

means to prevent and reduce the excessive and destabilizing transfer of small arms and light weapons and we will continue to work together to curb illegal trafficking in firearms.

EXPORT CONTROL REGIMES

81. We underline our support for the arrangements that make up the international export control regimes. The Zangger Committee and the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, and, for those who are members, the Australia Group export control regime, all contribute critically to the global application and enforcement of international export control norms.

ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES

82. Last year we committed ourselves to spare no effort in securing a global ban on anti-personnel landmines. To this end, we note the useful and complementary efforts in a variety of fora, including at the Conference on Disarmament and in formal negotiations to take place in Oslo in September through the Ottawa Process which has set the goal of achieving such a ban before the end of the year. We welcome the restrictions on anti-personnel landmines unilaterally declared by States, including by the members of the EU. We reaffirm the UN General Assembly resolution, approved overwhelmingly, calling for concluding an effective, legally-binding international agreement to ban anti-personnel landmines as soon as possible. All States should adhere to the strengthened Protocol on Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices. We encourage the international community to develop technological solutions to mine detection and clearance, and to strengthen its support for humanitarian demining and assistance to mine victims.

POLITICAL SITUATIONS

Hong Kong

83. We recognize the historic nature of China's imminent resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong. Considering our durable interests in this financial and economic center, we welcome and place weight on China's commitments, contained in the 1984 UK-PRC Joint Declaration and in the 1990 PRC Basic Law. These include ensuring Hong Kong's continued stability and prosperity and preserving its way of life, its high degree of autonomy -- including an independent monetary and economic system -- its fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. These will provide the essential underpinnings for Hong Kong's future economic success. We look forward to democratic elections in Hong Kong for a new legislature as soon as possible. We take serious note of China's assurances in the Joint Declaration and Basic Law that the provisions of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights will continue to apply in Hong Kong.

Middle East

84. The Peace Process faces a crisis, and we are determined to reinject momentum into it. Restoring the sense of security and confidence among Israelis and Palestinians is essential.