in circulation thanks to collection and destruction campaigns, improved security and physical management of weapons and ammunition stocks, and the strengthening of police and customs control, which

are all areas in which we could work. Significant progress has already been achieved. Many States have improved their legislation and the issue of small arms is now better reflected in regional organizations. However — and this is my third point — we cannot stop there.

Increased international cooperation in the marking, registering and tracing of small arms and light weapons is also essential. The exchange of information remains a key element if we wish to progress together. France welcomes the introduction of various tracking systems and databases such as iTrace and iArms. These initiatives allow the registration of seized weapons and, through access to the registers thereby created, improve the sharing of information. Private actors, especially industrial producers and civil society, also play a central role and must therefore be involved.

France is also convinced of the central importance of international assistance, which must be based on two major principles. First, we must adopt a cooperative and assistance-based approach that is tailored to the needs of the beneficiaries. Along with capacity development, that is one of the keys for the success of international assistance. Secondly, it is important to seek coordination among various assistance initiatives in order to avoid duplication and guarantee the maximum efficiency of all actions undertaken.

My country, for its part, resolutely contributes to the fight against the supply of arms to armed terrorist groups in the Sahelo-Saharan region, in particular with Chad, the Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania, which constitute the Group of Five for the Sahel. France also conducts numerous training activities for the benefit of States such as Benin, the Niger and Mali.

Despite our many accomplishments, many challenges remain. We can and must do better and go further in our efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and coherence of our actions. At the international level, adherence to and ratification of key international instruments in this area is of crucial importance. That is why France encourages all countries to accede to the Arms Trade Treaty as soon as possible.

In conclusion, the third Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and its International Tracing Instrument, to be held in June 2018, will be a unique occasion for us to move forward. It will be a key

opportunity for making concrete progress, including by increasing mobilization of all actors in the security, arms control and development sectors and by taking advantage of all possible synergies among existing instruments. I wish to assure members of the Council of France's full commitment and mobilization in this sense, at both the national level and as President, to ensure the success of that important Conference, which for France is a true priority.

Mr. Vitrenko (Ukraine): I would like to thank the Japanese presidency for convening this important meeting, as well as Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her informative briefing. We would also like to commend Lithuania for initiating the important resolution 2220 (2015) during its Council presidency in May 2015, and which Ukraine had the honour of co-sponsoring.

Ukraine remains gravely concerned over the fact that the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons continue to pose threats to international peace and security, causing significant loss of life and contributing to instability and insecurity in many regions of the world. In addition to fuelling armed conflicts, illicit small arms have myriad adverse effects on human rights and lead to negative humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences, in particular for the security of civilians. Armed conflicts driven by such arms are the main reason people flee their homes in the quest for a better life and a more secure environment. Ukraine fully subscribes to the view that there are ever increasing links between transnational organized crime, illicit arms trafficking and terrorism.

At the national level, Ukraine attaches particular importance to ensuring effective export control procedures in the sphere of conventional arms. We strictly adhere to the respective resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the international export control regime Wassenaar Arrangement. We continue to believe that the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is an important and universal tool in global efforts to combat the threat posed by such weapons. We also believe that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms continues to be an instrumental

transparency and confidence-building measure in the field of the conventional arms trade. Ukraine is one of the countries that voluntarily report on small arms imports and exports in their yearly submissions.

I must mention the current unprecedented twenty-first century challenges in Europe posed by the use of illicit conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, as a result of Russia's ongoing military aggression and occupation of Crimea and part of the Donbas region of Ukraine. Time and again, we have drawn the attention of the Council to the continuing illicit supplies — both hidden and in plain sight — of deadly weapons, ammunition and gunmen to our territory by the Russian Federation through the uncontrolled sections of the Ukrainian-Russian State border.

Just a few moments ago, the Russian delegation bragged about its experience in the area of small arms and expressed its readiness to share its so-called best practices. The following quote could be quite telling in that regard.

“I am particularly concerned about the situation on and around the border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation. This remains a key obstacle to the de-escalation of the situation on the ground as arms and heavy weaponry reportedly continue to flow unabated into Ukraine from Russia. There is an urgent need to ensure a secure border between the two countries, with international verification, as discussed in the Minsk talks”.

The Russian Federation will be disappointed to learn that that statement was not made by Ukraine officials; it was made by the previous Secretary-General. He clearly articulated those points at a press conference held on 29 August 2014. We wonder if the delegation of the Russian Federation would now like to apply its propaganda cliché about anti-Russian hysteria to the institution of the Secretary-General. We might also wonder which country would be willing to adopt Russian best practices, including in the area of small arms. Such deliberate criminal activity undermines not only subregional security, but European and international security as well, and is therefore the responsibility of the Council. In that regard, we urge the Secretary-General to include the relevant information in his next report on small arms.

In conclusion, let me stress that we fully support the United Nations efforts, in cooperation with host

Governments, to address the issues of weapons and ammunition management in conflict-affected areas, including stockpile management, physical security, marking, tracing, record-keeping and awareness-raising. We also reiterate our support for more frequent consideration of the small arms issue by the Council.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Japan.

I would like to begin by thanking High Representative Nakamitsu for her briefing on the Secretary-General's report on small arms and light weapons (S/2017/1025).

