

Statement by

Mr. David Donoghue

Permanent Representative of Ireland

at the

UN Security Council Open Debate on Small Arms

New York, 13 May 2015

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Madam President,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union. I would also like to make the following statement in a national capacity.

Ireland greatly welcomes the opportunity to debate the question of the human cost of the illicit transfer, accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons in this forum and we would like to thank the Lithuanian Presidency of the Security Council for providing the opportunity to debate the significant concerns for human security which are raised by this question.

We were pleased to welcome the adoption last year of UN Security Council Resolution 2117. We regarded that as a very encouraging step on the road to combating the scourge of illegal proliferation and accumulation of small arms and light weapons. We also welcomed the adoption of the consensus outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States Parties under the United Nations Programme of Action.

As the Presidency's concept paper sets out clearly, in our world, the majority of deaths in conflict are caused by the use of small arms; more human rights abuses are committed with small arms than with any other weapon, and armed insecurity is one of the major impediments to development everywhere. Ireland therefore strongly supports the measures contained in UNSCR 2117, in particular the integrated approach to tackling the significant problems posed by the illicit accumulation and proliferation of these weapons.

An integrated approach is essential if the international community is to adequately address the challenges posed by these weapons – whose contribution to conflict, post- conflict violence, and gender-based violence is rightly acknowledged in the Presidency’s concept paper – as well as the dangers which they pose for humanitarian and peacekeeping interventions.

Ireland welcomes therefore the inclusion of SALW related issues when peacekeeping mandates are under consideration. We strongly support current projects and efforts to make arms embargoes more effective, including through the development of international tracing procedures. We firmly believe that ammunition must also be included in the international community’s control systems for these weapons. We look forward to the expert meeting to be held next month and to further consideration of practical control measures in respect of these weapons.

Madam President,

Ireland recognizes that women have been, and continue to be, a powerful force for change in relation to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control affairs, and we welcome the renewed focus on both women’s empowerment and also on the gendered impact of illicit arms proliferation which has been brought forward in our debate today. We are pleased that the Global Study on Resolution 1325 currently underway will also address the impact of small arms on women affected by conflict, and we look forward to exchanging views with the lead author of the Study on these and other points shortly.

UNSCR 2117 is an important instrument in bringing forward recognition of the interrelationship between misuse of small arms and light weapons, women peace and security and human rights questions. Equally the Arms Trade Treaty

which entered into force on 24 December 2014 was ground-breaking in recognizing, for the first time in an international Treaty, the link between international arms transfers and gender based violence. We look forward to continuing this vital work along with Member States and Civil Society with a view to making women more visible in the Disarmament debate. We welcome today's discussion as another step in the right direction.

The Arms Trade Treaty is of course a major step forward in the international community's efforts to regulate the international trade in Conventional Weapons. As the first legally binding instrument in that regard, it has strong potential to also assist us greatly in our work in relation to controlling small arms and light weapons. As the ATT enters the final implementation phase before the First meeting of States Parties in Mexico this August, Ireland is working with States Parties and civil society to ensure that the Treaty, which represents a rare and inspiring success for the international disarmament community, will put in place strong and resilient implementation measures, which will allow us to carry out its ambitious provisions, not least in relation to small arms and light weapons.

Thank you Madam President.

ENDS