



Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

7036th meeting

Thursday, 26 September 2013, 3 p.m.

New York

President: Ms. Bishop (Australia)

Members:

Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
Azerbaijan	Mr. Mammadyarov
China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
France	Mr. Fabius
Guatemala	Mr. Pérez Molina
Luxembourg	Mr. Asselborn
Morocco	Mr. El Othmani
Pakistan	Mr. Aziz
Republic of Korea	Mr. Yun Byung-se
Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
Rwanda	Ms. Mushikiwabo
Togo	Mr. Menan
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Clegg
United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

Small arms

The impact of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons on international peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on Small arms (S/2013/503)

Letter dated 6 September 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2013/536)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Expression of condolence in connection with the terrorist attack in Kenya

The President: I wish to confirm the Council's condemnation in the strongest possible terms of the recent terrorist attack in Nairobi, which caused numerous deaths and injuries, and to convey our condolences to the victims and their families and to the people and the Government of Kenya. I note that the Council issued a press statement to that effect on 21 September.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Small arms

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Letter dated 6 September 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2013/536)

The President: I warmly welcome the Secretary-General, the President of Guatemala, the Deputy Prime Ministers of Luxembourg and the United Kingdom, Ministers of the countries members of the Security Council and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter to be addressed.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Germany, Japan, Liberia, Lithuania, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Timor-Leste and Trinidad and Tobago to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Christine Beerli, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, to participate in this meeting.

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

Members of the Council have before them document S/2013/570, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Germany, Guatemala, Japan, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/503, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on small arms.

I also draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/536, which contains a letter dated 6 September 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I am very pleased that the Council is convening this high-level meeting to consider the issue of small arms. The proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons threaten peace and drive conflict in many of the countries the Council considers. It is an issue that cuts across much of the Council's work, from sanctions, peacekeeping and peacebuilding to the women, peace and security agenda. Yet it is an issue that the Council has not considered in a dedicated way for more than five years. It is therefore entirely appropriate that we do so today.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: I thank you for your initiative, Madam President. At the outset, I would like to sincerely welcome your participation to preside over the Security Council immediately after your appointment as Foreign Minister of the Australian Government. You can count on me. I wish you all the best and continued good success.

In recent years, the Security Council has recognized the devastating impact of small arms on peace and development. The excessive accumulation of arms has fuelled insecurity and conflict from Mali to Afghanistan and beyond. But weapons trafficking has affected far more than the immediate security situation.

Armed conflict is the main cause of people fleeing their homes and of food insecurity.

The uncontrolled availability of guns and bullets threatens peace processes and fragile reconciliation efforts. It leads to a vast range of human rights violations, including killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, enforced disappearance, torture and the forced recruitment of children by armed groups. It exacerbates inter-community violence and organized crime. And it undermines our work for social justice, the rule of law and the Millennium Development Goals. The world is over-armed and peace is underfunded.

Earlier this year, States took a historic step forward by adopting the Arms Trade Treaty, which fully includes small arms and ammunition in its scope. That landmark measure obligates States to regulate international arms transfers, including prohibiting shipments to Governments that fail to use them in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations. The Treaty will also help address weapons diversion from Government stockpiles — a growing and disturbing source of arms for pirates, rebels and warlords. The Arms Trade Treaty will complement and strengthen a number of existing international instruments. I urge all States to sign and ratify it without delay. Already more than half of all Member States have signed. I want to thank members of the Security Council that have helped to lead the way.

(spoke in French)

As I mentioned in detail in my report (S/2013/503) presented recently to the Security Council, the absence of regulation, the ease of access to arms and the great profitability of the illicit trade in weapons constitute an explosive cocktail. By way of proof, the pillage of Libyan arms depots was one of the factors that contributed to the instability of the Sahel. Similar proof is evident from the lawlessness that currently prevails in Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic, Iraq and even on the high seas. Moreover, poor management of munitions stocks multiplies the risk of explosions, which would then endanger the lives of people and the environment.

(spoke in English)

I am pleased that the Council has recognized that States require additional support in weapons management. The standards on weapons and ammunition management developed by the United Nations can be of great assistance. Innovations such as

weapon-tracking technologies and the personalization of firearms can help. Arms embargoes are also vital. Yet unscrupulous brokers are adept at evading such strictures.

The various monitoring groups of Security Council Sanctions Committees need more and better information. My report includes a number of recommendations that the Security Council may wish to consider when mandating peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

In the past year alone, more than a dozen peacekeepers in Darfur, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been killed in action by small arms. Peacekeeping missions are addressing the challenge in a number of ways, including assistance with stockpile management and the collection and destruction of weapons. United Nations police observers in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, for example, have developed a guide to record arms and ammunition. And an embargo-monitoring capacity has been effectively established by the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

Small arms remain a big concern. The challenge lies at the intersection of human rights, security, development, crime, international trade, public health and counter-terrorism. Small arms are a source of crises, conflict and criminality. Member States, the United Nations system, regional organizations and civil society have made progress, but much remains to be done.

I want once again to commend the Security Council for taking up vital issues of disarmament and non-proliferation. I urge that to continue. Let us commit to advance our work together and build a safer more secure world for all.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Beerli.

Ms. Beerli: I am honoured to address the Security Council on the impact of the illicit transfer, accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

In its operations to protect and assist the victims of armed conflicts and other situations of violence worldwide, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a first-hand witness to the devastating costs to civilians of the easy access to, and misuse of, small arms and light weapons. Those are the weapons of choice when men, women and children are deliberately

targeted, raped or forced out of their homes and their property is destroyed.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons prolongs conflicts, facilitates violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law, and puts civilians at high risk of death or injury from weapons-related violence. The threat to civilians remains even after armed conflicts have ended. The indirect impact includes disease, starvation and abuse, which increase when humanitarian organizations are the object of attack and are forced to suspend operations or leave a country. Human suffering continues, often for years, after hostilities are over, as the widespread availability of these arms engenders a culture of violence, undermines the rule of law and threatens efforts at reconciliation.

It is imperative that States do much more to address the impact of the poorly controlled availability and misuse of small arms and light weapons. At three international conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent over the past 10 years, States party to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 have recognized that their obligation to ensure respect for international humanitarian law requires adequate measures to control the availability of weapons. To uphold that obligation, we call upon the Security Council to ensure that small arms and light weapons and their ammunition do not end up in the hands of those who may be expected to use them in violation of international humanitarian law or human rights law.

In particular, we urge the Council to call upon all United Nations States Members to promptly sign, ratify and implement the Arms Trade Treaty. The Treaty is a historic achievement. It establishes a global norm to prevent arms transfers when there is a manifest risk that war crimes or serious violations of human rights will be committed. In parallel, States must continue to comply with similar or stricter rules under regional instruments regulating arms transfers to which they are party. Unfortunately, a look at a number of current armed conflicts reveals an evident gap between the transfer criteria expressed in those instruments and the practice of some States.

The problem of small arms and light weapons must be addressed in a holistic manner. This requires developing a comprehensive strategy that includes reducing the vulnerability of people and communities at risk from small arms violence, helping victims, providing training in international humanitarian

law and human rights law for weapon-bearers, and violence-prevention strategies specific to the context.

Within this approach, effective protection from the misuse of arms requires improved respect for the law, including international humanitarian law, in situations of armed conflict. Enhanced respect for the law can increase people's safety and security and thereby contribute to reducing the demand for weapons in response to danger. In the light of this, continuous capacity-building efforts are required to ensure that military police and security forces and other weapon-bearers use weapons in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights law. In this regard, the ICRC can provide practical support to States in the training of Government forces. It also promotes respect for international humanitarian law by non-State armed groups.

It is crucial for the international community to do far more to address in a comprehensive manner the terrible and long-lasting human costs of the widespread availability and misuse of small arms and light weapons. The safety and well-being of millions of people around the world depend on this

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

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make a statement before the voting.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, let me express our condolences to the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan with respect to the heavy human loss arising from the destructive earthquake in the province of Beluchistan. We ask the representative of Pakistan to convey our condolences and our support to the bereaved families and we wish the victims a speedy recovery.

We thank the Australian presidency for bringing to the consideration of the Security Council the important topic as small arms and light weapons. However, we cannot support the draft resolution prepared on this subject since it lacks an important and urgent provision advanced by Russia on the unacceptable nature of the supply of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. We believe that the root of the problem of small arms and light weapons is illicit trafficking. Russia has consistently advocated the adoption of measures aimed at preventing illicit weapons trafficking.

In this context, of particular importance is the issue of imposing universal prohibitions on the transfer of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors and unauthorized State recipients and users. Weapons in the hands of illegal militias most frequently become instruments for the violation of the fundamental human rights and the source of suffering for the civilian population. A salient example of that is the recent events in Mali, where weapons were used that had initially been transferred to Libyan groups for humanitarian reasons.

The black and grey markets for small and light weapons fuel terrorists, extremists, illegal militias, organized and street crime, and varying kinds of conflicts. Therefore, any document devoted to this subject must address such a critical aspect as preventing the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons. It is far easier to prevent the flow of weapons into the wrong hands and much more complex to later take them out of those hands.

In advancing our proposal, we took into account the current lack of any universal agreement establishing a ban on the transfer of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. This lacuna must be removed as soon as possible. We are certain that a universal ban on the delivery of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors would shut off one of the channels through which weapons are illicitly trafficked and as a result would be in the interest of the national security of essentially any State.

The negotiating process on the draft text for the international Arms Trade Treaty demonstrated that the Russian approach to non-State actors is supported by a considerable number of States. It was opposed only by those countries that believe that it is justified to arm non-State militias, rebel movements and groups that use violent force to seize power under the banner of fighting totalitarian regimes, tyranny, and so on. Depending on the region or the relation to the Government of the country on whose territories militias are operating, they may be seen as terrorist or extremists, while others, similar in most respects, are provided with weapons to carry out their so-called just struggle. This sounds as if there were bad terrorists and extremists and good ones, which in our view is something unacceptable.

Banning the delivery of small arms and light weapons to non-authorized State structures is one way to counter the uncontrolled dissemination of weapons,

which Russia has for many years consistently advanced in many multilateral formats, including when drafting the recently Arms Trade Treaty. Among other similar measures is a ban on the unauthorized re-export of weapons, enhanced State control over the end use of supplied weapons, controls over the activities of arms brokers, and preventing the transfer of weapons and piracy — that is, activities without appropriate licensing. These measures are not financially costly and do not require additional financial support.

We believe that the draft resolution could have focused greater attention on the limitations of the United Nations Programme of Action on the Prevention and the Eradication of the Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. That is only existing global document in the area of fighting the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons. It provides for a broad complex range of measures that States must adopt at the global, regional and national levels in order to fight illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and to prevent them from falling into the illicit hands of terrorist organizations, organized crime and States that are subject to sanctions of the Security Council.

The support of the members of the Security Council for the implementation of the Programme of Action is extremely useful in strengthening its authority. The potential of the Programme has not yet been exhausted. Much remains to be done to implement it, above all at the national and regional levels. We are certain that the practical implementation of the comprehensive approach proposed by Russia to enhance national controls over transfers of small arms and light weapons would make it possible to strengthen the security of individual countries and regions that face the difficult consequences of the use of illicit small arms and light weapons. In light of all this, the Russian Federation will abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

The President: I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Azerbaijan, Australia, China, France, Guatemala, Luxembourg, Morocco, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

Abstaining:

Russian Federation

The President: There were 14 votes in favour, none against and one abstention. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2117 (2013).

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Foreign Minister of Australia.

I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and report (S/2013/503), which have laid the foundation for today's discussion. I also thank the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross for her briefing and for the invaluable work her organization is undertaking.

Australia's region, the Indo-Pacific has experienced the devastating effects of the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons. Thirteen years ago, our friends in Solomon Islands faced the very real prospect of becoming a failed State after long-simmering tensions boiled over into ethnic conflict. Militants raided police armouries, high-powered firearms — coupled with other weapons that flowed across porous borders — exacerbated the conflict. The results were devastating — a coup, widespread killings, breakdown in governance, law and order, and years of economic contraction.

Australia led the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) with fellow Pacific Islands Forum members, at Solomon Islands' request, to restore law and order. That meant getting guns out of the community quickly. During a three-week amnesty, more than 4,000 firearms were surrendered or confiscated by RAMSI. This early and decisive action underpinned the peace that was built and maintained over the next 10 years.

Small arms and light weapons have had similar effects elsewhere in our region — in Timor-Leste and in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. As a member of the Council, we are reminded all too frequently of the threat that the proliferation and misuse of these weapons can pose to civilians, to States and to international peace and security, including in Mali and the Sahel, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. These weapons pose a grave threat to civilians, to peacekeepers, to humanitarian workers and to civil society organizations. Their proliferation and misuse can undermine the rule of law and human rights, and destroy efforts to rebuild broken societies.

We have all learned valuable lessons on how this threat can be overcome. While States have the primary responsibility to prevent the illicit transfer and misuse of these weapons, many will need support to do so. Peacekeeping and political missions can play a key role, as we saw in Solomon Islands. This has also been the experience in Côte d'Ivoire, where a small but dedicated arms-embargo monitoring unit in the United Nations mission has made a real impact in supporting the government to combat illicit arms flows.

Assistance to States in managing their own weapons — those held by their security forces — will often be the starting point. For States emerging from conflict, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes for former combatants must be carefully designed and implemented, and weapons accounted for. Security sector reform must include effective weapons management. Such transition processes must be inclusive, with women's participation being crucial. Existing controls, including national regulations and arms embargoes, must be fully implemented. Regional organizations will often be able to play a pivotal role.

The international community has demonstrated renewed resolve to combat the threat posed by small arms and light weapons. The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty this year was a landmark achievement that will help stop destabilizing arms flows to conflict regions and to illicit users. It will prevent human rights abusers and those who violate the laws of war from being supplied with arms.

The Council, by adopting resolution 2117 (2013) today, is demonstrating that it has an important role to play in addressing these challenges. The resolution will strengthen the implementation of the Council's arms embargoes. It supports peacekeepers' efforts to limit the impact of these weapons on post-conflict societies. Most importantly, the resolution demonstrates the fundamental importance that the Council places on protecting civilians and of full respect for international humanitarian law and human rights.

