



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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Statement by H.E. Mr. Yoshiki Mine
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to the Conference on Disarmament
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during the 61st Session of the General Assembly
Thematic Discussion: Conventional Weapons
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Madam Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,

The Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects adopted by consensus in 2001 is a comprehensive normative guideline to be followed by the entire international community. In the five years since its adoption, the PoA has demonstrated its effectiveness, and we have much to be proud of, with measurable progress in tackling this problem at the national, regional and global levels. Furthermore, civil society has taken significant actions to supplement the governmental activities.

Madam Chair,

Let me cite some major achievements on the implementation of the PoA. First of all, the international instrument on marking and tracing has been adopted. This first instrument, negotiated and concluded among all Member States under the PoA in order to address a specific issue in the field of SALW, is a highly significant milestone in our efforts. Regardless of whether the instrument is legally binding or politically binding, what is important for the international community is to faithfully implement all the measures agreed in the instrument, which is required for a successful conclusion to our efforts to tackle the SALW problem.

Second, the GGE on illicit brokering begins its deliberations after this Committee in November. This is also a very important issue to be dealt with, which is taken up in the

follow-up section of the PoA alongside the tracing issue. Major outstanding matters, for example, the scope, licensing problem, extra-territorial jurisdiction, will be discussed in the course of the Group's deliberations.

Third, the growing rate of submission of national reports, as well as the increase in the number of National Points of Contact, deserve special mention. In order to effectively address the SALW problem, coordination among the internal agencies concerned is indispensable. Furthermore, international cooperation through information sharing among countries is also essential for the concerted efforts of the international community in this area to succeed. In this light, Japan continues to encourage those countries which have not yet done so to submit a national report and to establish or designate a National Point of Contact.

Fourth, a growing awareness of the necessity to address demand factors in tackling the SALW problem is also an important aspect to be considered. The PoA itself stresses the urgency to combat this problem from both a supply and demand perspective. Based on the deliberations held in the special session at the Review Conference this summer, we should continue to endeavor to address demand factors through best practices and lessons learned.

Madam Chair,

I am very proud that Japan has contributed to the aforementioned progress through its work on the draft resolution on SALW, which lays out a concrete roadmap for global efforts. It was not our expectation that there would be no final document at the Review Conference on the implementation of the PoA. However, it is Japan's position that this is not necessarily a negative outcome. We did conduct a very good exchange of views as well as discussions on the implementation of the PoA through the negotiations for the draft outcome document and draw the special attention of the international community to this issue in "placing the problem of SALW on the front burner of disarmament", as indicated by Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs. We therefore can say that the Conference was for the most part successful. We should continue to make such efforts within the framework of the United Nations. Japan believes that these efforts should be pursued in parallel with the efforts at the regional and national levels in order to

effectively tackle this problem. Japan, together with Colombia and South Africa, presented a draft resolution entitled "The illicit trade of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects" again this year. An in-depth presentation of the draft will be made by the distinguished Ambassador from South Africa. I therefore will limit myself to pointing out that the continuation of our efforts in the UN framework is one of the essential points in this year's draft resolution. We sincerely hope that we will receive the support and cooperation of all Member States for the resolution's consensus adoption, as we believe that it offers an effective approach to resolving this problem.

Madam Chair,

While the inclusion of transparency in armament in the draft resolution on SALW still requires careful consideration in light of the existence of a specific resolution on this matter and the difference in the scope of each resolution, our efforts to strengthen confidence-building measures through improved transparency should also be continued. Certainly, enhancing openness and transparency in armaments is conducive to the prevention of arms races and excessive arms build-ups, and therefore, the issue of TIA must be recognized as being critically important in the promotion of international disarmament. When the issue of TIA is brought up for consideration, the contribution of the UN Conventional Arms Register can by no means be discounted. The principle was established by "the resolution on transparency in armaments" submitted by Japan in cooperation with the former EC in 1991 to the UN General Assembly. In recent years, more than 110 countries have registered every year, and as of 2004, 170 countries had registered at least once. The fact that so many UN Member States participate in the Register is a good indication that the idea that "greater mutual security can be achieved through improved transparency in armaments" is gradually taking hold.

The meetings of the GGE on the UN Conventional Arms Register, the latest having been held this year, have steadily generated a great number of welcome accomplishments. The inclusion of MANPADS as a new subcategory under "Missiles and missile launchers" and the agreement on a standardized reporting form for small arms and light weapons are just a couple of recent examples of these accomplishments..

In this manner, through its ongoing review, the reliability of the Register is being improved as a confidence-building measure. Furthermore, while welcoming the steady increase in the number of participating countries, we must continue to strive for the universalization of the Register. Given that the Register is a confidence-building measure, we must literally build confidence through the ongoing involvement of all UN Member States.

Madam Chair,

This year, within the CD, we also had effective, in-depth deliberations on TIA in the framework of structured debate. We are very pleased about this because, although TIA has been placed on the agenda within the CD, over the last few years there had been no substantial discussions on the subject. Japan believes that the cooperation between the UN and the CD in the field of TIA should be strengthened. The activities of the CD for this year provided a good basis for such cooperation. The first and most important step for this purpose is to seriously study and follow the on-going activities made at the national, regional and global levels, and to identify problems which require more action. Furthermore, the establishment, in the future, of a feedback mechanism on the achievements of each forum would be extremely helpful for our objectives.

Madam Chair,

Efforts towards the creation of an arms trade treaty (ATT) within the UN framework should also be given due attention. A draft resolution on an ATT has been submitted to this Committee by like-minded countries including Japan. Recognizing that the absence of common international standard in arms trade, the proposal for an ATT aims to reduce unregulated and irresponsible weapons transfers. Indeed, assuring the responsible transfer of arms through an ATT, and registering them in accordance with the UN Register are mutually reinforcing measures, contributing to the strengthening of confidence-building, and thus enhancing both global and regional security. Against this backdrop, Japan believes that a legally binding instrument on the arms trade should be pursued for the consolidation of global peace and security.

Japan does not, in principle, export arms to the other countries, in accordance with its relevant domestic laws as well as its Three Principles on Non Arms Export, and believes that the international community should make further efforts to effectively regulate the transfer of conventional weapons, by establishing a well-defined set of principles. Japan is prepared to make constructive contributions to such efforts.

Thank you for your attention.