PORTUGAL

CONVENTIONAL ARMS DEBATE
FIRST COMMITTEE OF
THE UNITED NATIONS’
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

STATEMENT BY PORTUGAL

New York, October 2012

Check against delivery
Thank you, Mr Chairman,

The statement by my colleague from the European Union, with which I align my own, allows me to be brief and will limit myself to two issues regarding conventional arms.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) was opened for signature in 2008 and entered into force in 2010. In the past four years, the CCM has been garnering an ever increasing support. We welcome Australia’s recent ratification, which brings to 77 the number of States willing to be bound by the strict rules regarding production, stockpiling and use of these arms.

At the Second Meeting of States-Parties, in September 2011, Portugal was honoured to be appointed as one of the Co-ordinators on matters pertaining to the Universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and, in this endeavour, was recently joined by Ghana. In this capacity, Portugal urges all UN States in a position to do so to ratify or accede to the CCM.

Mr Chairman,

Cluster munitions affect indiscriminately military targets and the civilian population, causing an intolerable sufferance and continuing to make victims many years after the end of the conflicts in which they were used. This is why Portugal was so disturbed by recent reports of their use by the Syrian forces, which we strongly condemn.

Finally, Mr Chairman, Portugal would like to continue to express its utmost support for the early conclusion of a strong and robust Arms Trade Treaty, as mandated by the General Assembly. To this end, Portugal believes that a final and short Diplomatic Conference should be convened as soon as possible in 2013, and continue where we left off last July. The President’s paper of July
26\textsuperscript{th} remains the best and only basis, in our view, for the swift and successful conclusion of this negotiation.

To this end, Portugal will co-sponsor, among other Resolutions on conventional arms, the ATT Resolution and hopes that it will garner support it merits in this Committee.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.