This international momentum must be maintained. The Council has taken too long to adopt its first resolution on small arms. And I should note that Australia has built on the earlier work of others — including Argentina some years ago — to get to this point. The Council should consider these issues more systematically, return to this subject with greater frequency, and ensure that our commitments today are not forgotten tomorrow.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the members of the Council.

President Pérez Molina (*spoke in Spanish*): Just two hours ago, I had the opportunity to address the General Assembly in the general debate that has brought us all together in New York. This also provided me with the opportunity to attend this meeting, which is of particular satisfaction to me. Some present here may recall that my intention to preside over the last open debate of the Security Council during Guatemala's presidency in October 2012 was thwarted by storm Sandy, and it is only now that I have the opportunity to personally take part in this forum in order to bear witness to the support of my Government to its work, which is so crucial to humanity.

We thank your Government, Madam President, for having organized this high-level meeting, as well as for having elaborated the concept note that guides our debate (S/2013/536). At the same time, I thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Ms. Beerli, for their respective presentations.

The issue of small arms and light weapons has been addressed more broadly within the General Assembly, the leadership of which on the subject should be recognized. However, we believe that this should not prevent the Security Council from playing an active and complementary role in the specific areas of its competence. These have been the subject of several reports of the Secretary-General and of numerous presidential statements. That is why we commend the delegation of Australia for having taken up this initiative, and of course support the text of resolution 2117 (2013), which the Council adopted a few moments ago. This is a historic event, taking into account that the Council has never before adopted a resolution that specifically addresses small arms and light weapons.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/503) underlines the scourge of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and its potential serious consequences for international peace and security — in particular, its impact on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. Despite the efforts of United Nations peacekeeping operations and mechanisms to assist States in complying with arms embargoes, the unregulated circulation of small arms continues to proliferate at an alarming rate. This phenomenon persists due to the

lucrative nature of illicit trade, poor regulation and lack of controls, including poorly or unsecured Government stockpiles. It is worth noting that women and children are often those who most suffer the consequences.

In addressing this phenomenon, we agree with the Secretary-General's recommendation concerning the importance of focusing on a comprehensive policy approach, highlighting the role of international, regional and subregional organizations. In particular, we welcome the partnerships that the United Nations has built in this area. Moreover, regarding the role of the arms industry, although the report of the Secretary-General recommends considering the use of new technologies to improve stockpile management and reduce the diversion of arms to illicit use, it would not be remiss to encourage producing States to promote accountability and the full implementation of existing laws and regulations in that sector. Our common goal should be to stop the overproduction of weapons.

We must support the existing regulatory framework and formulate concrete steps to strengthen and maximize the impact of the Council's responses to threats to peace and security caused by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. In particular, I would like to highlight the recognition of the responsibility of States themselves to protect their civilians — most of all women and children — and to emphasize that preventing the proliferation of small arms must be part of that commitment.

Furthermore, although the responsibility for establishing effective firearms controls and regulations lies with the State, account should be taken of the challenges that States in conflict or States emerging from conflict must face, which often reveal serious deficiencies at the institutional level and render them especially vulnerable to arms trafficking, which is often linked to drug trafficking and transnational organized crime.

Our own internal conflict was resolved 17 years ago, but we still suffer the violence, insecurity, criminality and organized crime associated, in part, with illicit weapons that are often purchased legally before being diverted to the illicit market. Our Government has striven to combat that phenomenon at the domestic, regional and international levels. At the national level, without providing an exhaustive list, I would like to mention some areas of progress, which include the renewal of the National Commission for the Prevention

of Armed Violence and the creation of the Centre for Arms and Ammunitions Control within the judicial branch. We are also developing a national policy for the prevention of violence, and we have signed several cooperation agreements with civil society.

At the international level, we actively participated in the negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty, which we acceded to on 24 June, proving once again the commitment of my country to general and complete disarmament and strengthening the international security system. We are currently engaging in consultations prior to remitting the Treaty to our Congress for its approval and subsequent ratification. The Council, more than any other international forum, has witnessed the high cost in human lives that the lack of a universal instrument of that kind entails, hence the importance of ensuring its early entry into force and universality.

In conclusion, we are fully committed to the implementation of the outcomes of the second 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.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jean Asselborn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg.

Mr. Asselborn (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Australian presidency for having taken the initiative of convening this high-level meeting on the issue of small arms. I also wish the President every success in her new functions.

The impact of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons on international peace and security can be felt in a number of the geographic situations and thematic issues of which the Security Council is seized. I strongly welcome resolution 2117 (2013), which we have just adopted, the first of its kind, in order to counter the phenomenon.

I thank the Secretary-General for his presentation and his report (S/2013/503). We support his recommendations. My thanks also go to the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross for her very enlightening briefing about a sad reality. It is estimated that, each year, small arms claim the lives of more than 500,000 people. The majority of

the victims — 300,000 persons — die in situations of armed conflict. The uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons undermines peace and security, particularly in Africa, and it has a devastating impact on civilians in armed conflict. Women and children often bear the brunt of that impact. The President of Nigeria recalled that fact last Tuesday, 24 September, during his address to the General Assembly (see A/68/PV.5) : for Africa, those small arms are the weapons of mass destruction.

Over the course of the past year, several countries in the Sahel have become more vulnerable as a result of the proliferation of weapons from within and outside the region, a lack of governmental control over army and police stockpiles, terrorist activities and related organized crime. To counter that threat in Mali, the Security Council established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). On 25 April we gave MINUSMA the mandate to assist the Malian authorities in weapons and ammunition management, notably through training.

At the regional level, we have high expectations for the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, which has to be carried out in close coordination with the relevant regional organizations.

For its part, Luxembourg is committed to working alongside its African partners, notably by supporting the activities of the African Francophone Network on Small Arms, a non-governmental organization and think-tank network whose objective is to improve shared knowledge on small arms proliferation, security and disarmament with a view to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The illicit transfer and destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons are often done in violation of embargoes imposed by Security Council resolutions. It is therefore the responsibility of our Council, through the various Sanctions Committees and with the assistance of the associated panels of experts as well as the United Nations missions deployed on the ground, to ensure the effective implementation of sanctions decided by the Council. All the States Members of the United Nations need to lend their support to the task. Our credibility is at stake.

On 2 April, the General Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty, which more than 100 Member States, including Luxembourg, have already signed. The majority of the members of the Security Council,

including now the majority of its permanent members, have signed it. My country resolutely supports that historic instrument and will continue to work towards its rapid entry into force and its full implementation. By setting norms for the responsible transfer of all conventional arms, the Treaty will have a positive impact on international law, international humanitarian law and human rights. By prohibiting arms transfers in certain cases and by imposing the obligation on exporting States to assess whether the arms could be used to commit or facilitate serious acts of violence against women or children, the Treaty will contribute in a concrete manner to reducing human suffering and ensuring peace, security and stability.

