



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE
“THE HUMAN COST OF ILLICIT TRANSFER, DESTABILIZING ACCUMULATION
AND MISUSE OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS”
NEW YORK, 13 MAY 2015**

Madam President,

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you for taking the initiative to convene this important and far-reaching open debate in the Security Council on the human cost of illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons (SALW). My delegation also expresses our appreciation to you for the thought-provoking concept note on this theme.

2. I would also to thank the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings. Allow me in particular to express my delegation's gratitude to West Africa Action Network on Small Arms, Mr. Karamoko Diakité from Cote d'Ivoire, and to convey our appreciation for his valuable advocacy on this crucial subject matter.

Madam President,

3. Malaysia strongly believes that efforts to address the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) must be taken through a holistic perspective of arms control and disarmament, post-conflict peace-building, conflict prevention and socio-economic development. We would further underline the need to address root causes of illicit transfer of SALW including, inter alia, the supply of SALW to armed groups, whether by governments or through the black market; excessive accumulation and surplus of SALW in post-conflict situations; and the growing demand from SALW by armed groups and non-state actors.

4. Accordingly, we welcome this open debate of the Council, as a reflection on how the illicit transfer of SALW in armed conflicts has resulted in an alarming human cost. While the Council has also maintained a focus on non-proliferation, including on weapons of mass destruction, we are of the view that it should also give due consideration to SALW as the main cause for deaths in armed conflicts.

5. In this regard, the Secretary-General's latest report on SALW (S/2015/289) further reaffirms the need for concerted action on this matter. The apparent ease in which SALW are obtained through illicit methods has continued to exacerbate and prolong armed conflicts and post-conflict situations. The Council is no stranger to hearing depressing depictions while discussing separate regional situations, but we have to recognize that a common thread lies in these discussions, namely the prevalence of SALW in these conflict areas.

Madam President,

6. Malaysia is particularly concerned on the impact of illicit SALW to children, which, as the Secretary-General rightly noted in his report, are disproportionately affected by hostilities. In the event that children in armed conflict do not end up as victims of SALW themselves, they can also face abductions, displacement, and other forms of psychosocial distress. Even in post-conflict situations, we should not underestimate the danger posed to children by SALW, as seen in instances where children had been killed or injured from playing with unexploded ordnance.

7. The proliferation of inexpensive and lightweight SALW in conflict regions has also contributed to the recruitment of children as combatants, whether forced or otherwise. It does not take much for a child to carry a rifle which weighs around 3 kilograms, and which costs as little as a chicken or a sack of rice. In situations where one can neither have chicken nor rice, it is all too tempting for a child to be presented with a rifle instead, and seek his fulfilment through illegal means. As we are painfully aware, there are many unscrupulous groups which are willing to prey on this vulnerability, and fill a child's empty pair of hands with the instruments of death.

8. It cannot be denied that the illicit transfer of SALW serves to prolong conflict and intensify its impact on children. Malaysia reiterates the Council's call for relevant parties to take measures to stem the illicit flow of SALW, including through resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005) concerning children in armed conflict. At the same time, Malaysia believes that today's debate can provide further impetus to stronger and more forward-looking action by the Council to address the impact of SALW on children in armed conflict in a more comprehensive manner.

Madam President,

9. In addressing illicit SALW proliferation, the international community has established relevant parameters and guidelines. The 2001 UN Programme of Action (PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in All Its Aspects, and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit SALW, are key elements of this framework.

10. However, despite the adoption of these instruments, the marking and tracing of illicit SALW continues to be limited and difficult, particularly in conflict or post-conflict

environments. We therefore recognize the need for more for more capacity building, to meet the requirements and capacities of Member States related to the prevention of illicit trade of SALW. This includes increased facilitation of technology transfer to developing countries, upon their request, on physical security and stockpile management, as well as marking and tracing capacities. We believe this would significantly provide a boost to implementation of the PoA at the national level.

11. The Arms Trade Treaty also stands as a landmark instrument, which Malaysia signed on 26 September 2013, and which had since entered into force at the end of 2014. As countries begin to implement the ATT, they need to hold fast to the principle of ensuring that this is carried out in a consistent, objective and non-discriminatory manner. This principle would ensure that all countries would be able to work together to close any gaps, remove any loopholes, and bring interpretations and implementation closer to the ultimate goal of having the highest possible common international standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms. This also applies to today's discussion, in the context of ensuring that implementation of national obligations would contribute to reducing the human cost of the illicit transfer of SALW.

Madam President,

12. One element which my delegation considers as future work for the Council, is the linkage between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council. The PBC is well-placed to play an effective role in post-conflict disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), and could also work closely with other UN entities in ensuring that peacebuilding processes effectively complement one another. Going forward, we hope that the Council will consider the merits of interfacing with the PBC not only on DDR, but also through country-specific initiatives on community security and conflict prevention, which can be more attuned to local SALW concerns.

I thank you Madam President.