Statement

by the Member of the Delegation of the Russian Federation

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Conventional Weapons Issues

In the recent decade, the issues of conventional weapons attract the growing attention of the international community. This is related to the humanitarian issues that arise from the use of these weapons against the peaceful population, as well as a host of other issues related to its destabilizing accumulation in crises regions and illicit trafficking. The First Committee will review a number of draft resolutions dedicated to the subject of conventional weapons.

The problem of illicit small arms and light weapons trade is still an urgent issue. We stand for stepping up the efforts at the national, regional and global levels in fighting this evil. We believe that the UN Program to fight illicit SALW trafficking is far from being exhausted. A lot remains to be done by the states as homework primarily in the field of developing the legal base, strengthening oversight over the production and circulation of SALW, and regional cooperation. We note also the need to fulfill the international document by all the countries that would allow the states timely and reliably identify and track down illicit SALW.

One of the reasons of arms leaking into illicit trafficking is insufficient control over the activities of brokers. As for Russia, we have resolved this issue in a radical manner, i.e. in the Russian Federation only one organization is licensed to provide broker services in the field of arms trade.

Naturally, each state is free to decide independently how many organizations should be allowed to carry out broker activities. Yet, the situation when a small country has hundreds of brokers is hardly acceptable. That is why we continue to stand for reducing the number of brokers.

A few words on the idea to develop a global arms trade treaty. We believe that it is necessary to consider thoroughly this issue, taking into account the opinions of all interested states (nearly one hundred). It is also necessary to analyze the efficiency of already existing regional and sub-regional instruments regulating the legal transfer of arms. We consider that largely the inefficiency of such
mechanisms explains the intent to develop such a Treaty. In this regard, the work to determine the feasibility, scope and requirements of such a global document should begin with the analysis of the causes of why such mechanisms are failing and are inefficient despite the fact that they were elaborated with due account of the needs and specificity of each region.

As for the conventional weapons, which are excessively injurious, it is well known that their use is regulated by an important international document, the CCW.

For us the most important aspect is the unique character of the Convention, which is a disarmament instrument, as well as an instrument of international humanitarian law, that calls for special responsibility to strengthen it. Therefore, we stand for adopting a separate resolution in support of the CCW.

In our opinion, the Convention can be strengthened only through its universalization and fulfillment of the provisions of existing protocols and decisions.

In this connection, we note the importance of the decisions adopted by the Third CCW Review Conference in November last year.

We believe that the adoption of the resolution in support of the decisions of the Third Review Conference of the Convention, in particular, the decision on the mechanism of verification of the Convention would increase its effectiveness.

As regards the draft resolution on the Convention, on the whole, we have no objections and it can be used as a basis. The additions to it, as compared with last year’s version of the text, mainly concern borrowings from the adopted documents, i.e. decisions of the Third Review Conference, and the June 2007 meeting on the preparation of the First Review Conference of the States Parties to Protocol V and the Group of Governmental Experts of the States Parties to the CCW.