With the growing number of signatures and ratifications of the Arms Trade Treaty, the commitment by the whole international community and the momentum generated by today's meeting at the level of the Security Council, I trust that we will be able to decisively stem the scourge of the illicit trade in small arms.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Nick Clegg, Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Clegg (United Kingdom): None of us here today can fail to be concerned about the damage caused by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We all know the statistics. For every minute of our debate, a man, woman or child will die as a result of armed violence. We also know the facts. The only way we can tackle the issue seriously is by working together as an international community.

First, let me be clear. Tougher regulation is not about restricting the legitimate trade and use of small arms, such as in peacekeeping operations around the world. We do, however, have a duty to uphold human rights. Without tough global rules in place to govern the sale and availability of those weapons, too often they end up in the hands of criminals, terrorists and insurgents who use them to destabilize societies, fuel conflicts, prop up rogue regimes and commit atrocious acts.

As we saw during the tragic events in Kenya recently, those people did not confine their bullets to the battlefield. They use them across the world to terrorize and harm ordinary people.

Resolution 2117 (2013) gives us the chance to strengthen our joint efforts to tackle the issue and help secure peace and stability. A key part of that work, as the resolution recognizes, is the Arms Trade Treaty. The Treaty sets out, for the first time in history, a global set of legally binding rules to stop small arms and light weapons being sold, without concern for their ultimate use. Just yesterday, another 18 countries committed to the Treaty. We need just 50 States in total to ratify the Treaty so that it may enter into force. The United Kingdom is committed to ratifying it before the end of the year, because unless we put it into practice and start making it work on the ground, it will remain no more than a paper commitment. So I call on all of those States that have not yet done so to make the commitment to act as soon as possible.

The resolution is also a reminder that when it comes to arms embargoes, words are not enough. It is our collective responsibility to actively enforce them. That means we need to empower countries that need extra support to enforce embargoes. We need to turn up the pressure on countries that willfully allow or support their violation and bring such cases to the attention of the Council. We should not hesitate to prosecute those individuals and organizations breaking export controls within their own borders.

Finally, we cannot forget that those weapons are often used to intimidate women, children and men caught up in conflict through rape and other acts of sexual violence. Preventing the proliferation of small weapons is one important way that we can help to stop such horrendous acts. Over 115 States have endorsed the Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict. I would encourage all other States yet to do so, to join us in pledging their commitment to that initiative, in order to strengthen United Nations efforts and help organizations on the ground to support victims and their families.

In conclusion, I wish to thank you again, Madam President, for raising the issue and giving us the opportunity to renew our efforts to tackle the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Fabius (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish you, Madam President, every success in your new position.

As has been clearly stated by others before me, small arms and light weapons are responsible for 300,000 to 500,000 deaths each year. My British colleague mentioned one death each minute. They threaten States

and social structures. It is therefore essential that the United Nations continue to take action against the major scourge. As far as France and many present here are concerned, we committed early on to the fight against the proliferation of those weapons. We favoured the establishment of an international instrument. Following the adoption in 2001 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 we continued to work to strengthen it. Our efforts contributed to the adoption in 2005 of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We have also worked in a number of international forums to combat the illicit trafficking of such weapons by air.

This year, we adopted the first Arms Trade Treaty. France signed the document on 3 June and we intend to ratify it in the coming weeks; it is only through ratification that it will enter into force. Naturally, it will influence the proliferation of weapons and strengthen security. Like many here, I encourage all States Members of the United Nations that have not yet done so to sign the document in order that it may enter into force as quickly as possible.

With respect to resolution 2117 (2013), drafted by the Australian presidency, France believes that it is excellent and has supported it.

There is no single solution. In addition to the ongoing mobilization efforts of States, which remain essential, we must leverage all available tools to tackle the issue of small arms and light weapons, including international instruments, ad hoc measures, and specific actions and cooperation in the field, including the proposal of our Russian colleague. All of that must be coordinated based on local conditions and mutually defined goals.

I wish to conclude by stating the United Nations is an Organization that sometimes faces difficulties — as can be seen right now. But when we adopt a resolution of this nature and take a stand on a matter of such great magnitude, we see that the Organization, despite its limits, is absolutely indispensable to world peace.

Mr. Yun Byung-se (Republic of Korea): Let me begin by thanking you, Madam President, for convening today's important discussion. My appreciation also goes to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Vice-President Christine Beerli for their informative briefings. I am

also grateful to the Secretary-General for the valuable recommendations presented in his biennial report (S/2013/503).

Today's discussion and the adoption of resolution 2117 (2013) reflect the unswerving commitment of the international community to addressing the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. I believe that this meeting offers an excellent opportunity for us to work together in strengthening the Security Council's role on the issue, given the lengthy absence of a relevant high-level discussion in the Council.

The cross-cutting and adverse consequences of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons are well documented in numerous Security Council resolutions and presidential statements. It clearly demonstrates that no one country or institution can solve the problem alone. It requires continued commitment on the part of all sides, including by the Security Council.

First of all, each and every State is primarily responsible for preventing the proliferation and diversion of illicit small arms. Therefore, each State should ensure the highest degree of accountability in order to prevent its weapons from flowing into regions or countries of concern and falling into the wrong hands. In that regard, I believe that the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which was adopted in April, marked an important milestone in our efforts to prevent the illicit transfer and diversion of conventional arms. We appreciate the leadership of Australia and Argentina in bringing the ATT negotiations to fruition. The Republic of Korea, one of the original signatory States to the Treaty, will play its part in bringing the Treaty into force at an early date. I would also like to welcome the United States as a new signatory to that important treaty.

In addition, the Republic of Korea will also continue to lead efforts, along with Australia, in advancing the biennial General Assembly resolution on illicit brokering. I have every confidence that the resolution will be instrumental in creating yet another international norm against the merchants of death who profit from the world's deadliest conflicts and destroy fragile peace in recovering States.

Along with the efforts of each Member State, the Security Council must play a vital and increased role, given the multifaceted impact of small arms on its

country-specific and thematic agendas. Let me share a couple of ideas in that regard.

First, the Security Council's arms embargoes have acted as an effective line of defense against the illicit transfer of small arms. The Security Council therefore needs to exert greater efforts to ensure that the arms embargoes are more workable and to further assist Member States in their implementation. As rightly recommended by the Secretary-General, it will be a step in the right direction for the Council to mandate peacekeeping operations and political missions to assist in monitoring and implementing arms embargoes, including the collection of prohibited arms and the management of Government stockpiles, as appropriate.

Furthermore, it is equally important that the Council provide practical support to Member States in the implementation of arms embargoes. As the recent case of Panama's interdiction of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea vessel *Chong Chon Gang* clearly demonstrates, strict arms embargo measures imposed by Member States can make a real difference in combating arms proliferation. With effective and timely support from the Panel of Experts of the Sanctions Committees, for example, Member States will be able to implement arms embargoes with increased confidence.

Secondly, in order to better protect civilians, particularly women and children, in armed conflicts, the Council's post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, such as programmes for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform, require further improvement. Peacekeeping, peacebuilding missions and special political missions should be given effective mandates and sufficient resources to enable them to fully support their host Governments. As the Secretary-General points out in his report, support actions for arms control and regulation should be considered in the planning of integrated peace missions. Reinforced border controls can also contribute to making disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes more sustainable.

