Excellency,

I am writing to you following our third informal consultations of 12 March 2020 in preparation for the Seventh Biennial Meeting of States (BMS7) 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.

I would like to thank all delegations which attended the meeting and provided their views on the dedicated theme of "Consideration of 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, at the national level, the regional level, and the global level, including considerations to preventing and combating the diversion and the illicit international transfer of small arms and light weapons to unauthorized recipients", a theme which, as you would recall, will be a major focus for BMS7.

Postponement of scheduled in-person informal consultations for BMS7

I would further like to take the opportunity to inform you that following discussions with the Secretariat and relevant UN bodies, I have decided to postpone all the in-person informal consultations for BMS7 scheduled for March and April with immediate effect in the light of the recent developments regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19). The Secretariat is also currently reviewing all scheduled UN meetings in the context of COVID-19, including BMS7. We should therefore be able to formulate a new timetable for BMS7 in the coming weeks and communicate the same at the earliest convenience.

Written submission of proposals and inputs

With the postponement of our planned informal consultations, I would like to invite all delegations to submit written comments and proposals on the agenda items which you positively reviewed at our 12 March informal consultations:

A. Consideration of 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, at the national level, the regional level, and the global level, including considerations to preventing and combating the diversion and the illicit international transfer of small arms and light weapons to unauthorized recipients.

B. Consideration of the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, including consideration of a supplementary annex to the ITI.

C. Consideration of international cooperation and assistance, including national, regional and global target-setting, for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, including capacity-building.

D. Decision on agenda of BMS8
E. Other issues and topics of relevance for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument

Your substantive inputs will allow me and my team to begin assembling substantive elements for BMS7 in a timely manner. I therefore also suggest that your views and proposals on the ITI Annex take into account the “non-exhaustive list of elements” for such an annex compiled on the basis of previous discussions and included in the Secretary-General’s 2019 report (A/74/187). Following requests made by delegations at the 12 March informal consultations for discussions on the ITI Annex to be more inclusive of other recent developments in small arms and light weapons manufacturing, technology and design, I would encourage you to also review the Secretary-General’s 2014 report (A/CONF.192/BMS/2014/1), which was dedicated to this issue and which informed the deliberations of the 2015 Meetings of Governmental Experts on the same issue.

I would like, once again, to encourage Member States to submit working papers that would also facilitate our preparations ahead of BMS7.

All views and proposals can be submitted directly to conventionalarms-unoda@un.org.

Finally, I would like to thank States that have submitted their national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action and encourage those that have not done so yet to submit their reports as soon as possible. The online reporting tool can be accessed through the BMS7 web portal (see www.un.org/disarmament/bms7).

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

LAZARUS OMBAI AMAYO
AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the
United Nations
NEW YORK

1 Available at https://undocs.org/A/74/187
3 www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/past-meetings