Madam Chairperson,

Pakistan has long been in the forefront of efforts to promote the cause of conventional disarmament and control, particularly at the regional and sub-regional levels to advance international and regional peace and security.

Pakistan shares the long-term objectives that the draft resolution seeks to achieve. We believe that a comprehensive approach is required to address the complex issue of conventional arms transfers. Emphasis on supply side prescriptions and disregard of regional particularities does not advance the shared objectives of regulating arms transfers. At the same time, the draft resolution does not address the question of existing imbalances which impact negatively on regional security and are caused by inequitable policies of certain supplying States.

We are convinced that equal attention and effort should be devoted to balanced reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments, specially in regions of tension. The overarching aim of any international arms trade framework must be geared toward reduction of regional and international tensions, prevention and resolution of conflicts and disputes, building and enhancing confidence, and promoting disarmament as well as social and economic development. As agreed in SSOD–I, “States with the largest military arsenals have a special responsibly in pursuing the process of conventional armaments reduction”.

We share the view that given the complexity of the issues, a step-by-step approach is essential both on substance and process. On substance, the following factors are important:

1. Promoting the existing mechanism of UN Arms Register;
2. Addressing both supply and demand equation of the conventional arms transfers;
3. further strengthening of national controls on transfers;
4. evolving sub-regional and/or regional mechanisms such as the proposal of Pakistan on a Strategic Restraint Regime in South Asia.

With regard to process, we see merit in calls for a sequential approach in approaching this issue. In the first instance therefore, the Secretary General should seek the views of Member States. At the second stage, Member States could decide on the question of establishing a GGE and thereafter formulate an instrument or instruments on conventional arms transfers.

My delegation had hoped that some of the elements outlined above would be reflected in the draft resolution. However, the omission of these important inputs which could have made the draft resolution more balanced has obliged my delegation to abstain. We would nonetheless remain fully engaged in the process of consultations and dialogue on this issue. For the dialogue to be successful, it is necessary that it should be inclusive reflecting diverse views on the subject.

I thank you Madam Chair.