STATEMENT BY
MS. FRANCISILANA SRIKLAND-SIMONET
REPRESENTATIVE OF SAMOA
PERMANENT MISSION OF SAMOA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT THE
SPECIAL EVENT TO MARK THE OPENING FOR SIGNATURE OF THE
ARMS TRADE TREATY

3 JUNE 2013, NEW YORK

Mr. Secretary General,
Distinguished Delegates,

My delegation is grateful for the opportunity to add our voice to the "loud shouts" of support for the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

Despite years of exhaustive and sometimes difficult deliberations, a key milestone was achieved when the majority of countries including my own, voted in support for a new treaty to finally help regulate the global trade in conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons.

The historical signing ceremony today, brings that positive realization and hope, that we are indeed beginning the new leg of this important journey. A journey to ensure that we all play our part, in helping prevent and deter the illicit trafficking and proliferation of arms, which threaten peace and security. A journey, to successfully reduce and eventually eliminate altogether, the human cost of these conventional arms.

Why was it important for us to speak today?

My delegation will give you three reasons:

Firstly, Samoa celebrated on Saturday 1 June its 51 years of Independence and stability. We believe it is important to highlight, that international instruments such as the ATT, can play a key role in ensuring the peace and security of our peoples. For a small island developing state like Samoa, it only takes a few small arms and light weapons in the wrong hands, to cause instability.

We have experienced within our own Pacific region, how such arms can fuel conflicts, support criminal activities, disrupt the peaceful lives of communities and impede development.
Secondly, Samoa applauds the overwhelming number of supporters of the ATT who are able to sign the Treaty today. Malo lava! (Congratulations)

My delegation, also understands that many supporters of the ATT, for one reason or another, could not sign today. This includes my own country, Samoa.

I am happy to announce, that to underscore the importance of the ATT to Samoa, we will sign the Treaty at the highest political level, during the UN Treaty Event in September this year.

Lastly, we join the strong chorus of voices, calling on States to sign and swiftly ratify the Treaty. While having a Treaty is a success in itself, we believe the real success story should be its effective implementation.

The ATT provides hope for a safer future for millions of people around the world.

Samoa will play its part; we are confident the NGOs and civil society will continue to play theirs, so we urge all States to act to ensure the success of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Thank you Mr. Secretary General.