Thank you, Mr. President. For years now, the United States has sought to achieve an Arms Trade Treaty that is strong, meaningful, and implementable -- a treaty on which the United States could join consensus, a treaty the U.S. government could sign, and ultimately recommend to our Senate for ratification. Thanks to you, Mr. President and your exceptional team, that goal is in sight and the U.S. will spare no effort to achieve it.

To give you examples of how hard we have worked with you and other delegations, let me mention Article 6, which was just mentioned by our friend from Norway. Last week, we endorsed a suggestion by Japan, which we saw as a sound basis for negotiation, and which led to a discussion among the U.S. and many others that has made real progress towards addressing an important issue. We will, of course, take this latest proposal by Norway into consideration.

Article 6 and 7 together are the heart of the treaty, a barrier against the misuse of conventional arms.

We have worked toward a compromise on Article 5.2 but none has been found. In the end, we cannot accept language that is contrary to the plain meaning of the treaty.

My delegation came to this final UN conference prepared to work, as the General Assembly decided, on the basis of the July 26 text, a text that had its flaws but was the result of real, politically balanced compromise, a text that would both be meaningful and attract the widest possible consensus. At that time, 90 countries said they could accept that text. Since that time, your March 22 text is stronger, clearer, and more implementable. I would hope all those who could accept the July text could accept this stronger one.

Let me remind you that this is not an arms control treaty, not a disarmament treaty -- it is a trade treaty regulating a legitimate activity. Allow me to comment on its two primary purposes. A minimum requirement for national action is to regulate, in a fashion that will curb abuses against humanity and common sense, what is, nonetheless, a very legitimate international activity: the transfer of conventional arms to enhance, rather than undermine, peace and security -- this is the heart of the regulation provisions. This text contains strong language on these points that would bring the world closer to the standard of the United States and other major exporters. On the second major goal, combating diversion, we are prepared to work on meaningful language either in a separate article or in clauses throughout the text. Some diversion occurs between exporter and importer. More diversion occurs after receipt by the importer. To address all aspects of diversion, we are ready to work on meaningful language that expands international cooperation.
but recognize it must have language that respects domestic jurisdictions over domestic criminal activity.

Let’s be honest with each other; we are barely 48 hours away from a final text. It is much too late to try to reopen some of the hard-fought compromises that were achieved last July -- or to push the treaty into something new. The U.S., like other delegations, has been constructive and leaned forward as much as we could, but trying to stretch that attitude into new topics at this point in time simply risks the rubber band snapping back and leaving us with a far less useful result than we already have seen. So I would urge my colleagues to keep their focus on the object we share: ensuring that we produce and agree on, at the end of the week, an instrument that will optimize -- not maximize, but optimize -- the prospects for completing the full process of making an effective Arms Trade Treaty a working and living instrument.