Statement by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Before the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty

New York, 18 March, 2013

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In the name of God, the most compassionate, the most merciful

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election to preside over this Conference. I am confident that with your diplomatic skills, the Conference will be managed professionally to fulfill its important mandate.

At the beginning of this crucial Conference on arms trade treaty, we believe that a question of fundamental importance needs to be dealt with. What are the requirements for establishing a desirable international legal instrument that could effectively regulate international trade and transfer of conventional arms? To answer this question is very much relevant to the task we have before us.

The most significant requirement for such an instrument is to base it on solid foundations that would lead to a more responsible behavior by all players in conventional arms and a healthy international trade in this field. In this context, we believe that a delicate balance should be stroked between legitimate national security considerations and regulatory aspects of the treaty.

It is also necessary to arrive at a common understanding about achievable goals for this treaty. Taking into account realities on the ground, we believe that establishing common standards for regulating international trade in conventional arms is an objective within reach, provided that we set aside subjective and interpretative goals, which are very susceptible to misinterpretation, discrimination and politicization.

Defining a limited scope could play a significant role in realizing goals of the treaty. We are of the view that setting a wide scope for this treaty is a disservice to the lofty goals of our efforts.
To achieve common standards on international arms trade, proper means need to be devised. The draft treaty before us has envisaged an implementation mechanism which is mainly left to the hands of states parties. While, the goals and criteria enshrined in the current draft treaty are subjective and prone to interpretation, recourse to such an implementation mechanism may take us to a path completely different from our initial novel idea.

Mr. President,

I would like to conclude my remarks by assuring you that my delegation will engage actively in the negotiations in the coming days to reach to a draft treaty that its founding principles are balanced, its goals are realistic and achievable, its scope is practical, its criteria are objective and non-politicized, and its implementation mechanism is non-abusable.

If you allow me I would like to put on the record that the decision taken today on the participation of Palestine and Holly See in this conference is not creating and shall not create a precedent in either two cases. The General assembly resolution on granting non-member observer state status to Palestine (A/RES/67/19) was a historical decision that shall be respected in all its aspects and in all activities undertaken by the United Nations.

In light of the remarks made by the distinguished ambassador of Palestine, my delegation decided not to stand against the decision made today in this meeting. However, this in no case shall be construed that my delegation associate itself with this move adopted in this conference.

Thank you very much.