Opening Statement by

Mr. Eran Yuvan
Deputy Director, Arms Control Policy Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel

The Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty

United Nations, New York
18 March 2013

(Check Against Delivery)
Thank you, Mr. President.

Let me join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as President of this Final Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. We are confident that your skillful leadership and able guidance will allow us to finalize this important Treaty. In this regard, I would like to assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation during our deliberations.

Mr. President,

Israel attaches great importance to the Arms Trade Treaty. Throughout the entire process, Israel, like other states, has made every effort to constructively discuss the various aspects and elements of a future ATT, while striving to ensure that the process remains professional and free of politicization.

Israel would like to note that the work and efforts conducted in the framework of the previous conference under Ambassador Roberto Garcia Moritan, have resulted in bringing the international community closer to an ATT than ever before. The President's draft of July 2012 should serve, as Israel has previously noted, as a valuable basis for our continued deliberations in the course of these two crucial weeks.

As time is of the essence, let me briefly focus on several key issues that are of significance to my delegation:

- Israel believes that the ATT should create a global, comprehensive, legally-binding and effective instrument that would regulate the lawful worldwide trade in conventional weapons. It should determine concrete measures that prevent the illegal trade in arms and their illicit diversion.
• The ATT represents an important step in the international community’s struggle against terrorism. It is critical that the ATT puts in place effective and practical measures to prevent and eradicate the illicit trafficking and divergence of arms to terrorists. The treaty must set clear standards, norms and operational responsibilities for preventing these illegal arms transfers. It should also advance modes of cooperation and coordination between states to eradicate this illicit trade.

• It is imperative that decisions made about arms transfers remain under the national responsibility and discretion of states.

• The important tasks envisioned for the ATT call for a concerted effort to bring on board states where export control systems do not exist or have not been fully developed. In doing so, the ATT should seek to promote higher national standards for arms trade activities and serve as a guide for nations to form - and continuously improve - effective and enforceable export control systems.

• The ATT should enhance the individual and collective security of states - not detract from it. The right to self-defense must not be compromised by the ATT, allowing states to engage in legitimate arms transfers, while countering illicit trade in arms and their diversion to unauthorized end users. The ATT should recognize the legitimacy of the legal and responsible international trade in conventional weapons.

• Well-balanced mechanisms could enable states to effectively implement their obligations, under a future ATT. We must take special care not to create a mechanism that will impede states’ national security interests. In this regard, on the issue of reporting, Israel considers the UN Register of Conventional Arms as an important confidence building measure among states, particularly in our region. Reporting provisions which may be
included in the future Treaty require careful consideration and balance with States' legitimate national security and confidentiality concerns.

Finally, Mr. President,

The phenomenon of illegal arms trafficking and its severe consequences are too overwhelming for any country to tackle alone. We today have a valuable opportunity to reach consensus on a balanced and implementable Arms Trade Treaty.

Allow me again to convey our appreciation to you and the Secretariat for the efforts to move this process forward towards a successful outcome.

Thank you, Mr. President.