Thirdly, enhanced coordination and information sharing across the United Nations system would create synergy in better combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In that vein, we support the enhanced role of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms, which is the United Nations inter-agency task force on small arms.

Finally, the Security Council needs to establish a follow-up mechanism to the Secretary-General's biennial reports. To maintain that momentum and move a step forward, we need to continually assess where we are and where we are heading through such an established process.

Many conflicts and much post-conflict violence throughout the world are fuelled and exacerbated by small arms and light weapons. The scale of the associated human suffering is immense; women and children are particularly vulnerable. Inaction and procrastination today will result in a high cost tomorrow.

As the Korean Government pursues the goal of well-being for all global citizens, it will continue to exert its sincere efforts in combating the illicit use and trade in small arms and light weapons, while providing effective assistance for ongoing global peacebuilding efforts, in particular in the development of fragile States.

The Security Council must take the lead in restoring peace and stability and ensure that the security and well-being of civilians are key elements of its considerations. We must work together to maintain the valuable and long-awaited momentum created by the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty and today's high-level meeting.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Saad-Eddine El Othmani, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Mr. El Othmani (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, let me congratulate Australia for its outstanding presidency of the Security Council this month, and we commend your excellent choice, Madam, of the subject for this high-level meeting. I also express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for the excellent report (S/2013/503) he presented to the Council and the recommendations contained therein.

The concept note (S/2013/536, annex) circulated by the Australian presidency has raised relevant questions related to the mechanisms for coordinating international efforts to ensure an effective fight against the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and to seek better ways to address the challenges related to it. The world is unanimous with respect to the repercussions of that scourge — loss of human life, the destruction of economic capacities and threats to the peace and security of States and their territorial integrity. It

also prolongs conflict, worsens armed violence and undermines humanitarian, international and human rights law. Furthermore, the close nexus between terrorism, organized crime, human trafficking, drug trafficking and trafficking in certain national resources is clear.

Unfortunately, Africa bears the brunt of the disastrous effects of that scourge. In that regard, the Sahel region and the region of the Sahara are testimonies to the link between illicit arms trafficking, terrorist separatist groups and organized crime. Security risks extending beyond the borders of the Sahel have worsened because of the increase in arms flows in recent years, particularly those originating from the Libyan stockpiles of the previous regime. That threatens the region with more instability and reinforces the arsenals of terrorist groups.

Addressing those challenges requires international cooperation to support, in particular, the capacities of States in the region. Therefore, the initiative of the Secretary-General to hold a high-level meeting on counter-terrorism strategies in the Sahel and the region and the special meeting organized by the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which Morocco had the honour to chair, are of particular importance within the framework of the cooperation and assistance to be provided to the Sahel region to bolster its counter-terrorism capacities.

The Kingdom of Morocco would like to reaffirm the great importance of 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. We reaffirm our support to the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as the international follow-up Small Arms Review Conference. Morocco calls for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action by national and regional authorities within the framework of the work plan adopted by the second Small Arms Review Conference. Furthermore, we welcome the opening for signature of the Arms Trade Treaty and the holding of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, which was presided over by the excellent Australian diplomat Mr. Woolcott. Morocco hopes that this instrument will help to strengthen international efforts to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

For the same reasons, the Kingdom of Morocco, since 2006, has taken part in the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. We contributed to launching the Declaration together with Switzerland and 41 other States, the United Nations Development Programme and non-governmental organizations active in the area of development. That initiative, which now has 109 countries signatories, is working to assist the countries that suffer from armed violence to help them put an end to that scourge and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. That is done by integrating disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in their national development policies. Morocco would like to call for international efforts to be taken. However, in fighting illicit trafficking we need to count international law and the Charter with respect to the right of each State to import small arms and light weapons and manufacture them for their legitimate needs with respect to national defence and to ensure territorial integrity.

In conclusion, we hope that this meeting and resolution 2117 (2013), which was just adopted, will strengthen cooperation internationally, regionally and subregionally. We reaffirm that we need to step up our efforts at cooperation to implement the programme of work and all of the commitments pertaining to international instruments. We commend civil society and the role that it plays in dealing with this scourge.

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Louise Mushikiwabo, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Rwanda.

Ms. Mushikiwabo (Rwanda): I wish to begin by congratulating you, Madam President, on your recent appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia. I personally look forward to working with you. Also, thank you, Madam President, for choosing the topic of small arms and light weapons for this high-level meeting of your presidency. We are all fully aware that the last time this threat was considered by the Security Council (see S/PV.5881) makes this meeting long overdue. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General and the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

As we contemplate the danger caused by arms and weapons in the wrong hands, I would also like to express my sympathy and solidarity with the people

of Kenya, neighbours of Rwanda, many of whom only days ago experienced a heinous crime made possible, in great part, by the accessibility of the weapons we are talking about today. As the Secretary-General says in his report (S/2013/503), it is an indisputable fact that the excessive, cruel and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons poses a substantial threat to international peace and security, human rights and social development in many countries, including on our own continent, Africa.

It is a reality that the African continent, particularly the Great Lakes region, where Rwanda is located, continues to be engulfed by internal armed conflicts facilitated by such easily accessible weapons. We know from experience that small arms and light weapons have neither a small nor a light impact on communities devastated by conflict, and we should therefore not be fooled by those adjectives. It is in recognition of the grave harm caused by the illicit manufacture, transfer, circulation, excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons that we emphasize the importance of regional and subregional cooperation, in regard to which Rwanda has subscribed to and ratified 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. Rwanda has also been party to a number of initiatives, taken at international, regional and local levels, that have culminated in lifesaving commitments.

Rwanda has established and implemented a policy on firearms and ammunition that provides for measures regulating the import, transfer, brokering, marking and licensing of firearms, ammunition and munitions. As a result, so far 42,266 arms and 52 tons of unexploded ordinance have been destroyed in the last several years. Reports to the Regional Centre on Small Arms have shown that Rwanda is ahead in the subregion in the management of stockpiles of arms and ammunition. We take this opportunity to applaud United Nations States Members that have signed the Arms Trade Treaty, adopted by the General Assembly on 2 April. My country was among the many that signed the Treaty when it was first opened for signature here at Headquarters. We are proud to be associated with the Treaty, which includes small arms in its scope and backs up prevailing international and regional instruments for the control and regulation of conventional small arms and light weapons.

We would like to recognize the efforts of the Regional Centre on Small Arms based in Nairobi and the East African community's small arms and light weapons programmes, as well as other regional organizations, in their work in combating the illicit use and transfer of small arms and light weapons. We remain convinced that such regional efforts will help to ensure cooperation in addressing the illicit transfer and destabilizing accumulation and misuse of such arms and weapons.

In conclusion, Rwanda would like to call on all members of the Security Council to work closely and support regional initiatives in a true spirit of partnership, remembering that we have not just an individual but a collective obligation and responsibility to avert and combat the destabilizing accumulation and illicit manufacture, trade and circulation of small arms and light weapons.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Adviser on National Security and Foreign Affairs to the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Mr. Aziz (Pakistan): I would like to begin by thanking Australia for convening this meeting, and the Secretary-General for presenting his comprehensive report on small arms (S/2013/503).

