Excellency,

I am writing to you in my capacity as President-designate of the fourth Review 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, to be held in New York from June 2024.

At the outset, allow me to reiterate my gratitude to States for the constructive contributions made during the informal consultations convened on 19 December 2023, 15 January 2024 and 5 February 2024.

I have carefully noted all of the comments and suggestions offered thus far during these consultations and through the statements submitted by delegations. On the basis of these inputs, and as mentioned during the most recent consultation, I am pleased to provide hereto attached, a draft outline of elements that would help guide our discussions at the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) and in the lead up to the fourth Review Conference. Annexed to the draft is also a set of questions that can help guide the discussions during the PrepCom meeting from 12-16 February 2024.

The themes outlined in the attached document are drawn from a variety of sources, including the views offered by States at the informal consultations mentioned above, as well as the discussions and outcome documents during the last review cycle, including the third Review Conference in 2018 and the seventh and eighth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS8) in 2021 and 2022, respectively. Two of these elements are derived from specific mandates from BMS8 for consideration at the fourth Review Conference, contained in paragraphs 75 and 87 of A/CONF.192/BMS/2022/1.

I also wish to reiterate again that the elements in this outline are without prejudice to other issues States may wish to raise and should not be seen as either final or exhaustive. As such, please be assured that I am sharing the attached outline of elements for an outcome document as a work-in-progress to support our on-going discussions. We will have opportunity for additional discussions on these elements during the PrepCom as well as in the informal consultations which I intend to hold over the coming weeks and months in the lead-up to the RevCon4. More detailed information on these consultations will be provided in due course.
I look forward to very fruitful discussions as we continue our preparations with a view to a productive outcome for the fourth Review Conference, including at the PrepCom next week.

Please accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Maritza Chan-Valverde
President-designate of the fourth Review Conference
PoA RevCon4 – Outline of elements

Preparatory Committee for the Fourth United Nations 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, 12–16 February 2024

President-designate’s outline of elements for consideration by the Conference.

I. 2024 Declaration

A political declaration reaffirming the commitment of Members States of the United Nations to preventing, combating, and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, especially in view of recent political and security developments around the world, will be negotiated for adoption at the Fourth Review Conference.

Potential elements of the political declaration could include:

- Recall commitments made in the PoA, and during RevCon3, BM7 and BMS8
- Challenges and opportunities posed by developments in small arms and light weapons manufacturing, technology and design.
- Strengthen PoA and ITI implementation in all its aspects, including in areas such as stockpile management and security, marking, record-keeping and tracing, border controls, the relationship between SALW control and the achievement of the SDGs, and the related demand and supply factors that serve as drivers of the illicit flows of SALW.
- Importance of articulating adequate, effective, sustainable, and coordinated international cooperation and assistance.
- National ownership and responsibility of States to implement PoA/ITI
- Respect for international law and the UN Charter, including right to self-defence, and lawful acquisition and transfer of SALW.

1 The present document has been prepared by Ambassador Maritza Chan in her capacity as President-designate of the Fourth United Nations 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. It contains a proposal of elements that may form part of the substantive outcome document of the Conference. It is a preliminary, non-exhaustive document reflecting the initial exchange of views shared by delegations with the President-designate and during the three informal consultations held on 19 December 2023, 15 January 2024 and 5 February 2024. Drawing on past practice, the proposed structure includes four sections: 2024 declaration; implementation measures for the Programme of Action and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, 2024–2030; implementation measures to promote international cooperation and assistance; and follow-up to the Fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action. The annex to the present document contains a list of questions that may be used to facilitate discussion between States during the meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference.
• Impact and human suffering caused by SALW, including links to the human cost of weapons and the UN Secretary-General’s policy brief entitled “A New Agenda for Peace”
• International humanitarian law, international human rights law, and the illicit flows and misuse of SALW as impediments to the provision of humanitarian assistance
• Links with human rights violations, gender-based violence, and gender inequality
• Relationship between SALW control and development, including socioeconomic development, sustainable peace, links to Agenda 2030, post 2030 discussions, and the Pact for the Future.
• Relationship between illicit trade and environmental impacts and climate change
• Differentiated impacts of illicit trade in SALW and mainstreaming a gender perspective
• Combatting the illicit SALW trade through concerted approaches to address SALW supply and demand side controls.
• Importance of understanding and addressing the drivers and socio-economic and cultural motivations for acquiring illicit arms
• Considering the role of all parties involved in the different stages in the entire life cycle of small arms and light weapons, including the private sector and industry.
• Diversion risks at each stage of the life cycle of a weapon, and to unauthorized recipients
• Links with terrorism, illegal armed groups, illegal manufacturing, trafficking, and organized crime
• Importance of women’s full, equal, meaningful and effective participation, including in leadership roles and as agents of change
• Importance of youth participation in SALW control processes and armed violence reduction programmes.
• Engagement with civil society, and victims and survivors impacted by armed violence.
• Welcoming the New Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management as a complementary instrument for the fight against SALW perpetrated violence.
• Complementarities with other instruments to which a State is party in the fight against the illicit flows of SALW, armed violence and the achievement of the SDGs.
• Role of regional and subregional bodies, mechanisms, and initiatives.

