Launching of the 2015 Small Arms Survey Yearbook

Statement

By

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Ambassador Paul Seger of Switzerland,

I would like to thank through you the Government of Switzerland and the Small Arms Survey for organizing this important event and inviting me to speak.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The launch of the Small Arms Survey 2015 yearbook has been designed to coincide with the first day of the Second Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts on the UN Programme of Action on small arms.

This timing is significant. Since the early days of the UN small arms process, the Small Arms Survey has been working alongside the UN in this process. It provides an important and impartial information resource on the issue of small arms to governments, policy-makers, researchers, and civil society. In particular, it has made available valuable information on this topic to the delegations in the conference room. It has been instrumental in their consideration of next steps on how to combat the illicit trade in small arms.

The illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons continue to fuel armed conflicts world-wide. They cause a protracted negative impact on human rights, development and even humanitarian aid. This is why the issue of illicit small arms and light weapons remains of key concern to the international community.

The work of the Small Arms Survey, through the outstanding quality of its publications, contributes to a better understanding of the urgency of the issue and the need for the redoubling of efforts by all of us to effectively address it.

Through the years, the Small Arms Survey yearbooks have become central references to a wide audience because of the depth and pertinence of the analysis, the clarity of the language and the accuracy of the data therein.

I believe that this year’s edition, entitled “Weapons and the world” is no exception: It aims to examine the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons from innovative perspectives. It includes the impact of weapons on the environment and the nexus between weapons and natural resources, and the implications of recent developments in small arms technology on weapon marking, record-keeping and tracing.

Indeed, this innovative approach is fully consonant with ways forward encouraged in the May 2015 report of the Secretary-General on the issue presented to the Security Council.
Furthermore, the issue of new technologies is also particularly pertinent to the discussions now taking place at the Second Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Programme of Action.

I would urge us all to take a close read of the Small Arms Survey 2015 yearbook and, more than that, to use it as inspiration for new ideas to support our collective efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

I thank you.