STATEMENT

by

Ambassador Paul Beijer
Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

on the occasion of

the Report of the Chair of the ATT Preparatory Committee
to the First Committee of the
66th Session of the General Assembly

United Nations
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –
Mr. Chairman, Distinguished delegates,

Sweden would like to join other speakers in welcoming and supporting the report of Ambassador Roberto García Moritán, Chairman of the Arms Trade Treaty Preparatory Committee.

In Sweden’s view, the preparatory work for the 2012 UN Conference on an Arms Trade Treaty has been a remarkably successful exercise. In part, this is due to the very strong, almost global, support for the idea of an ATT, and to the spirit of genuine engagement that has characterized this process. But to a significant extent, it is also a result of the able leadership of Ambassador Moritán.

His proposal to use as a point of reference for the Preparatory Committee’s work a draft paper incrementally updated by the Chair to reflect the Committee’s discussions and consultations, has been very useful. It has enabled a structured discussion and a gradual mapping out of the issues that will need to be addressed by the Diplomatic Conference in July 2012. Working with this text has, I believe, been a learning experience for all participants of the PrepCom process, whether they represent countries with well-developed export controls, or countries with limited experience of such controls, and it should greatly facilitate national preparations for the upcoming Conference.

In its current form, we believe this paper will provide an excellent basis for work at the Conference. It is not a negotiating text, it is a structured list of topics that need to be tackled in the upcoming negotiations. It has sought to accommodate different interests and perspectives and has done so in such a way that no single participant is entirely satisfied with the result - which is as good an indication as any of success in this respect.

Mr. Chairman,

Sweden is firmly committed to the goal set up by the General Assembly – of reaching agreement on an ATT in July 2012. And we will continue to actively contribute to these efforts, drawing upon and sharing our own practical experiences of maintaining
a comprehensive system of controls on exports and other forms of transfers involving military equipment.

We are convinced that an ATT can make a real contribution to lessening the enormous cost, in terms of human suffering and societal disruption, that follow in the wake of unregulated trade in conventional weapons and their diversion to the illicit market. And against the background of the successful work of the Preparatory Committee, we believe that a legally binding international instrument setting the highest common standards for the transfer of conventional weapons is a realistic goal to aim for.

Let me conclude this part of my statement, Mr. Chairman, by expressing our sincere appreciation for the way in which Ambassador Moritán has guided the work of the ATT Preparatory Committee. We will continue to support his chairmanship through to the conclusion of the Committee’s work and hope that he will be available to guide also the negotiating process in July 2012.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.