68th session of the General Assembly

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

Consideration of the implementation of the UN PoA at the national, regional and global levels, including stockpile management, including physical security measures of small arms and light weapons

New York, 16 June 2014

Swiss Statement

Mr. Chair,

Switzerland would like to take the opportunity of its first intervention to congratulate the Chair on his election and also to acknowledge the extensive consultations and work conducted prior to our meeting that has resulted in the draft document we are working with today.

It is a strong foundation for our deliberations, and Switzerland will work to ensure that we achieve a successful and strong outcome of this Biennial meeting of States.

With respect to the specific issue of stockpile management, including physical security measures of small arms and light weapons, Switzerland particularly put emphasis on the following aspects.

1. First of all, Switzerland supports adopting a holistic approach to the management of all aspects of the life-cycle of small arms and light weapons, from initial production or acquisition, to final disposal or destruction as described in paragraph 9 of the draft 4. This approach ensures that measures falling within the framework of the International Tracing Instrument are duly considered in national implementation processes.
2. Secondly, we suggest considering the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) as well as the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) as guiding principles when defining national life-cycle management procedures.

3. Third, we support fostering, where appropriate, the regional cooperation in fields requiring high levels of expertise, resources or technology in order to create synergies. This may include cooperation in surplus disposal as successfully experienced in South East Europe.

4. Fourth, Switzerland notes with concern that there have been more than 460 accidental explosions in the past 25 years, and more than 100 incidents since 2010. Hence, we recommend exploring ways to include ammunition in our discussions, since it is, especially when talking about life-cycle management, an inseparable component of SALW.

5. Finally, Switzerland strongly supports the current paragraph 13 of draft 4 of the outcome document. However, for consistency reasons, Switzerland recommends to move the paragraph to Section III (Way Forward) since it is strictly related to the status of experts in assistance projects.

Mr. Chair, I thank you for your attention and the consideration of our statement.