As my colleagues have pointed out, the illicit trade in arms and light weapons is causing havoc around the world. Terrorists and rebels are targeting peacekeepers, police and security forces. Civilians bear the brunt of armed conflict, which is fuelled by the proliferation, accumulation and use of such arms. The illicit trade in these weapons abets crimes and contributes to narcotic drug trafficking. In our region, we have first-hand experience of the lethal nature of such arms. Every day, innocent people fall victim to the murderous designs of terrorists, criminals and zealots using such weapons, which are cheap, easy to transport and easy to conceal. We agree with the United Nations that such arms are dominant tools of criminal violence and warfare.

Small arms also have huge social and economic costs. Instability created by the use of illicit light weapons drives away investment, slows human development and impedes economic growth. Terrorists and criminals do not manufacture those arms. They buy them in illicit arms markets or receive them from forces and entities that want to destabilize particular regions. It is therefore the responsibility of all States,

the Council and the United Nations to take measures to prevent the illicit trade in such arms and their transfer, diversion and misuse. We must show strong resolve in opposing the criminals who use small arms and the networks that supply them with these killing machines.

The Security Council has done a commendable job in reducing the adverse consequences of the illicit trade in these weapons, even as new flows and hotspots keep emerging. We support the Secretary-General's recommendations for using new technologies for stockpile management, making national systems for marking and tracing weapons more efficient, and monitoring the activities of traders and brokers more closely.

To stem the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons, we need a comprehensive and integrated approach. The existing mechanisms have mainly focused on regulating the supply side of this complex issue. In our view, greater attention must be paid to addressing the issues related to the demand side. Unresolved disputes, the growth in terrorist activities and the rise in illicit narcotics and organized crime are the driving forces behind the demand for the illegal small arms trade. The Security Council can address that aspect by playing a more active role in the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts.

The Government of Pakistan has taken several steps to regulate the sale, supply, import and transfer of small arms. We have regularly filed national implementation reports under the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, outlining the national measures taken over the years. Pakistan has developed the necessary legislative, regulatory, enforcement and institutional mechanisms to address the range of issues relating to small arms and light weapons. An inter-ministerial group addresses those issues in an integrated manner. We have adopted policy guidelines on the export of conventional arms and established a national evaluation mechanism to regulate their trade. We now plan to take additional measures to strengthen the enforcement regime, which covers imports and licences.

The success last year of the second 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 the adoption this year of the Arms Trade Treaty

are important milestones in advancing our shared objective of preventing the proliferation of those arms. National ownership, I believe, is a key tool for spurring international efforts to deal effectively with small arms.

For developing countries, particularly in Africa, as pointed out by other colleagues, the role of international assistance and cooperation is critical. It is the main enabler of global, regional and national efforts to regulate and prevent the use of those arms. We therefore call for stronger commitment from the international community to mobilize resources in that regard in order to help smaller countries deal with the devastation caused by the illegal trade in arms.

One of the main objectives of the resolution adopted today (resolution 2117 (2013)) is to protect innocent human lives. In that context, we agree with the Secretary-General's observation that drone strikes result in child casualties and have had a serious impact on their psychosocial health. In Pakistan, we frequently experience casualties of civilians, including women and children, inflicted by armed drones. We call for an end to the use of drone strikes, as they violate international law, including international humanitarian law, and are also detrimental to our efforts to fight terrorism.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Elmar Maharram oglu Mammadyarov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Mammadyarov (Azerbaijan): I would like to start by expressing my profound gratitude to the Australian presidency of the Security Council for having convened today's meeting on the very important issue of small arms and light weapons.

The high-level participation today attests to the importance accorded by the members of the Security Council to an acute problem being faced in many parts of the world, including our own. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross for their informative and insightful presentations.

The holding of today's meeting is timely. It provides us with an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the Council's decisions on the small arms and light weapons problem in conflict and post-conflict situations in its purview, consider practical steps to strengthen its responses and give impetus to the implementation of relevant international obligations in that sphere.

The consequences of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons are grave and immeasurable. Yet the worldwide negative effects are more than evident. In a sense, small arms and light weapons may not trigger conflicts but their excessive accumulation and wide availability beyond control heighten tensions, exacerbate armed violence, prolong conflicts and fuel terrorism and criminal activities.

Domestically and in a wider context, the impact of illicit small arms and light weapons circulation has similar security, political and socioeconomic dimensions. Its repercussions often become serious impediments to the democratic and economic development of countries and whole regions. The latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/503) aptly defines the scope, gravity and magnitude of the undermining impact of small arms and light weapons on international peace and security in several regions. Most importantly, it offers a number of pertinent recommendations and observations on some aspects of the problem. We believe that the recommendations related to the Security Council engagement on the issue should receive new consideration and be properly reflected in its future decisions.

More generally, we emphasize the utmost importance of continued and full implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action on Small Arms as the main international framework to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, as well as the 2005 International Tracing Instrument.

Building strong national capacities is pivotal for the effective implementation by States of their relevant obligations. Various multilateral mechanisms and processes should aim to foster international cooperation and assistance for States and complement national and regional efforts.

Azerbaijan fully supports international initiatives and instruments on the prevention and eradication of the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled proliferation. The same position concerns first and foremost the 2001 Programme of Action on Small Arms. At the regional level, we stress the relevance of the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and

its important contribution to addressing the problems in the OSCE area. Azerbaijan takes all the appropriate measures at the national, regional and global levels to implement its commitments and meet the objectives of that instrument. We have established efficient inter-agency cooperation and information sharing as well as a robust national export control system that involves best practices.

Azerbaijan stands for increased transparency and responsible behaviour in the global trade in small arms and light weapons and conventional weapons. However, our efforts taken at the national and international levels are being seriously hampered by the continued occupation of Azerbaijani territories by neighbouring Armenia. In gross violation of international law and the relevant regional documents to which it is a party, Armenia continues its military build-up in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Large quantities of small arms and light weapons and conventional weaponry are being channelled to that territory beyond international control. Azerbaijan has repeatedly drawn the attention of the international community to the illegal transfer of small arms and light weapons and other conventional weaponry by Armenia to the occupied territories of my country. We urge all States to refrain from, condemn and prevent such illegal activities, which violate Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity and, more broadly, prevent the establishment of peace and prosperity in the region.

In conclusion, I would like to welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2117 (2013) as an outcome of our deliberations today. Not only does the resolution provide an important basis for reinforcing the Council's engagement on small arms and light weapons but it also effectively guides the efforts of the States Members of the United Nations and the relevant entities in the implementation of the Council's decision on that cross-cutting problem. I commend Australia for its hard work in that regard.

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Samantha Power, Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations and a member of President Obama's Cabinet.

Ms. Power (United States of America): Madam President, you should know that your Ambassador, Mr. Gary Quinlan, and his team have done a magnificent job this month in the presidency of the Security Council. We are all very grateful to them.

My Government welcomes today's ministerial meeting and is pleased that greater attention is being paid to the danger posed to international stability and human life by the illicit trafficking, stockpiling and use of small arms and light weapons.

