Madam Chair,

I would like to draw your attention to the Resolution “Transparency in Arms”, which the Netherlands has tabled yesterday and which has been forwarded to all delegations.

The Resolution is of particular importance, as transparency in military matters contributes directly to confidence and security-building between governments.

In order to respond to the increased desire of governments for openness on these matters, the UN established, in 1991, the UN Register of Conventional Arms. Annually, all UN Member States can provide data, on a voluntary basis, on their imports and exports of arms.

Every three years, a Group of Governmental Experts reviews the operation and considers further development of the UN Register of Conventional Arms. This process really works. The respective GGEs have booked consistent and considerable progress. The recommendations of this year’s expert group are now included in the draft resolution.

What is new?
The 2006 GGE has built on the achievements of the 2003 group, whose work paved the way for broadening the scope of the register.

- Firstly, it was recommended that international transfers of conventional arms involving only UN Member States should be reported to the Register.
- Secondly, an extension of the notification commitment regarding the sixth category of the register is proposed: information exchange on a broader range of warships.
- Thirdly, the group developed an optional standardized form for notification of transfers of small arms and light weapons. This will make the notification for states easier.

These recommendations have all been incorporated in the new resolution.

Last year, the resolution was co-sponsored by 106 states. I kindly invite all delegations to sponsor the resolution this year, so we can achieve an even better result!

Thank you, Madam Chair