Mr. Chairman,

The Islamic Republic of Iran associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on this cluster.

My delegation attaches great importance to the consideration of the issue of conventional weapons within the United Nations while reaffirming the sovereign and inherent right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms for their self-defence and security needs in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, is aware of the consequences of illicit trade in arms, in particular small arms and light weapons, on innocent civilians.

In our view, any arms instrument, the negotiations of which must be carried out multilaterally, in an open and transparent manner, and based on consensus, and above all, without pressure from certain arms producing and exporting cartels and countries, shall contain clear commitment by its parties to fully respect the inherent rights to self-defence and refrain, in any manner, in particular imposition of restrictions or application of unilateral coercive measures, to undermine these fundamental rights.

Many Members States in their statements referred, that the main problem in arms trade is illegal trade in small arms and light weapons. Therefore, the central objective of any efforts shall be to promote the coordination among States to prevent the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and the best way would be to strengthen the UN Program of Action instead of creating new treaties.

An arms treaty would not be magic potion to all civilian sufferings in regions of conflict or tension as long as its focus merely is trade and serves the major exporting countries. However, since this process started within the UN, my country constructively participated in the preparatory phase and the UN Conference. As we have stated the ATT process should not be aimed at pursuing narrow national agendas or regional policies. The paper submitted by President of the Conference "under his own responsibility and without prejudice to the position of member States" is very vague and confusing, providing many loopholes by leaving things open to interpretation and the so-called the “view” of the exporting state to do whatever it wishes under the pretext of "contributing to peace and security" as well as making
exception of "not apply to the international transfer of conventional arms" by a certain State outside its national territories, all of which make the proposed text ineligible to be "the base of future ATT". The worse thing is omitting the reference to "commit or aggravate an act of aggression or foreign occupation " from the proposed treaty by the President just for the sake of one occupier regime.

We also believe that universality of an arms instrument is of vital importance. The mere fact that over 85 per cent of the global trade in conventional weapons is dominated by a handful of countries proves that realization of the objectives of a future treaty is subject to the membership of exporting countries in the treaty.

In view of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the United Nations Program of Action and the International Instrument on marking and tracing which were negotiated within the UN, based on a progressive approach and adopted by consensus, are still main international platforms to address the multifaceted challenge of the Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

On the issue of conventionally armed “Missiles”, having the bitter experience of eight-year imposed war during which Iranians in defenseless cities even in the capital were under constant missile attacks by Saddam’s army, my country was obliged to develop its indigenous missile technology for its self-defense as a deterrent option. We have a clear defensive policy and our conventionally-armed missiles are exclusively for defending our country and therefore pose no threat to any state.

Needless to say that, Iran was the last country in the region resorted to missile technology. In the meantime, my country fully supports any comprehensive and non-discriminatory approach towards addressing the issue of missiles in all its aspects within the United Nations and had introduced a resolution on this issue to the UNGA since 1999.

Discriminatory approach outside the UN such the Hague Code of Conduct (HCOC) will not contribute to addressing comprehensively this important issue. Anti-missiles system development by US under the pretext of so-call missiles threat is only aimed at to get the supremacy over other powers in Europe neighborhood and Far East. Spending billions of dollars for the development of an anti-missiles system in continuation of the original so-called “Star War” of 1980s, has no justification and definitely it will neither add to the security of the host countries nor the security of the country operating such system. It would be an unfortunate cause of a new arms rivalry.

Mr. Chairman,

The Islamic Republic of Iran at the invitation of the government of Lebanon attended for the first time in Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions as an observer. Iran shares the humanitarian aspects of this Convention and we ourselves are faced with a huge problem of contaminated lands due to the leftover mines and cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war already used by the Saddam’s army. Our presence in Beirut Conference was also an indication of our support to the peoples of Lebanon who are the main victims of cluster bombs used by Zionist regime during the 33-day war.

The invader army unleashed about 4 million bomblets in southern Lebanon during the last three days of the 33-day war after a UN cease fire deal of which 1 million of them failed to explode and has endangered civilians after the conflict. Many civilians, in particular children, have been killed in southern Lebanon since the war ended in 2006, as a result of the explosions of the leftover cluster bombs. This brutality against the civilians in Southern Lebanon and later on in Gaza is not only a grave violation of the international law by Zionist regime but also goes against all the basic norms and ethics prevail in human society.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.