On behalf of the United States, I congratulate our friends from Australia for their leadership in bringing this subject to the attention of the Security Council and for promoting action that reaffirms the commitment of the international community to addressing the problem in a consistent, persistent and coordinated way. I also commend the Secretary-General for his recent report on small arms (S/2013/503), which includes a wealth of insights and observations that have informed the Council's unprecedented action this afternoon. I thank International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Vice-President Beerli for her briefing and for the valuable work that ICRC does each and every day, often at grave risk, around the world.

The urgency and timeliness of the resolution adopted today (resolution 2117 (2013)) is reflected in the recent terrorist attack in Kenya, ongoing violence in the Central African Republic, the devastation caused by recent fighting in Mali and the daily toll of suffering caused by armed criminals, illegal militias, drug cartels, pirates and others with illegitimate access to such weapons. The resolution highlights the special risks that illicit weapons pose to vulnerable groups, including refugees, the internally displaced, women and children and members of civil society, including those who deliver humanitarian assistance to families in desperate need. We are also reminded on a daily basis that the availability of illicit arms is both a cause and the result of violence, as rival groups arm themselves in response to the growing arsenals of the other. Our task, and it is a fully appropriate one for the Security Council, is to encourage States to act together to reverse those cycles of destruction and to invest our energy and resources on behalf of the rule of law.

Of course, we recognize that nations have the right to defend themselves and their citizens and that small arms and light weapons are manufactured legally and traded and retained for legitimate purposes, and we would strongly oppose any effort impinge on the constitutional rights of our citizens to bear arms. Our concerns arise when legal controls break down and, through weakness of governance, corruption or other lawless activity, deadly weapons fall into the wrong hands.

Every State has an obligation to prevent the illegal transfer and accumulation of weapons, and in particular to abide by Security Council resolutions pertaining to the flow of arms into countries in conflict. We each have a responsibility to work as partners in seeking to improve border controls, support United Nations peace operations, promote the sharing of information among law enforcement agencies, and comply with relevant international treaties and agreements.

The many dimensions of that task as reflected in the programmes and policies of my own Government, which has worked for many years to assist States in developing better law-enforcement capabilities and stockpile-management systems, while also discouraging irresponsible and indiscriminate arms exports. Last year alone, we contributed more than \$149 million to some 35 countries to safely destroy surplus conventional weapons and inform area residents of potential risks from unexploded munitions.

Looking ahead, I urge the Council to maintain its focus on this challenge and to make creative use of the full range of available options, including quick-response mechanisms, in order to save lives by reducing dramatically and permanently the illicit flow of light weapons and small arms.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, Madam, I wish to welcome your presence leading this meeting of the Security Council. I thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Ms. Beerli, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, for their briefings. I wish to express my appreciation and thanks to Australia for the preparations it made for this meeting.

The illicit trade in and excessive accumulation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons have posed a major challenge to the international community. The international security situation is complex and volatile and rife with both traditional and non-traditional security threats, such as regional unrest, terrorism and transnational organized crime. Globalization, IT applications and new technological revolutions have added complexity to the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

All of this poses new challenges to many countries, in particular developing countries in Africa and Latin America. The Security Council should continue to play a positive role and urge the international community to

redouble its efforts in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

In that regard, I wish to make the following proposals. First, we should take a holistic approach in addressing both the symptoms and the root causes. The international community should commit itself to resolving disputes through political and diplomatic means and to safeguarding regional and international peace. At the same time, we should enhance peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction and help the relevant countries to achieve economic development and social stability in an effort to eliminate the root causes of wars, conflict, terrorism and organized crime. This would pave the way for a fundamental solution to the issue of small arms and light weapons.

Secondly, we should bring into full play the role of the United Nations as the major actor. We should comprehensively and effectively implement the outcomes reached under the framework of the United Nations, work for steady progress in the relevant processes, and intensify the fight against the illicit trade in arms at the national, regional and international levels. The United Nations should play an even greater role in promoting international cooperation and assistance in that regard.

Thirdly, we should strengthen international cooperation. The law-enforcement bodies of all countries should enhance their coordination and maintain closer links with multilateral institutions, such as INTERPOL, with a view to increasing information exchange and practical cooperation through bilateral and multilateral channels. Different regions can establish their own priorities and develop effective measures in the light of their specific situations. Developed countries should provide greater assistance to developing countries in the areas of institution-building, personnel training, capital and technology.

Fourthly, Governments need to enhance their capacity-building. National Governments bear the primary responsibility to fight the illicit trade in arms. All countries should comply with Security Council resolutions involving arms embargoes, improve their domestic legislation in the light of national conditions, and tighten control on small arms and light weapons so as to cut off the source of their illicit trade.

The Chinese Government has been consistently and firmly against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We fully understand the concerns of the

relevant countries and regions and deeply sympathize with them. Over the years, China has taken an active part in international cooperation in this area and improved its domestic management of the small arms trade, thereby contributing to efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

First, we have enhanced legislation, law enforcement and capacity-building. The Chinese Government has exerted strict controls over small arms and light weapons in accordance with the law of the People's Republic of China on the control of firearms and other laws and regulations. We have promulgated precise regulations for small-arms marking that provide for the detailed marking of small arms and light weapons, and put in place an information system for the management of guns used for official purposes. Chinese law enforcement departments have carried out several special campaigns to confiscate guns and combat violence. As a result, the gun-related crime rate has gone down year after year, contributing to continued social stability and the safety of people and their property.

We have actively engaged in bilateral and multilateral exchanges and cooperation and in providing foreign assistance. The competent departments in China have played an active role in international exchanges and practical cooperation. We have provided assistance to other countries and multilateral organizations in the form of capital, technology and personnel training within the frameworks of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. In addition, China has provided assistance in various forms to approximately 40 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America in order to help them address humanitarian crises that have been triggered by mines and explosive remnants of war.

Thirdly, China has adopted a prudent and responsible approach towards the export of small arms and light weapons. Acting in strict compliance with the principles of never impairing regional peace and security and of non-interference in the internal affairs of recipient countries, China has exported no small arms and light weapons to countries or regions that are subject to Security Council arms embargoes or to non-State entities and individuals.

The Chinese Government has put in place a sound arms-export control system that includes end-user certification and export licensing, among other things. In particular, China has established a record-keeping system for the export of small arms and light weapons.

Building a peaceful and prosperous world free from gun violence is an aspiration shared by the Chinese people and the people of all countries alike. China will work with the international community and continue to strive tirelessly to find a solution to the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Menan (Togo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Madam, for the initiative of organizing this meeting on the issue of the consequences of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons for international peace and security. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross for their presentations on the issue.

The most widespread and easily accessible instruments of violence are small arms and light weapons. Their proliferation and accumulation pose a genuine threat to international peace and security and to the development of many countries. These weapons are light in name only, because in countries in conflict and even those at peace, they are often the leading cause of violence, suffering, loss of human life, unspeakable misfortune and turmoil for families and societies.

The disturbing ease with which such weapons can be acquired is a result of the illegal trade going on around the world. There is also a direct link between the illicit trade in small arms and the activities of armed groups, rebels and terrorists, as well as the illegal exploitation of natural resources.

