Statement by H.E. Mr. Sumio Tarui
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Head of the Delegation of Japan
to the Conference on Disarmament
At the Meeting of the First Committee
during the 62nd Session of the General Assembly
Thematic Discussion: Conventional Weapons
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Mr. Chairman,

It is to be acknowledged that the issue of small arms and light weapons (SALW) is one of the most critical problems being faced by the international community. In this connection, Japan attaches great importance to the continuing efforts by the United Nations to tackle the severe problem of SALW.

Although last year’s UN Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (PoA) was unable to reach agreement on further efforts at the global level, the PoA remains the most important international framework for tackling illicit small arms. Bearing in mind that 500,000 people lose their lives to small arms every year, we must continue to enhance the implementation of the PoA at the national, regional and international levels.

From this perspective, in March this year Japan held the Tokyo Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which was entitled, “SALW Issues from the Perspective of the Protection and Empowerment of the Peaceful Community”. In addition to sharing best practices concerning efforts on the issue of SALW, understanding was also deepened on demand factors and transfer controls. Japan also actively participated in the Group of Governmental Experts meeting (GGE) on illicit brokering, and made efforts to forge a report that included the most concrete and action-oriented as possible model national regulations and recommendations. Japan strongly hopes that many countries implement the contents of this report.
Mr. Chairman,

A biennial meeting of States (BMS) is scheduled to be held next year. It will be the first official meeting since the 2006 Conference to Review the Implementation of the PoA, and it is necessary to strengthen our endeavors towards the issue of SALW in this meeting. Last year’s resolution on small arms and light weapons decided that the meeting of States to consider the implementation of the International Instrument on Tracing shall be held within the framework of the BMS. Moreover, the aforementioned report of the GGE recommended that each country’s report on brokering be considered at the BMS. Japan believes that steadily implementing these actions will lead to strengthening the implementation of the PoA, and bolstering international cooperation is vital to this end. From this viewpoint, Japan along with Colombia and South Africa have once again submitted a draft resolution that includes these elements. We believe that the SALW resolution lays out a concrete roadmap for the implementation of the PoA, and we call on the support of the UN Member States for its consensus adoption.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to restate at this stage that Japan, in accordance with its Three Principles on Arms Exports, does not export weapons. This policy is executed with the broad support of the citizens of Japan, who sincerely desire international peace and security. Against this backdrop, Japan also places immense value on projects on the ground to reduce the actual harm caused by SALW. We assist countries especially in Asia and Africa, and this year we provided support to the Central Africa Republic and the Republic of Congo.

Mr. Chairman,

The GGE on an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is due to be held next year. Japan believes the ATT is a valuable and epoch-making initiative. There is a pressing need for the international community to overcome the problems of uncontrolled or irresponsible transfers of conventional weapons, and thus prevent victims caused by such transfers. In order for an ATT to materialize, not only is it essential to combine technical and expert knowledge, but also to fuel the momentum of discussions through involvement by the greatest number of countries. With this in mind, Japan is prepared to contribute to the full extent of its ability. Furthermore, since Japan is one of the original co-sponsor countries of the ATT resolution – “Towards an arms trade treaty” – we will be energetically taking part in the discussions of the GGE, and aim to establish an effective treaty through the participation of as many countries as possible.
Mr. Chairman,

This year, China expressed its will to return to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and participate in the United Nations Military Expenditure Reporting Instrument, and submitted annual reports for both. Japan values China's efforts as a first step towards confidence building in the international community through the improvement of transparency in armaments and the arms trade.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to cluster munitions, Japan is fully aware of the humanitarian concerns caused by them. In order to respond effectively and practically to the problem, it is necessary to develop the process that addresses this issue with the participation of the major producers and possessors, while allowing for a balance between humanitarian and security aspects. Japan is actively involved in the international discussions taking place in various fora, and from the viewpoint of effectiveness, we support the negotiation of an international agreement on cluster munitions within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), in which the major countries that produce and possess these munitions participate. Taking into consideration the June recommendations of the Group of Governmental Expert's meeting, Japan intends to make its utmost efforts so that a negotiating mandate for cluster munitions will be adopted by consensus at the November Meeting of States Parties to the CCW.

Thank you.