



UN Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects

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Remarks on the Plan of Action at the Conference Stake-Out
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Good Morning. The United States is pleased and gratified that this Conference has successfully reached an agreed political Program of Action between the member states participating. It was a lot of hard work. It sets the basis for cooperative action to try to address some very serious problems caused by flows of illicit small arms and light weapons in areas of instability. This is a subject about which many of the participating states care a great deal. The United States cares a great deal. We are already very active in trying to redress the problems of instability in many areas of the world. The illicit flows of small arms and light weapons are a factor in contributing to instability and can undermine the success of our other foreign policy efforts, in conjunction with other states.

We feel that with this Program of Action we can now move forward in concert with other states to try to take measures which will help ameliorate this problem and we look forward to taking concrete actions as anticipated in the Program and to making a difference.

Let me if I may pay a special respect to Ambassador Reyes of Colombia who very ably guided us through this very challenging negotiating process. I'd also like to pay my respects to Ambassador Dos Santos of Mozambique. I could name many others but he in particular showed great diplomatic skill in helping to guide us toward a solution, particularly on behalf of the African countries who are so deeply affected by the problems of instability.

I'd also like, if I may, to tip my cap to my colleague, Ambassador Donald McConnell, from the State Department who is our next Ambassador to Eritrea, I'm happy to announce. Ambassador McConnell very ably guided the U.S. delegation through this negotiation from beginning to end. All Americans can take pride in him and I know our colleagues in the international community are also pleased with his work. So with that, I'll yield the microphone to others but again, we commend your interest in this Program of Action and the United States looks forward to participating constructively in the actions that follow. Thank you very much.

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