Permanent Mission of

Malaysia

to the United Nations

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Statement by
Dato' Muhammad Hatta Abdul Aziz
Representative of Malaysia
at the Conference to Review Progress Made in 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
New York, Wednesday, 28 June 2006

Mr. President,

Let me join the others in congratulating you on your election as President of this Review Conference. As Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, my delegation is particularly proud to see you, Mr. President --whose candidature for the Presidency was presented by the Movement last year-- presiding over the deliberations of this important conference. My delegation is confident that with your leadership qualities, vast experience and diplomatic skills, in addition to your longstanding association with issues relating to small arms and light weapons (SALW), you will be able to steer this important conference towards a successful conclusion. My delegation assures you of our full support and co-operation. My delegation also associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Myanmar on behalf of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Mr. President,

2. It has been five years since the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in SALW in 2001, which produced the Programme of Action (PoA) and whose implementation we are now reviewing. Nonetheless, the situation of illegal trade in SALW remains alarming due to its strong linkages to other transnational crimes, which include drugs trafficking and terrorism.

3. Malaysia strongly supports efforts towards the attainment of general and complete disarmament, and remains deeply concerned over the continued existence of illicit transfer, manufacturing and trade of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread at global level.

4. As reflected in the national report for the year 2005, Malaysia is continuously taking necessary steps and measures to implement the PoA, by putting in place, adequate and stringent laws, regulations and administrative procedures for the effective control over the production of SALW as well as over the ownership and possession, licensing, manufacturing, stockpiling, brokering, exports, imports, transits and re-transfer of such weapons, in order to prevent illegal manufacture and illicit trafficking or their illegal diversion to unauthorised recipients.

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5. The Ministry of Internal Security Malaysia, the Royal Malaysian Police and the Royal Malaysian Customs remain at the forefront in enforcing strict legislation on preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in SALW, acting in accordance with the existing domestic laws and regulations. The Arms Act of 1960 (Revised 1989) has proven to be effective in controlling and addressing the issue of illicit SALW in all its aspects in Malaysia.

Mr. President,

6. Malaysia acknowledges that there are constraints to effectively police our national border and nearly impossible to ensure that goods coming in through the legal entry points are totally free from illicit SALW. However, the Royal Malaysia Police and the Anti-Smuggling Unit have taken preventive measures to minimise the problem of smuggling of small arms by implementing stringent checking on all inbound individuals and vehicles at the entry points and strategic locations along common borders to preserve security.

7. At the regional level, Malaysia continues to support, participate in and contribute to efforts and initiatives under the ASEAN framework that seek to strengthen capabilities of its Member States to deal with the problems of illicit trade in SALW, as mentioned in the Statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Myanmar.

Mr. President,

8. My delegation is pleased to inform this Review Conference that Malaysia hosted the 26th Session of the ASEANAPOL Conference in Kuala Lumpur from 23 to 26 May 2006, in which a joint communiqué signed by all Police Chiefs of ASEAN Member States was adopted. The Conference underscored the importance of law enforcement and the promotion of peace and security through collaboration in dealing with terrorism, including bio-terrorism, drug trafficking and arms smuggling. There has been an achievement whereby the ASEANAPOL Database system -an internet-based criminal database linking ASEAN Member States and the INTERPOL database in Lyon, France- was launched. This system facilitates greater access to information on international criminals and syndicates including those dealing with illicit firearms.

9. My delegation would like to recall that during the United Nations Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which was held in Bangkok from 17 to 19 May 2006, most if not all countries in the Southeast Asian region had highlighted their porous borders as one of the main obstacles in their combat against the illicit trade in SALW. In Malaysia's case, our long coastline and the absence of total land border fencing are factors that have allowed the existence of illegal entry points. In addition, the increasingly heavy volume of movement of people and goods to and from neighbouring countries has made thorough inspection at our borders difficult for the authorities.

10. The challenges could only be addressed, in the view of my delegation, through effective control of land and maritime borders, and close co-operation and sharing of relevant information among the police, customs and other officials responsible for combating the illicit trade in SALW. Recognising the indispensable need to closely co-operate with its neighbouring countries in that connection, Malaysia will continue to work collectively with ASEAN Member States to attain the vision of a peaceful and stable Southeast Asian region by the year 2020. Malaysia remains confident that all ASEAN Member States will continue to share information

and experience among themselves in order to collectively address in an effective manner the problems of illicit trade in SALW in the region.

Mr. President,

11. My delegation considers this Review Conference as a timely opportunity to make significant progress in addressing the risk of illicit trade in SALW. My delegation believes that the outcome of this Review Conference would contribute towards enhancing our consolidated efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects.

I thank you, Mr. President.