Every year at least 500,000 lives are lost and countless human rights violations, including sexual violence and the forced recruitment of children, are conducted as a result of the misuse and illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons. Such weapons also prolong and intensify conflicts and hinder humanitarian aid, reconstruction and development, even in post-conflict areas. It is imperative for the international community to enact adequate regulations and controls in order to reduce further armed violence involving the misuse of such weapons.

Japan believes that disarmament that saves lives, as called for by the Secretary-General, is an important vision. That is the very mindset we should adopt to tackle the issue of small arms and light weapons. From that point of view, we welcome the recommendations and best practices described in the report. Japan hopes that the report will help the world take further steps to reduce small arms-related violence.

Japan places a high priority on addressing threats involving the misuse and illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons. In post-conflict areas in particular, we focus on capacity-building for competent national institutions, such as for law enforcement and security authority. For instance, from 2015 to 2017, Japan has provided approximately \$3 million to Côte d'Ivoire. In cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, we have provided capacity-building assistance for the national commission in charge of the collection and disposal of small arms and light weapons and also helped to set guidelines on the control of those weapons, to be used by national authorities. We hope that such efforts will lead to sustainable peace in post-conflict areas.

It is evident that the excessive stockpiling of conventional arms can destabilize domestic and regional situations, and that proper international trade and stockpile management are indispensable. In that regard, Japan would like to emphasize the importance of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) as the first legally binding Treaty regulating international trade in conventional arms. The ATT sets high standards for the regulation of the arms trade, and its implementation contributes to eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. However, although three years have passed since the entry into force of the Treaty, only 93 States have joined it. In the Asia-Pacific region, only six countries have joined the Treaty. Japan, as President of the upcoming Conference of States Parties to the ATT, is committed to the universalization of the Treaty. We will approach those who have not yet joined the Treaty and call for a joint effort of the international community.

As other speakers have already mentioned, in June of next year, the third Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons will be held in New York. The Programme of Action provides a framework for activities to counter the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Japan believes that the Conference will be an important opportunity to take stock of our progress. Japan is strongly committed to the success of the Conference. We will continue our efforts, together with the international community, to eliminate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

I resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The negative impact on the implementation of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements, which remains the only option for resolving the situation in south-eastern Ukraine, is exacerbated by overall instability in the country, the exploitation of the Donbas factor to foment internal political strife and the rise of radical and extremist forces that are condoned by the authorities.

More and more often, it is the weapons in the hands of the extremists that are becoming the instruments that settle conflicts, and the country's authorities are incapable of prosecuting the trafficking of those weapons. In that regard, we would like to draw

the Council's attention to the fact that, according to data published in April by the independent non-governmental organization the Small Arms Survey, the volume of illegally traded small arms in Ukraine stood at approximately 3 million units in 2013. The 2014 coup d'état only exacerbated the situation. It was under the passive eye of the coupists that army depots were looted — which was well documented in the media — including in western areas of the country, and small arms and light weapons were distributed willy nilly to the extremists, who were subsequently legalized by their inclusion in the country's armed forces. In that regard, we hope that the Kyiv authorities fulfil their international obligation to control the circulation of small arms and light weapons and take the necessary measures to combat their illegal trade.

Mr. Vitrenko (Ukraine): I will be brief. Russia is the sole supplier of arms, heavy weaponry, mercenaries, ammunition and a whole host of other deadly weapons to Russian separatists and terrorists in eastern Ukraine, including the infamous Buk missile that downed Malaysia Airlines flight MH-17, killing the almost 300 people on board. Russia therefore has neither a moral nor legal right to lecture any delegation in the Council, especially given that it is recognized by the General Assembly as a party to the conflict and an occupying Power in Ukraine.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): In response to what was just said about Russia being the only supplier of weapons to Ukraine, let me go into more detail regarding our theory about how various countries supply Ukraine with lethal weapons. We have already mentioned that Canada publicly stated its readiness to license its companies to supply them. As

it recently turned out, some American companies, and in particular AirTronic USA, which makes handheld grenade launchers, are already supplying Kiev with weapons, having been secretly authorized to do so with the agreement of both the State Department and the Pentagon, although the official United States line is that no final decision has been made on that matter.

We would like to suggest to those promoting and making such decisions to consider their responsibility for the results. It is entirely obvious that pouring American and Canadian weapons of war into Ukraine is pushing the country's leaders, who are already sabotaging the Minsk agreements, into undertaking new military ventures. Everyone must understand that the conflict in Donbas cannot be settled by force, and the blame for the lives lost will be on those who put weapons in the killers' hands.

Mr. Vitrenko (Ukraine): I apologize for taking the floor once again. The Russian representative omitted to mention one particular point, which is that Ukraine is defending its own territory, territorial integrity and sovereignty against Russian aggression.

Lastly, the Russian delegation's carefully prepared statement and data speak to major preparation on its part for this meeting, which is somewhat ominous, as if Russia were preparing for a further phase of military aggression against Ukraine, which I hope does not materialize.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Very briefly, I would like to say that the Russian delegation prepares extremely thoroughly and carefully for every Security Council meeting.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.