

Letter of transmittal dated 07 May 2004 from the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons

I have the honour to submit herewith my non-paper in view of the first substantial meeting of the OEWG that will take place in New York from 14 to 25 June 2004. The paper seeks to provide delegations with a starting point for the discussion of the three areas of marking, record-keeping and cooperation in tracing.

The basis of the non-paper is the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on tracing illicit small arms and light weapons (A/58/138, 11 July 2003) that was welcomed by the General Assembly in Resolution 58/241. The non-paper at hand highlights areas of common practice and understanding as well as gaps in various areas of importance to the negotiation of an international instrument. I of course welcome any suggestions of additional elements that need to be discussed during the negotiation.

It should be noted that this paper does not constitute a proposal for the elaboration of a first draft of the international instrument. It does not in any way seek to prejudge the outcome of the negotiations.

My hope is that the non-paper contributes to a focused discussion in June; a discussion that will provide us with elements for drafting a first text of an international instrument.

(Signed) Anton Thalmann
Chairman of the Open-Ended Working Group on
Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons