



# AUSTRALIA



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## **Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider 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**

18 June 2014

### **International cooperation and assistance**

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Mr Chair,

I take this opportunity to reiterate the main points identified in Australia's working paper on international cooperation and assistance.

Mr Chair,

Australia recognises that effective international cooperation and assistance underpins our collective efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW), and is therefore crucial to the effectiveness and survival of the UN Programme of Action. Its importance is clearly stated in all instruments making up the SALW institutional framework – a framework which has continued to evolve and expand, and particularly over the past year.

Mr Chair,

At the core of Australia's approach to international cooperation and assistance, has been a focus on preventing, combating and eradicating the global illicit trade of SALW through working with regional partners, the United Nations, including the UN regional centres for peace and disarmament, and civil society, to address the challenges.

It is in this spirit that Australia led the development, with Germany, of a multi-donor facility, the UN Trust Facility for Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR), to assist with implementation of the UNPoA and the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), and worked to secure strong provisions on international cooperation and assistance in the ATT and UN Security Council Resolution 2117 on SALW.

Mr Chair,

To further highlight some of Australia's funding assistance, initiatives that have supported UNPoA implementation include:

- \$2 million contribution to UNSCAR;
- Demobilisation and integration of ex-combatants – including child soldiers – into productive civilian life at the end of armed conflict in Nepal, Bougainville and the Philippines and support to DDR programs in Afghanistan and Central African Republic;
- Support for East Timor on broader security reform processes, including assistance with weapons audits and the construction of two SALW armouries;
- Support for the development and implementation of the International Small Arms Control Standards;
- Assistance to Somalian Police on arms management and destruction practices;
- Capacity-building assistance to law enforcement agencies in Mali on the control of SALW and ammunition;
- Support to regional, cross-regional and South-South cooperation, including exchanges to assist in building national SALW commissions and arms registries; and
- Support to research and assessments, including on armed violence, in the Indo-Pacific.

Mr Chair,

In Australia's view, the UNPoA and ITI must take note of and leverage changes in the SALW landscape, if they are to remain relevant and meet contemporary challenges, particularly in the area of international cooperation and assistance. In Australia's view therefore, Section III of the outcome document should include:

- References to the ATT, welcoming particularly recognising its adoption and the inclusion of SALW in its scope. The ATT will be an important vehicle for assistance in areas of direct relevance to the UNPoA's implementation, including on stockpile management, DDR programmes and model legislation.
- Acknowledgement of UNSCAR as a voluntary multi-donor facility to mobilise assistance for the implementation of the PoA.
- Recognition of the importance of a strategic and holistic approach to monitoring and implementing UN Security Council arms embargoes, which are an essential instrument of the Security Council to assist States emerging from conflict to address the physical security of weapons and ultimately combat unregulated SALW. This approach should involve the affected Member State and its

neighbours, sanctions committees, expert groups, peacekeeping, and SSR and DDR programmes.

- Recognition of the important role and contribution of women in the area of UNPoA implementation, including efforts to facilitate the full participation and representation of women in policymaking, planning and implementation processes related to SALW, particularly with respect to international cooperation and assistance.

Mr Chair,

Australia believes that BMS5 is an opportune time for States to review and take stock of the wider landscape in SALW, as well as progress that can be made in the specific area of international cooperation and assistance under the UNPoA and ITI, and to identify areas which could be strengthened.

Thank you.