HSN Statement for BMS5  
delivered at informal consultations on 13 June 2014

Mr Chairman,

At the outset, let me congratulate you on behalf of the Human Security Network composed of Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Panama, Slovenia, Switzerland, Thailand, and South Africa as an observer for assuming the stewardship of this important Meeting to consider the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) and let me also thank the delegation of New Zealand for moderating the discussion pertaining to the International Tracing Instrument (ITI). As the Secretary-General rightly noted in his latest Report on Human Security (A/68/685), our network focuses on common global challenges such as the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, in order to promote an international response which is people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented in order to ensure the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential. From our perspective, the determination of States to reduce the human suffering caused by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and to enhance the respect for life and the dignity of the human person through the promotion of a culture of peace set out in the Preamble of the PoA remains more than relevant. While the PoA and the ITI are important tools to promote human security by curbing the scourge of the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, much remains to be done. On behalf of the Network, let me address the following issues for further consideration at BMS5.

1. Stockpile management, including physical security measures of small arms, light weapons and corresponding ammunition, is of crucial importance to prevent their illicit transfer and destabilizing accumulation. In this regard, the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) and the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS), both developed in the context of the UN, are essential tools. Furthermore, the establishment of benchmarks and indicators could be useful for the evaluation of the progress of the implementation of stockpile management, including physical security measures, as noted in paragraph 9 of draft 4.

2. Acknowledging the opportunities for the enhancement of marking and tracing of Small Arms and Lights Weapons associated with new developments in design and manufacturing, and welcoming in this regard the recent report of the Secretary-General (A/CONF.192/BMS/2014/1), the 2015 Meeting of Governmental Experts could be tasked to further discuss this issue, as suggested in paragraph 79 of draft 4. Taking into account paragraph 10 of the ITI Implementation Plan agreed at the Second Review Conference held in 2012, we encourage States to cooperate with relevant international, regional and subregional organisations with regard to sharing information for the tracing of illicit weapons and to use the Illicit Arms Records and tracing Management System (iARMS) of INTERPOL, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his Report on Small Arms (S/2013/503).
3. As regards international cooperation and assistance, including capacity building and training, regional and international programmes for specialist training and expertise on small arms and light weapons stockpile management, including physical security measures, should be further developed, as stipulated in the Programme of Action. To facilitate the provision of such expertise and training, where requested, States are encouraged in paragraph 13 of draft 4 to explore ways to improve the relevant legal basis, including the status of experts and their immunities, cognisant of the different multilateral settings in which such cooperation and assistance are pursued. Moreover, let me recall Resolution 68/34 encouraging cooperation among State organs, international organisations and civil society in support of programmes and projects aimed at combating the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them, in which the General Assembly expressed concern at the magnitude of human casualty and suffering, especially among children, caused by the illicit proliferation and use of small arms and light weapons and the negative impact that the proliferation and use of those weapons continue to have on the efforts of States in the Sahelo-Saharan subregion in the areas of poverty eradication, sustainable development and the maintenance of peace, security and stability.

Transparency and cooperation with civil society, including relevant non-governmental organisations and industry, is indispensable for the implementation of both instruments and needs to be strengthened. In this context, the different needs of women, men, children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities affected by violence committed with small arms and light weapons need to be duly taken into account. In this regard, the Arms Trade Treaty is a step forward towards the protection of women and children as its provisions establish that exporting States shall take into account the risk of covered conventional arms or items being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of violence against women and children. The call of the General Assembly in Resolution 68/33 upon all States to empower women, including through capacity building efforts, as appropriate, to participate in the design and implementation of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts, is also relevant in this context. With these brief remarks, let me assure you of our readiness to engage constructively with all delegations in elaborating an outcome that promotes human security by further reducing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. I thank you.