Africa, like other continents, has not been spared the uncontrolled circulation and use of small arms. Because of weaknesses of every kind and vulnerability of its States, Africa remains, unfortunately, the most profitable market for arms dealers and thus has the highest number of victims. Given this situation, it is imperative that effective measures be taken against their proliferation and illegal use in order to prevent conflicts and ensure States' stability and the success of peacebuilding processes.

We welcome the fact that the international community is now involved in the process of

negotiating the limitation, control and reduction of weapons systems. The Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, which entered into force in 2005, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, is one of many examples of the United Nations response to this scourge. Even more important were the adoption and opening for signature by the General Assembly of the Arms Trade Treaty (see resolution 67/234 B). These positive actions by the United Nations complement the many national, subregional and regional initiatives on the African continent.

Despite all these initiatives, the existence of uncontrolled weapons remains a multidimensional problem that is deeply interlinked with other, broader security issues and that has implications for development. The biggest problem is the coordination of the various national and subregional initiatives, given limited resources and legal systems and institutional and technical capacities that vary so greatly. All that is against the backdrop of porous borders and the risk of national efforts losing their relevance. It goes without saying that no State can fight alone against this phenomenon.

The nature of the problem caused by small arms therefore requires coordinated and complementary efforts among the various organs of the United Nations system.

Mainly, it is important that Security Council fulfil its mandate to ensure peace and security in the world by giving increased attention to two fundamental issues: respect for arms embargoes, and participation in the disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration of ex-combatants. Indeed, arms embargoes must be respected in order to prevent arms from falling into unsuitable hands. In view of this, the Council must take, as necessary, sanctions against those who violate embargoes.

Similarly, the management of post-conflict situations is a very important element. Thus, it is imperative to collect weapons from ex-combatants and neutralize and destroy them. Such programmes should be systematically included in peace agreements ending internal conflicts and in the mandates of peacekeeping operations. These actions should go hand in hand with the demobilization of ex-combatants and their

integration into civilian life, with particular attention to the plight of child soldiers.

The work of the Security Council would be more effective if it were accompanied by support from the international community. Certainly, the General Assembly adopted, on 2 April 2013, the Arms Trade Treaty, which Togo welcomed and proceeded to sign the first day of its opening for signature. The international community should work for the ratification and rapid entry into force of the Treaty and ensure its effective and practical implementation. Togo is preparing to carry out this formality within the next few weeks.

However, in the meantime, the international community and the United Nations should help countries strengthen arms control and facilitate the harmonization of national legislation and regional and subregional coordination. A special focus by the Security Council on this issue will allow us to effectively address the security and humanitarian dimensions of the phenomenon, as the resolution just adopted (resolution 2117 (2013)) urges us to do.

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are pleased to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia presiding over this debate on small arms. The importance and significance of this discussion are highlighted by the presence of dignitaries, foreign ministers and other high-level individuals here today. We also note the participation of the Secretary-General and welcome his report (S/2013/503). We thank the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross for her statement.

Argentina welcomes the adoption of the first resolution on small arms (resolution 2117 (2013)), which crystallizes the objectives promoted by my country during its former presidency of the Security Council, in March 2006, as you so generously mentioned, Madam President. The fact that Australia has undertaken this initiative speaks to the shared convictions and the fact that there is no room in this Organization for monopolized agendas or privileged positions for anyone. It is obvious that the essence of true multilateralism is working together. It is a shared responsibility, one that has to do with solidarity, that is strategic: to build, for everyone, a more just, secure and peaceful world.

It is the duty and responsibility of the international community to intensify and multiply the efforts to eradicate the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, as they pose a challenge to the maintenance

of international peace and security. It is important that the measures taken are aimed at more control and transparency in the stockpiling and transfer of weapons, an improvement of international cooperation, including the exchange of information and confidence-building measures, and capacity-building assistance to States in order to establish effective arms control and regulatory measures and to enable them to implement their commitments under the relevant instruments, both regionally and internationally, including the arms embargoes established by the Security Council.

The stockpiling and uncontrolled spread of small arms and ammunition have severe implications for human development, sustainable economic growth and peace. As mentioned previously, armed violence erodes the fabric of society; diverts investments in infrastructure, health and education; promotes political insecurity; increases crime; and foments political instability and a climate of impunity.

We know that throughout the world violence in conflict and post-conflict situations is carried out mostly with conventional weapons, especially small arms and light weapons, which are available because of the very lucrative business of smuggling, as well as regulations and controls that are really insufficient or nonexistent. It should be clear that the uncontrolled proliferation of these weapons has a devastating impact on civilians, especially women and children. That is why Argentina believes it a priority to strengthen existing mechanisms to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Argentina approaches the problems arising from small arms in the context of a comprehensive strategy that includes elements related to international security, defence, non-proliferation and domestic security. This strategy includes both domestic and foreign policy actions through our participation in efforts at the international and regional level. The premise on which we base ourselves is that the fight against the proliferation and illicit trafficking of small arms depends largely on the policies that countries are willing to adopt in the domestic arena, such as periodic reviews of control measures for arms exports. However, efforts to prevent and combat the illicit trafficking in and irresponsible transfers of arms will be effective only if appropriate regulation and controls exist at the regional and international level.

In that conviction, Argentina participated actively alongside other countries in the negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty, in the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, and in the meetings 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, among others. The Southern Common Market has been working to the same end.

It is estimated that the worldwide traffic in small arms and light weapons amounts to more than 650 million, that 1,500 people die every day as a result of armed violence, and that 60 per cent of all human rights violations are committed with small arms. In Syria, to cite but one instance, the horror of chemical weapons, whose use is a war crime and a crime against humanity, should not overshadow the need to remember that 99 per cent of victims have been claimed by conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons.

We emphasize that resolution 2117 (2013), which we have just adopted, recognizes the link between the unregulated circulation of small arms, on the one hand, and sexual violence and violence against children, on the other, in situations of armed conflict, although examples of this link also abound in peacetime. Various studies show that in any region of the world the possession of a small arm in the family space increases by 41 per cent the risk of a family member being murdered, while for women this risk increases threefold. The danger is only heightened in situations of armed conflict.

We note that, in the context of measures to prevent the proliferation of weapons, the effective implementation without double standards of the sanctions imposed by the Security Council is essential. Sanctions are not an end in themselves, but strict compliance with them — on the part not only of those against whom they are addressed, but also the rest of the membership, especially the producers and exporters of weapons — is a significant factor in reducing the availability of weapons and conflict. At the same time, it is necessary to prevent targeted transfers to a country in conflict or where they can be used to commit violations of international humanitarian law and human rights and disrupt communal security.

Through you, Madam President, we commend the focused and committed work of the Australian Mission, led by Ambassador Gary Quinlan. As is emphasized in the concept note drawn up for this meeting (S/2013/536), armed violence is not only a cause of endemic poverty but also a consequence thereof. We hope that the resolution which the Security Council has adopted today, based on the broad agreement that the international community achieved in adopting the Arms Trade Treaty, will open a new phase in which, to paraphrase the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, the merchants of death will be displaced by the peacemakers.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.