II. Action-oriented measures for effective implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and its International Tracing Instrument, 2024–2030

The following is a list of potential elements for the implementation of the Programme of Action in the period from 2024 to 2030, without prejudice to other elements that States may wish to add.

A. National implementation
   a. Strengthening national ownership and empowering relevant national structures to assume responsibilities for oversight and accountability for national implementation of SALW programmes
   b. Consistent PoA/ITI national reporting
c. National action plans, assessments, and voluntary national targets.
d. Integrating small arms and light weapons control into national development and prevention frameworks
e. National frameworks, multi-sectoral, and whole-of-government coordination
f. National points of contact and information exchange mechanisms
g. Addressing the supply and demand of illicit SALW at the national level
h. National systems for reciprocal links between WPS and YPS
i. Data collection, research, analysis and reporting, including gender, age and disability disaggregated data.
j. Role of United Nations and relevant stakeholders in support of national implementation
k. Complementarities with other instruments to which a State is party.

B. Regional and subregional implementation
   a. Regional bodies, programmes, and instruments
   b. Role of regional and sub-regional organizations, including in support of national implementation
c. Role of UNODA Regional Centres
d. Regional targets for greater measurability of implementation

C. Global implementation
   a. Role of United Nations and international organizations, including in support of national implementation
   b. Exchanges of lessons learned, good practices and best ways and means of sharing experiences.
c. Cooperation and information sharing
d. Conflict and post-conflict settings: SALW control and tracing challenges
e. Prevention of organized crime and counter terrorism.
f. Links with Agenda 2030, post-2030 discussions, Summit of the Future and A New Agenda for Peace
g. Root causes, consequences, and differentiated impacts of the illicit circulation and misuse of SALW
h. Gender based violence and conflict related sexual violence: the role of illicit circulation and misuse of SALW.
i. Promotion of a culture of peace
j. Application of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and the fight against terrorism in SALW transfer decisions
k. Mandates to the Secretariat 2024–2030
l. Establishment of an open-ended technical expert group on recent developments in SALW manufacturing, technology, and design

D. Preventing and combating through-life diversion and illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons
   a. SALW manufacturing, including improvised and craft production and 3D printing
   b. Pre-transfer
c. Transfers (export, import, brokering, transit, transshipment) and re-transfers
d. End-user control
e. Transportation  
f. Physical security and stockpile management  
g. Marking, record-keeping, and tracing  
h. Destruction  
i. Reactivation and conversion  
j. Diversion monitoring and analysis  
k. Information exchange mechanisms  
l. Border controls and cooperation, including shipments.  
m. Investigations, criminal offences, and prosecutions  
n. Unauthorized recipients  
o. Prevention, response and preparedness to recent developments in manufacturing, technology, and design, including law enforcement and criminal justice responses (identification and interdiction, cyber patrolling, crime scene investigations, etc.)

E. Other topics

III. Action-oriented measures to promote effective international cooperation and assistance to ensure the effective implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, 2024–2030

A. International Cooperation  
a. Information exchange, including databases to facilitate international cooperation.  
b. National points of contacts and coordination  
c. Partnerships  
d. Role of UN, international organizations, and regional and subregional organizations  
e. Involvement and dialogue with the private sector  
f. Role of civil society  
g. South-South and triangular cooperation

B. International Assistance  
a. Sustainability of assistance and national ownership  
b. Technical assistance  
c. Capacity-building, including development of proposals, technical expertise and technology transfers to build sustainable capacities for life-cycle management of SALW.  
d. Financial assistance, including utilization of Official Development Assistance-eligible funds, UN Trust Funds (including the Saving Lives Entity – SALIENT, and the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation – UNSCAR), and other funding mechanisms including through bilateral assistance and national budgeting.  
e. Reporting – communication of requests, progress and achievements in international assistance  
f. Voluntary national baseline assessments  
g. Information sharing, including information platform/hub on existing international assistance activities.  
h. Structured procedures for matching needs and resources
i. Role of international and regional organizations
j. Role of relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and civil society, academia, research institutions and industry
k. SALW fellowship programme.

