Mr. Chairman,

1. While weapons of mass destruction (WMD) have dominated much of the global security and disarmament agenda for the last few decades, the illicit transfer and use of conventional weapons has continued to engender insecurity and conflict across the world. Their use has been associated with some of the gravest war crimes and humanitarian crises of our time. It has also had destabilizing effects on UN activities to maintain international peace and security, such as arms embargoes, peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peace-building programs.

2. The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) last year marked an important milestone in our efforts to curb the illicit trade of conventional weapons around the world. The Treaty is the first international legally binding instrument to introduce rule of law and common standards to the global commerce of conventional weapons. In particular, States are required for the first time under this Treaty to consider humanitarian and human rights consequences when exporting conventional weapons.

3. The Republic of Korea hails the deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification of the ATT last month, which triggered the Treaty’s entry into force for later this year - a feat achieved less than two years after its adoption. We should
maintain the momentum of our work by continuing our robust efforts toward the universalisation of this Treaty, as well as its full and effective implementation by the States Parties.

4. As one of the original signatory states, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its strong commitment to the goals and objectives of the ATT. The ROK government is working earnestly towards the ratification of the Treaty at the earliest possible date.

5. The adoption of resolution 2117 last year, the first ever resolution dedicated exclusively to small arms and light weapons, by the Security Council was another meaningful development in this area. The resolution highlights a number of key points, including the obligation of all states to comply with UN-mandated arms embargoes, protection of civilians in armed conflicts, especially women and children, and the need for effective implementation of the ATT among many others.

6. With the Arms Trade Treaty set to enter into force soon, we should work to strengthen the synergy between the ATT, Security Council resolution 2117, and the UN Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (UNPoA) to build a cohesive and effective global regime on conventional arms control.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) has served as an essential foundation of conventional disarmament and arms control for the past three decades, while maintaining the delicate balance between
humanitarian principles and legitimate and indispensable security concerns. The CCW also serves as a dynamic instrument that responds to the new, evolving threats and urgent humanitarian challenges before us.

8. My delegation is of the view that the discussion on Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) during the CCW Meeting of Experts over the course of the past 5 years was a meaningful step forward. Given the gravely negative impact of IEDs on the lives of civilians who are directly affected as well as on efforts at post-conflict social restoration and economic reconstruction, it is imperative to continue to further explore ways to collaborate more closely in addressing the challenges they pose.

9. Finally, it is also worth noting the discussion of lethal autonomous weapons system, held for the first time within the structure of the CCW. We look forward to a balanced and equitable approach towards developing a common understanding on the relevant technology and their implications. /End/