



## STATEMENT BY

# MS. NIDHI TEWARI UNDER SECRETARY DISARMAMENT & INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS DIVISION MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

### AT THE

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE THIRD
UN CONFERENCE TO REVIEW PROGRESS
MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF
ACTION (POA) TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT
TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS (SALW) IN ALL
ITS ASPECTS

19-23 MARCH 2018

Thank you, Mr. President.

The Indian delegation warmly congratulates you on your election as the Chair of the Third Review Conference of the UN PoA. We are pleased to see France lead this important Conference. We assure you of our full cooperation and support towards a successful outcome at the Review Conference.

We would also like to congratulate others members of the Bureau on their election. We appreciate the transparent and inclusive manner in which you have undertaken the preparations for the Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee, including through the early commencement of informal consultations. We also thank you for sharing your outline of elements and questions as an aid to our discussions.

India associates itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia earlier this afternoon on behalf of NAM.

# Mr. President,

India attaches high importance to the UN PoA as the cornerstone of multilateral efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW. India's national security has been adversely affected by terrorism, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking and piracy, in all of which, illicit trade in SALW plays a pernicious role. The continued full and effective implementation of the PoA is therefore, a priority for India, especially as a means for combating terrorism and transnational crime.

It is evident that progress has been made in the implementation of the PoA since its adoption in 2001. At the same time, it is also true that much remains to be done. Despite the efforts of responsible states and international organizations, small arms, light weapons, ammunition and explosives continue to move illicitly across borders. It is therefore imperative, as also suggested by you earlier in your remarks, Mr. President, to focus our attention on further strengthening the implementation of the PoA.

India has a robust legislative and administrative mechanism to combat and eradicate the menace of illicit SALW, the details of which can be found in our national reports, including the latest one which has been submitted online recently.

India maintains strict export controls over all munitions and related items including SALW. India joined the Wassenaar Arrangement in December 2017. India is also party to all the thirteen counter-terrorism conventions and has ratified the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime as well its Protocol on Firearms.

With a long border with several neighbors, border management remains a significant challenge for India. A principle objective of India's border management policy is to secure our borders against illicit trade, including through the setting up of a Department of Border Management as well as establishing bilateral and multilateral avenues of cooperation in this sphere.

# Mr. President,

India was privileged to chair the GGE in 2002- 2003 whose recommendations led to the Open-ended Working Group to negotiate the ITI. We believe that the full implementation of the ITI will go a long way in tackling illicit trade in SALW. The ITI recognized the interconnected nature of marking, record keeping and international cooperation, which, in our view remain the three pillars of successful tracing of illicit SALW.

With regard to the opportunities and challenges of new developments in SALW related technologies, while we would, in principle, support any technological development that contributes towards enhancing the effectiveness of ITI implementation, we would, at the same time, be cautious about the onerous financial and technical burden, particularly for the developing countries, likely to be imposed by some suggestions being advanced for addressing these technologies.

As for the discussion on synergies with other instruments, we believe that the PoA should continue to be the main framework for measures to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects and that it is essential to preserve the universal and consensus driven nature of the PoA. The international community has taken modest yet significant steps in addressing the issues posed by SALW. We need to

carefully nurture the coherence, cooperative atmosphere and commitment that have emerged as key elements of the PoA. A steady, flexible and progressive approach will help consolidate our gains. India, Mr. President, remains committed to this approach.

I thank you Mr. President.