Mr. Chairman,

Sweden fully subscribes to the statement by the European Union. I will therefore limit myself to some additional points in a national capacity.

The adoption of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in 2013 was a landmark step towards establishing robust and effective common international standards for the international trade in conventional arms. The next step is of course to secure the widest application of these standards in practice. Sweden therefore attaches the greatest importance to broad adherence to the treaty, and to its effective implementation. The Arms Trade Treaty holds the promise of becoming an important tool for international efforts to encourage a more responsible trade in conventional arms, as well as to eradicate the unregulated and illicit trade in these arms.

Sweden especially welcomes the inclusion of the provision on gender-based violence in the ATT. Gender-based violence is a complex issue that needs to be addressed on many levels. The ATT can contribute by limiting the availability of arms in areas where there is a serious risk that they could be used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence. But in order to effectively implement this provision, States need to update their risk assessment procedures and provide appropriate training for their licensing officers.

Under the appreciated leadership of the government of Mexico, the preparations for the first Conference of State Parties of the ATT has
made a promising start. The treaty, which already enjoys broad international support, needs a successful first Conference to put into place the structures and rules required for effective implementation and operation. Sweden supports an open and inclusive preparatory process in which both States Parties and Signatories can play an active role, with continued support from civil society, international and regional organisations and industry. As a further contribution to building a functional and effective treaty, Sweden has nominated Ambassador Paul Beijer as candidate to the post of Head of the future ATT Secretariat.

Another important task for the international community will be to provide implementation assistance to those Signatories and States parties who express the need for such assistance. Sweden supports this work through the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, UNSCAR, as well as through direct support to a number of initiatives. We warmly welcome civil society's contributions in this area, which effectively reinforce and complement the efforts of governments.

Mr. Chairman,

We continue to consider the UN Programme of Action (PoA) on small arms and light weapons (SALW) a key universal tool to respond to the challenges posed by the illicit spread of such weapons. We welcome the adoption of the Fifth Biannual Meeting (BMS5) outcome document, in which important priorities for Sweden were included - such as a strong focus on physical security and stockpile management, and a recognition of the devastating consequences of illicit trade with small arms on civilians, particularly for women and children. These are areas where Sweden has expertise to offer and is keen to move forward.

The Arms Trade Treaty entering into force later this year is a major step forward that promises to complement and reinforce the work being done in instruments such as the PoA and the Firearms Protocol. The inclusion of SALW in the ATT’s scope introduces legally binding obligations and new norms for the regulation of legal transfers of small arms. This will further reduce the risk of such weapons being diverted to the illegal market.
We welcome that UNODA has established an office in Vienna which will facilitate closer cooperation and effective interaction in all areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. On the small arms issue, this will be especially important with regard to cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as well as with other relevant regional intergovernmental organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Mr. Chairman,

This year’s Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines set important goals in the Maputo Action Plan and reinforced the spirit of cooperation upon which the Convention is based.

The Ottawa Convention already sets a world norm for use of anti-personnel mines. The recent announcement by the United States that it will abide by the major obligations of the Treaty is encouraging, and we hope that the US and other States will follow and join the convention to finally achieve the goal of a mine-free world. We also wish that this could be an inspiration to States not yet Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions to make similar commitments ahead of its first Review Conference, to be held next year. We look forward to a time when we will see also see the world’s largest manufacturers and users of cluster munitions join that Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

Sweden remains firmly committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its protocols. We very much appreciated the opportunity at the Expert Meeting in May this year to take a first look at the questions around lethal autonomous weapon systems, LAWS. As a starting point, Sweden believes that humans should not delegate to machines the power to make life-and-death decisions in the battlefield. As States, we have an obligation to assess the legality of new weapons, and we will therefore welcome a continued discussion of this issue within the framework of the CCW.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.