Statement by Ms. Seo Eunji  
Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the  
Conference on Disarmament  
at the First Committee of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly  
Thematic Debate on Conventional Weapons  
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Mr. Chairman,

Small arms and light weapons continue to be the weapons of choice in destructive armed conflicts and violence around the world. More often than not, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons fuel and prolong armed violence, giving way to illegal activities and emergence of violent groups and hindering long term peace and development. We support the various initiatives to address this situation.

First, the UN Program of Action (PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and its International Tracing Instrument (ITI) have played a vital role in equipping the international community with various national and multi-national tracing systems and promoting the importance of stockpile management efforts.

Focusing on illicit brokering, the Republic of Korea and Australia have been tabling the resolution Preventing and Combating Illicit Brokering Activities since 2008. We have also readily cooperated with international
authorities in tracing conventional arms in conflict and post-conflict situations. We actively participated in the Open-Ended Meeting of Governmental experts on Implementation of the UNPoA in 2015 and take this opportunity to reaffirm our support of the outcome document of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States in 2016. We expect the Third UN Review Conference of the UNPoA, to be held in New York next June, to be filled with more effective and practical implementation efforts.

Second, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) contributes to a more responsible arms trade and thereby to enhancing international peace and security and the protection of human rights. With domestic regulations on conventional arms trade to reflect the goals and objectives of the ATT already in place, the Republic of Korea, one of the original signatories of the Treaty, ratified the Treaty last November. Based on our relative strength in export and border control, we will work with other Member States and regional and international authorities for the effective implementation and universalization of the Treaty.

Third, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) has played an instrumental role in bringing together states with various legitimate security concerns by taking into account both principles of International Humanitarian Law and military necessity in a balanced manner. A total of 124 countries have joined the CCW and we welcome the recent accession of Lebanon and Afghanistan.

The CCW, with its flexible modular and structure, has been able to address the humanitarian impact caused by conventional weapons, while keeping the discussion within the CCW framework. We welcome the establishment of the Open-ended Governmental Group of Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons (LAWS GGE) and the adoption of the “Declaration on Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)” in the Conference and also recognize the value of the draft resolution on “Countering the Threat posed by IEDs”, which is tabled by Afghanistan. The 5th Review conference of the CCW last year provided us with a truly important opportunity to take stock of our achievement and to set up the future work for the next five-year Review cycle. It was highly commendable to have adopted the final document by consensus.
Without undermining these significant achievements, my delegation cannot neglect pointing out that the important meetings decided in the Review Conference have not been convened this year due to the poor financial situation of the CCW. We have to find a way to generate the financial capability in the operational process of the CCW as soon as possible.

Before closing, my delegation would like to congratulate the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Anti-Personnel Landmines. The Republic of Korea is fully committed to the objectives and purposes of this convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions associated with humanitarian concerns caused by their uses, by actively participating in the related CCW discussion as well as by trying to make further contributions on international cooperation for those affected by landmines and cluster munitions. The Republic of Korea looks forward to continuing our joint work of advancing our common concerns.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. /End/