Mr. President,

I congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of the Conference and pledge the support of my Delegation to your leadership.

We also welcome your non-paper and agree with others that it presents a good basis for us to launch discussions.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by New Zealand on behalf of the Pacific Island Forum countries.

Mr. President,

For Papua New Guinea, we have and continue to support the inclusion of small arms and light weapons in a final arms trade treaty.

As noted by New Zealand, the Pacific and indeed Papua New Guinea has experienced the effects of illegal use of small arms and light weapons. The proliferation of these weapons pose serious challenges to the effective maintenance of law and order, development aspirations and our national security.

While Papua New Guinea looks forward to the conclusion of a legally binding arms trade treaty that would establish common international standards to regulate and monitor the trade in conventional arms – including small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, we state the following:

1. We reaffirm Article 51 of the Charter on the inherent right of all States to individual or collective self-defence.

2. We are mindful that effective implementation of obligations will require capacity-building, assistance in the establishment of national regulatory and monitoring systems as well as having an effective legislative framework and support inclusion of such provisions in a final treaty.
3. We support the call by others for international assistance to ensure fulfillment of our obligations under a final treaty. To this end, we support the establishment of an implementation support unit under the treaty to match needs with resources as well as act as a repository for reports.

4. While agreeing to the merits of regional-based reporting, including “nil reporting”, standardized formats, among others, we would note the importance of individual country reporting as a means of assessing the effectiveness of the treaty. We realize that the strength and effectiveness of this treaty depends very much on how transparent and accountable states are in their reporting.

Mr. President,

We look forward to hearing from other like-minded countries as we head into negotiations in the coming weeks.

Thank you.