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EU statement on International Small Arms Control Standards

Mr Chairperson

The European Union warmly welcomes Mr. Patrick McCarthy from the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thanks him for his presentation.

The project on International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) will, when finalised, enhance policymaking and programming on small arms across the UN system and provide comprehensive guidance to practitioners and policymakers.

The EU considers that the results of the recent Fourth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS4), on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), held last June in New York, gives the international community a more solid basis to further develop coordinated efforts to address SALW-related issues. The outcome document of the BMS4 calls indeed for further harmonization and international coordination in the provision of assistance in the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on SALW.

In this regard, the results of the BMS4 are most welcome by the European Union. Within the framework of the EU SALW Strategy, we have long supported the development of international standards and the enhancement of coordination in addressing the threats posed by the illicit trade and excessive accumulation of SALW and their ammunition. Let me give you some examples. The European Union has been among the main promoters of the 2005 International Marking and Tracing Instrument (ITI) that has served this standardization purpose in the field of the marking, record-keeping, and tracing of SALW. It has also supported the implementation of the ITI through dedicated outreach activities and the provision of technical and infrastructural assistance to third countries

Through several regional projects, the EU has been also supporting the harmonization of legislation, common practices and tools in the prevention of SALW trafficking, in particular through the support provided to African Regional Communities. Similarly the EU is about to finalize a new project in support of the UN Programme of Action that will contain a specific element to finance the completion and successive implementation of international guidelines for the stockpile management of ammunition.

Therefore, we cannot but encourage the efforts undertaken by UN ODA and UNDP in the framework of the CASA mechanisms to finalize the project on ISACS, which will certainly provide a valuable tool for the full implementation of the UN Programme of Action by all UN Member States.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA* and ICELAND, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area NORWAY, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.