IV. Follow-up to the Fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action

Following past practice, this section will include a schedule of meetings for the period between the Fourth and the Fifth Review Conferences. States may wish to consider adding to the following proposed programme, of activities which is subject to the availability of financial resources.

A. Schedule of meetings

(i) 2026 — biennial meeting of States, five days, New York;
(ii) 2028 — biennial meeting of States, five days, New York;
(iii) 2030 — Fifth Review Conference, 10 days, New York, preceded by a Preparatory Meeting of five days.

This schedule of meetings will be adjusted to integrate the proposal for an open-ended technical expert group on developments in SALW manufacturing, technology and design and other topics as may be decided by the Fourth Review Conference.

B. Regional and sub-regional meetings
C. Support for meeting participation
Annex

Elements for discussion for the Preparatory Committee for the Fourth United Nations 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:

Suggested guiding questions:

The following questions have been put forward by the President-designate to facilitate discussion among Member States participating in the preparatory process for the Fourth United Nations 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. The questions that are listed in this document do not preclude States from raising any other elements that they consider relevant. The questions are not meant to form part of an outcome document of the Fourth Review Conference but to serve as a working tool to guide the thematic debates on 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 and its International Tracing Instrument:

**Topic 1: Preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects at the national, regional and global levels** - Monday, 12 February and Tuesday, 13 February – morning session.

- Question 1: What are your key *national priorities* in combating illicit small arms and light weapons for the Programme of Action meeting cycle leading to the Fourth Review Conference?

- Question 2: What do you consider to be the *key regional and/or global* issues to tackle during the Fourth Review Conference?

- Question 3: When considering preventing and combatting *through-life diversion and illicit trafficking* of small arms and light weapons, what elements should the conference address?

- Question 4: Is there any aspect of the diversion, illicit trade, or misuse of small arms and light weapons that you believe should be given *greater attention or be addressed in greater detail*?

- Question 5: How could the PoA and the ITI better address both *supply-chain security and the full life cycle of SALW, and demand factors and enablers of illicit SALW*?

**Topic 2: Implementation, international cooperation and assistance** - Tuesday, 13 February – afternoon session

- Question 6: What elements should be considered by the Review Conference to adequately address and strengthen *international cooperation in the PoA and the ITI*?
• Question 7: What elements should be considered by the Review Conference to adequately address international assistance?

• Question 8: How can the Secretariat best support the matching of needs and resources for international assistance under the PoA and the ITI frameworks, including development of a structured procedure for requesting and receiving assistance?

• Question 9: What can be done to strengthen the implementation of the PoA and the ITI through the sustainability of national authorities’ capabilities, including through the provision of training, retention of capacities, provision of equipment and the transfer of technology?

• Question 10: What can be done to ensure the adequacy, effectiveness, and sustainability of assistance, including financial and technical assistance, for the implementation of the PoA and the ITI?

• Question 11: How can we strengthen the implementation of the PoA through integrating SALW controls in development and prevention frameworks?

• Question 12: What concrete measures should be taken to mainstream a gender perspective in PoA implementation?


• Question 13: How could the review conference process better contribute to achieving measurable results in implementing the PoA and ITI?
  o Please provide practical recommendations, including practices on voluntary national or regional targets to advance understanding on the level of implementation of PoA/ITI

• Question 14: Which would be the preferred options for an open-ended technical expert group on developments in SALW manufacturing, technology, and design? Please include the following elements
  o Scope and mandate
  o Participation
  o Duration and timelines
  o Organization of work
  o Outcomes

• Question 15: What other options would you recommend to make best use of the intersessional period between Review Conferences?
Topic 4: Thematic debate on progress made in the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons

- Question 16: How could the ITI be used to better address the diversion of SALW to unauthorized recipients?

- Question 17: What specific measures, steps, or approaches, including the use of best practices on marking, record-keeping, identification, and tracing can be strengthened to enhance ITI implementation?

- Question 18: What specific measures and practices can be taken by States to address marking obliteration and ensuring marking recovery?

- Question 19: How can information exchange mechanisms be improved to support ITI implementation?

- Question 20: What needs to be done to address the challenges posed by recent technological developments in small arms and light weapons, such as the production of polymer frame small arms, modular weapons design and the application of three-dimensional printing technology to small arms manufacture?