EU working paper in preparation of the
Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the UN Programme of
Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (BMS5)

1. Ever since its adoption in 2001, the European Union (EU) has actively promoted the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects (UN PoA). In order to further strengthen its action against the destabilising accumulation and spread of SALW and their ammunition the EU adopted a Strategy on SALW in 2005.

2. The UN PoA and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) remain the key starting point for further action on illicit SALW and their ammunition at national, regional and international levels. The Fifth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS5) provides the opportunity to not only review progress made in the implementation of the UN PoA and the ITI, but also to explore ways to strengthen their implementation.

3. The EU welcomes the adoption by the UN Security Council of resolution 2117 (2013), the first-ever resolution dedicated exclusively to the issue of small arms and light weapons, as well as the UN Secretary-General’s report to the Security Council of 22 August 2013 entitled “Small Arms” (S/2013/503).

4. The European Union wishes to thank chair-designate Ambassador Tanin for the distribution of a "zero draft" outcome document as a point of departure for further deliberations. The EU supports the proposed structure of the outcome document, which is taking into account proposals expressed by Member States at previous informal meetings held in New York and in Geneva. The EU is pleased that most of its proposals with respect to the substantive agenda items are reflected in the "zero draft" document.

5. The EU would like to stress the importance of rapidly reaching an agreement on a reduced list of key topics under each agenda item, with a view to allow for substantial and focused debates, building on the achievements of the previous conferences.

6. The EU would like to submit the following considerations and suggestions for BMS5:
a. **Physical security and stockpile management:** the EU strongly welcomes the proposed particular focus of BMS5 on stockpile management including physical security measures (suggested agenda item I.a). With the PoA, States have explicitly committed themselves to ensure that there are adequate and detailed standards and procedures relating to the management and security of SALW stocks and their ammunition. However, poorly managed and insufficiently secured SALW and ammunition stockpiles remain a prime means through which SALW are diverted from the legal to the illicit market. They also continue to pose a significant risk to international and regional security as well as to human security and public safety. In our view, the discussions at BMS5 on this agenda item should build on the work already carried out at BMS3 with the aim to further assist us in improving our past and ongoing efforts in securing and maintaining SALW through comprehensive systems for sound physical security and stockpile management. As part of this agenda item, the EU would welcome a detailed consideration of the following issues: the development of agreed standards and best practices, based on such instruments such as the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG); the use of technology to improve the management and security of SALW and ammunition stocks (see also point c below); and physical security and stockpile management in conflict and post-conflict situations.

b. **Tracing of illicit arms in conflict and post-conflict situations:** under the suggested substantive agenda item II (ITI), the EU would support a focused discussion on the ways and means to improve the tracing of SALW in conflict and post-conflict contexts. Effective tracing in conflict zones can contribute to contain the flows of illicit arms into conflict zones and has the potential to enhance the effectiveness of arms control and law enforcement measures and serve broader conflict prevention, crisis management and peace-building objectives. As part of this discussion, the EU considers that BMS5 should discuss the possibility of increasing the role and capacities of peace support and other relevant missions in weapons tracing, notably with a view to a more effective monitoring of and preventing violations into arms embargoes.

c. **Enhanced exchange of tracing results:** under the suggested substantive agenda item II (ITI), the EU considers that BMS5 should look at ways to enhance the exchange of information between authorities at the national, regional and international level related to tracing results as well as other relevant information relevant to the illicit transfer, diversion, destabilising accumulation or misuse of small arms and light weapons, including by further developing and making full use of databases and online technologies (such as iArms and iTrace) in order to
increase the effectiveness of arms control measures and prevent diversion of SALW.

d. **Use of modern technologies for the improved control of SALW, including their ammunition:** under the suggested substantive agenda items I.a (Stockpile management including physical security measures) and II (ITI), the EU considers that BMS5 should examine the opportunities and challenges provided by the latest technological advances in the context of stockpile management, as well as for a more effective marking, record-keeping and tracing of SALW and their ammunition. BMS5 should notably consider the initial report of the UN Secretary General on the implications of technological developments in small arms manufacturing and technology for marking, record keeping and tracing. The conclusions and recommendations to be drawn from this discussion could include the tasking of further expert work, as appropriate.

e. **International cooperation and assistance:** continued international cooperation and assistance remain key for the successful implementation of the PoA and should therefore continue to form an integral element of any PoA and ITI meetings. The EU has been providing significant assistance to states, sub-regional, regional and international organizations to fully implement all provisions of the PoA. Thus, the EU welcomes the inclusion of agenda item III, including with a view to discussing the effectiveness and possible improvement of existing cooperation and assistance instruments. In addition, the EU suggests focusing on the participation and representation of women in international cooperation and assistance for PoA and ITI implementation, in line with Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and other related resolutions.

f. **Relationship of PoA /ITI commitments with the Arms Trade Treaty:** BMS 5 will take place in 2014, the year which, in all likelihood, will see the entering into force of the Arms Trade Treaty. Commitments under the PoA / ITI and under the ATT have the potential of being mutually reinforcing. Care must however also be taken to avoid overlap in work under these two instruments. In this context, the EU invites BMS5 to take into account the upcoming role of the ATT in establishing international norms for the control of the legal trade in SALW, and also the Treaty's particular focus on the prevention of diversion risks.