STATEMENT

by

Mr. Israil Tilegen, Minister Counsellor
of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan
at the Thematic discussion of the UN General Assembly First Committee
on Conventional Arms

1 November 2012
New York
Mr. Chairman,

During this thematic debate on Conventional Arms, my delegation would like to focus primarily on the shared goal of concluding a strong and effective Arms Trade Treaty for the safety and security of humanity, preventing needless killings and loss of lives.

While the outcome was disappointing, the draft Treaty presented by President of the ATT Conference on 26 July reflects important advances towards this goal. We should therefore relentlessly press for convening a final Conference to conclude the work that has begun.

This task is of critical importance because my delegation recognizes the grave and real threat that conventional arms, especially small arms and light weapons, pose to international peace and security, especially for the developing countries. We would like to draw attention that important areas of world trade between Member States of the United Nations are covered by rules that bind countries into agreed conduct, but they are not bound by rules when transferring weapons. A legally binding uniform agreement would therefore seek to harmonize existing diverse national laws on the trade in armaments and ammunition, which presently obscure transparency and trust. The differences between them continue to create legal loopholes, which have for decades resulted in the ready availability of weapons that have led to human suffering, repression, crime, terror and gross human rights violations which are obstructions to human development. The statistics are well known: one person dies every minute (with an estimated 740,000 deaths annually worldwide).

Hence the crucial necessity to finalize the ATT, which would establish the highest common global standards for the import, export, transfer, production and brokering of conventional arms, and provide transparency and accountability to the optimum level. The ATT is also necessary to prevent international transfers of conventional arms that cause or aggravate human suffering, and serious violations of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law. It should also be able to prevent violations of United Nations Security Council sanctions and arms, embargoes and other international obligations and, most of all, armed conflict. Furthermore, the Treaty should avert arms transfers that trigger displacement of people, organized crime, and terrorist acts, thereby undermining peace, reconciliation, and stability.

While we call for the ATT, Kazakhstan also recognizes the independent sovereignty of states and their right to self-defense. At the same time, we need to clearly demarcate regulations for all kinds of conventional arms: military vehicles, artillery systems, military aircraft and helicopters (manned or unmanned), naval vessels (surface and submarine vessels manned or equipped for military use),
missiles and missile systems (guided or unguided), and also small arms. Moreover
greater clarity is needed in defining the obligations of States Parties with respect to
national risk assessment so that these criteria may be legally binding.

We also welcome the inclusion of SALW in the ATT Chair’s paper, as well
as, in the seven categories of the United Nations Registry of Conventional
Weapons. My delegation strongly believes that ammunition, as well as parts and
components, must be listed within the scope of regulated items. Moreover, greater
clarity is needed as defining the obligations of States Parties with respect to
national risk assessment so that these criteria may be legally binding.

We welcome the final document of the 2012 Second Conference to Review
Progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) to
Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Use of Small Arms and Light Weapons.
Though not all the provisions we wanted were included in the outcome document,
it is still an important achievement, and every effort should be made to implement
the Programme at the regional and national levels through improved national
legislation and controls, regional cooperation, and international assistance and
cooperation. There still has much to be done in a wide range of areas: small arms
manufacturing; marking, record-keeping and tracing; stockpile management and
security; surplus identification and disposal; brokering; public awareness; and
DDR programmes. My delegation once again firmly reiterates that the illicit
SALW trade should also be consistent with human rights standards and
International Humanitarian Law.

Furthermore, overall military expenditures of Member States must be
diverted to investments and development in all countries, especially those
experiencing conflict and high levels of violence. Such constructive channeling of
funds would accelerate the capacity to attain the Millennium Development Goals,
and promote sustainable development and human advancement.

Kazakhstan stands ready to join the international community in regulating
the arms trade for a more secure and safe world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.