

**UNITED STATES REPORT TO THE SECOND BIENNIAL
MEETING OF STATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS PROGRAM OF ACTION FOR SMALL ARMS
AND LIGHT WEAPONS**

Delivered by
Deputy Director for the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement
United States Department of State
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Thank you Mr. Chairman. It is my honor and privilege to present the United States report to the Second Biennial Meeting of States on the efforts the United States has undertaken to implement the UN Program of Action since our last meeting here in 2003.

The U.S. view has been that detailed reporting on States' SA/LW – related efforts is an essential tool in gauging progress, or lack thereof, in implementing the POA. Effective and candid reporting by both affected States and donors should help match the needs to potential resources. It helps us identify successes and areas in need of greater focus, both regionally and functionally. We believe that we cannot seriously consider “the way forward” or develop new initiatives for 2006 until we have thoroughly assessed progress in fulfilling commitments made in the POA.

Just last month, Member States concluded negotiations on an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace illicit SA/LW. We welcome this important contribution to our overall POA efforts. We look forward to its adoption at the UN General Assembly this fall, as well as subsequent reporting by States on their implementation of the Instrument.

Member States have made significant strides in implementing the UN Program of Action on a regional basis. How Man-Portable Air Defense Systems, or MANPADS, have been addressed is a good example. At the June 2003 Evian summit, G-8 States agreed on a MANPADS statement covering destruction efforts, tightened production and brokering, and launch control features. The OSCE (May 2004), APEC (November 2004), and OAS (June 2005) adopted guidelines on security and control of MANPADS which were based on the 2003 Wassenaar Guidelines for export controls on MANPADS; we would like to work with AU, Arab League, ECOWAS, and SADC to expand support for these guidelines. At the December 2003

Wassenaar Plenary member states adopted brokering guidelines on SA/LW writ large, and at the 2004 OSCE summit, member states adopted end-user control guidelines. At the OAS/CICAD 34th regular session in 2003, revised model regulations to control firearms brokers was adopted. These are success stories of various groups of member states responding to the urgent need to reduce the threat posed by illicit SA/LW.

At the national level, we applaud those States that have taken the initiative to seek SA/LW destruction assistance bilaterally and through regional organizations. One amongst many exemplary cases is Ukraine, which, in cooperation with NATO's Partnership for Peace, soon will begin a twelve-year program to destroy 1.5 million SA/LW, 1,000 MANPADS, and 133,000 tons of ammunition. The United States has taken lead nation status for the first three-year phase of this twelve-year project, the largest of its kind to date. We have contributed over \$1.6 million for the first year of the project, which will begin soon, and others have also made generous contributions. It is through such collective efforts that a real difference is being made.

Indeed, one of the most significant U.S. contributions in implementing the Program has been in the area of destruction assistance projects run by the Department of State. Since early 2001, U.S.-supported programs in 23 countries have resulted in approximately 800,000 SA/LW and 80 million rounds of ammunition destroyed. Since 2003, the United States has destroyed over 13,400 MANPADS in 13 countries in Africa, Central America, Eastern Europe and South East Asia. The United States sees the destruction of SA/LW, coupled with effective stockpile security and management procedures, as a practical way to reduce the potential for poorly secured and surplus SA/LW to enter the illicit arms market.

The Department of Defense, through the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), counters global and regional proliferation of SA/LW by improving security and accountability for MANPADS and SA/LW through physical security and stockpile management assistance programs. Since 2000, DTRA has reached out to countries in Central America, South America, Europe, Africa and Asia and assisted over 19 countries with stockpile security and management for SA/LW, ammunition and MANPADS.

Among the activities undertaken by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in support of the UN POA is a Basic Firearm's

Identification Course for international law enforcement professionals, which provides training on marking practices to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In addition, between January 1994 and December 2004, ATF responded to over 147,000 requests from foreign governments for assistance in tracing illegal firearms.

Mr. Chairman, as illustrated by the reports already delivered on efforts to implement the UN Program of Action, much progress has been achieved. We believe the Program of Action gave us a solid foundation four years ago to forcefully tackle the illicit trade in SA/LW. However, much more can be done. We urge States to continue to work to develop and implement all provisions of the Program of Action. Achieving that progress, in our view, will require addressing many factors underlying the illicit trade in SA/LW worldwide. Such trade persists in part because of lax enforcement of laws and regulations, or their absence altogether. It occurs because of poor governance and an environment that tolerates illegal commerce, often involving corruption among government officials. Stricter border security and export controls will certainly bring us closer to our goals.

Mr. Chairman, the United States fully supports your proposed program this week. We stand ready to support States in achieving their national goals in reducing the illicit trade in SA/LW. Thank you.