Mr. President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for this opportunity to deliver a statement before the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. I am delivering this statement on behalf of 10 United Nations agencies and other actors involved in humanitarian action.

Mr. President,

This conference is important for many reasons.

It is an opportunity for States to agree to global, binding rules to regulate the trade in arms.

It is an opportunity for States to take decisive action to address the adverse human rights, humanitarian and development consequences of the poorly regulated trade in arms and the corresponding widespread availability and misuse of weapons.

It is an opportunity to reduce the widespread killing, wounding, and rape of civilians, including women and children, and the commission of other serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

It is an opportunity to reduce and even prevent human displacement, both within and across borders. At the end of 2011, an estimated 26.4 million people were internally displaced as a result of conflict and insecurity, and millions more have sought refuge across borders. In many cases, the violence that drove them from their homes was fuelled by the widespread availability and misuse of weapons.

It is an opportunity to reduce the staggering cost of providing millions of women, girls, boys and men with the shelter, food, medical and other forms of humanitarian and development assistance that they so desperately need.

It is an opportunity to address the frequent suspension or delay of life-saving humanitarian and development operations because of threats to the safety of, or actual attacks against, our staff and those of other organizations. Between 2000 and 2010, more than 780 humanitarian workers were killed in armed attacks and a further 689 were injured.

And it is an opportunity to reduce the violent crime and insecurity that plagues so many societies, undermines development and fuels conflict, poverty and exacerbates sexual and other forms of gender-based violence.

Mr. President,
Seizing this opportunity to address the human cost of the poorly regulated arms trade requires agreement of a comprehensive and robust arms trade treaty that contains the following if it is to be effective:

**First,** it must require States to assess the risk that serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law may be committed with the weapons being transferred, including through diversion to unintended users. It must also require States to refrain from authorizing transfers where there is a substantial risk that the weapons will be used to commit such violations.

**Second,** it must include within its scope all conventional weapons. This includes small arms as well as parts and components. As the United Nations Secretary-General observed in his 2011 report on small arms, the trade in small arms is poorly regulated. In many countries, because of a lack of regulation and controls, it is far too easy for small arms to fall into the hands of those who use them to commit violations of international humanitarian law or human rights law.

**Third,** it must include ammunition within its scope. Supplies of ammunition need to be continuously renewed. Without ammunition existing stocks of conventional weapons cannot be used. Again, as the Secretary-General noted in his report on small arms, the popularity of certain types of weapons among armed groups is due to the availability of ammunition. Preventing resupply in situations of high risk to civilians should be a priority. Regulating the transfer of ammunition is as important as regulating the transfer of the weapons themselves.

**Fourth,** it must ensure that there are no loopholes by covering all types of transfer, including activities such as transit, transshipment, loans, leases, gifts as well as brokering and closely-related activities.

We strongly urge Member States to place human rights, humanitarian and development concerns at the forefront of their discussions by taking these elements into account and striving for a comprehensive and robust Arms Trade Treaty that makes people safer by reducing the overwhelming human cost of inadequate controls on arms transfers.

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