Dear Excellency,

It is my honour to write to you again following our well-attended and very constructive open, informal consultation on the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider 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 (BMS5) held on Friday, 25 October 2013. This meeting provided us all with valuable insight into Member States’ perspectives on the possible agenda and other substantive and organisational aspects of BMS5, which is scheduled to take place from 16 to 20 June 2014.

Working methods
I have noted from our consultations a broadly held preference for adopting the same working methods that were successfully employed in past Programme of Action (PoA) meetings. This includes the established practice of moving directly into substantive discussions without a general debate or high-level segment; the early circulation of a ‘zero-draft’ outcome document with ample possibility for open, transparent consultations in the lead-up to the meeting itself; and encouraging States to consider national reports as their contribution of views on the general implementation of the PoA. (See UNODA’s Note Verbale of 20 September 2013 requesting Missions to submit their government’s national report before 31 December 2013.)

BMS5 Agenda
During our consultations, I took note that while additional possible agenda items were raised, there was no objection to the initial list of agenda items suggested in my letter of 10 October 2013, which were made fully on the basis of past practice and the agreed outcome of the 2nd Review Conference.

I also noted that some objections were raised with regard to other possible agenda topics suggested at the consultations. Consequently, I consider the following items as the ones that can garner consensus:

1. Stockpile management;
2. Marking, record-keeping and tracing (International Tracing Instrument);
3. International cooperation and assistance;
4. Other issues.

Some of the additional suggestions – for example, those on increasing measurability of PoA implementation efforts and on trust fund arrangements – may instead be covered under the above agenda item of international cooperation and assistance. I would also take this opportunity to remind you that my
door remains open to all delegations for consultations or further suggestions. I encourage delegations wishing to include other topics to take this opportunity to consult on them with priority, in order to assess at an early stage if consensus on their suggestions is feasible.

In my previous letter I already indicated my intention to reach informal agreement on the agenda of the BMS5 before the end of this calendar year. (As you know, the agenda will be formally adopted at the first day of BMS5.) Therefore, I suggest that we use our next open, informal consultations to attain an informal agreement on the substantive agenda points for BMS5.

**Marking, record-keeping and tracing (International Tracing Instrument)**
At our previous consultations, I proposed that, in accordance with past practice, I select a separate moderator on the issue of the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) for BMS5. In this regard, I am pleased to inform you that I have requested that Mr. Wolfgang Bindseil, Deputy Head of Division on Conventional Arms Control in the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany, undertake this role. Mr. Bindseil has kindly agreed, and he will join me on the podium at our next open, informal consultations. This will help ensure that the topic of marking, record-keeping and tracing continues to be dealt with in a coherent manner.

**Next consultations**
I would like to confirm that our next open, informal consultations will be held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, on **Wednesday, 20 November** in the Trusteeship Council Chamber at 10am.

In line with standing practice, this informal meeting will be conducted in English only.

The objective of this meeting would be to:
1. Agree on the provisional substantive agenda points for BMS5;
2. Allow for Member States to indicate their national and regional perspectives on areas of priority, within the agreed substantive agenda points.

I believe that a focused, well-prepared discussion under the second point would vastly help the ITI moderator and me to understand where there may be room for development and progress in the outcome of BMS5. In that regard, I would also strongly encourage Member States to develop non-papers on any substantive agenda point. The most useful time window for submission of such non-papers would be between the end of November and the end of March to my office by email ambassador@afghanistan-un.org or fax (212) 972-1216.
Additionally, as I mentioned at the last consultations, I plan to hold informal consultations in Geneva, subject to available resources – as well as further informal consultations in New York in the beginning of 2014.

I look forward to your active participation at the consultations on the 20th.

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

Zahir Tanin
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations

To: All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations New York