Statement

by

Mr. Korakot Parachasit
Second Secretary

before the First Committee
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Thematic Discussion: Conventional Weapons
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Mr. Chair,

1. Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chair,

2. Proliferation of conventional weapons and illicit transfer of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) constitute a complicated and multi-dimensional issue. They pose a serious threat to global peace and security as well as hinder socio-economic development. Nevertheless, Thailand maintains our optimistic view that this issue can be addressed effectively, especially with the collective efforts of international community.

3. Thailand reiterates our commitment to the United Nations Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPoA) as the principal multilateral cooperation framework to address this common and widespread problem. We welcome the adoption by consensus of the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS5) on the UNPoA and urge all states to continue to cooperate with one another to ensure full and effective implementation.

Mr. Chair,

4. Thailand welcomes the imminent entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on 24th December 2014. The speedy progression from negotiation to the entry into force clearly demonstrates the international community’s awareness of the threat of unregulated arms trade as well as its determination to seek a solution to the problem.

5. However, for the ATT to be truly effective, States Parties, Observer States and civil society must do their parts to steer and facilitate its implementation. In this regard, Thailand welcomes the decision by Germany to organise a preparatory meeting in Berlin at the end of next month and Mexico for its offer to host the first conference of States Parties next year. We hope that the conference of States Parties will be conducted in an inclusive manner, with participation from Observer States and civil society. The inclusive participation will also encourage the universalisation of the treaty.

6. Regarding the implementation of the ATT, Thailand stresses that we should avoid the duplication of work or imposition of unnecessary burden — that is, the implementation of the ATT must be consistent with relevant existing frameworks, mechanisms and agreements, including the UNPoA.

7. For our part, Thailand has fully supported the ATT since its inception. We have already convened inter-agency consultations to review and assess existing frameworks and regulations and wish to become the State Party to the treaty in the very near future.
Mr. Chair,

8. Humanitarian principles have always been at the core of Thailand’s policy. In this connection, we adhere strictly to these principles enshrined in various conventions, including the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and Mine Ban Convention.

9. Thailand was one of the first countries to ratify the Mine Ban Convention in 1999 and we strive to fulfill our obligations to the convention. The Thai delegation participated actively in the 3rd Review Conference and we will abide by our political commitment in the Maputo+15 Declaration and fulfill our obligations as guided by the Maputo Action Plan.

Mr. Chair,

10. On mine clearance, Thailand is committed to the goal of zero-victim and mine-free country remains an obligation. Since 2001 Thailand has reduced mine-affected areas from approximately 2,500 square kilometers to 500 square kilometers today. To further improve the efficiency of our mine clearance, Thailand Mine Action Center is in the process of revising our method according to the updated International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). Thailand also commends the Government of Japan, the Government of Norway and Norwegian People’s Aid for their continued support to our mine clearance efforts.

11. On victim assistance, Thailand has adopted a holistic and integrated approach which is closely connected to our obligations under the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Care for landmine victims is integrated into the broader legal framework, national plans and programs for persons with disabilities, and is implemented under the umbrella of the Universal Health Coverage for all.

12. Thailand also focuses on creating strong local community networks to empower persons with disabilities through community-based rehabilitation, the establishment of community learning centres, and strengthening of local volunteer networks. Next year, Thailand is honoured to assume the Chairmanship of the Committee on Victim Assistance, and we also plan to organize the 2nd Bangkok Symposium as part of our continued effort to share best practices and lesson learned with States Parties of the Mine Ban Convention.

13. Thailand stands ready and committed to render assistance in mine action to other States Parties. In June 2013, we organised the first training course in mine action for representatives from Myanmar. Another extensive training course was also organised in September this year. We hope that our modest contribution in this regard will help us move closer to the mine-free world.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

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