United Nations Conference on
the Arms Trade Treaty

Statement by Ambassador Han Thu
Deputy Permanent Representative
On behalf of the ASEAN Member States
New York, 3 July 2012
Mr. President,

On behalf of the ASEAN Member States, I congratulate Ambassador Roberto Garcia Moritan on his election as President of the United Nations Conference on Arms Trade Treaty as well as other members of the Bureau. We are confident that under your able stewardship, we will be able to negotiate a robust and comprehensive Treaty.

ASEAN welcomes the Final Report of the Preparatory Committee as contained in document A/CONF.217/1, and believes that this provides a solid basis for the convening of this Conference. At the same time, ASEAN views the Chairman’s Draft Paper of 14 July 2011 as a viable starting point to begin substantive negotiations on an Arms Trade Treaty. However, ASEAN stresses that the perspectives of all Member States, including those expressed in the previous Preparatory Committee meetings and reflected in the ‘compilation of views on the elements of an arms trade treaty, must be considered. No presupposition should be made on any nation’s behalf and no region be left out from the ATT negotiations.

Mr. President,

Any procedural issues that may arise should be resolved in accordance with the agreed rules of procedure and in the spirit of flexibility.

ASEAN countries are of the view that the scope, criteria and parameters, international cooperation and assistance, implementation and final provisions of the ATT are useful components of the draft Treaty.

ASEAN is well aware that illicit arms trade hampers the peace, stability and development of the nations and regions. In this regard, the treaty should aim to address the prevention and eradication of the illicit transfer of conventional arms.

ASEAN underscores that every nation has the rights to self-defense and protection of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. In this context, States have the primary responsibility to prevent illicit arms trade and transfer in their own territories.
Mr. President,

While taking into account the agreed categories of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms together with the important elements from the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Arms Trade Treaty should aim be universal.

Recognizing that countries of different regions will have their own unique priorities and needs, the Arms Trade Treaty should have clear provisions for international cooperation and technical assistance to support States that would like to fully implement measures in the treaty but lack sufficient capacity to do so.

Furthermore, the Arms Trade Treaty should entail an agreed consultation mechanism between the States Parties of the treaty. This mechanism would ensure the credibility and consistency of the treaty’s implementation.

Mr. President,

An achievable, comprehensive, effective and balanced, legally binding instrument which adequately addresses the concerns of exporting as well as importing states will contribute to the effective prevention of international illicit arms trade.

For its part, ASEAN will cooperate fully and engage with all delegations to attain this goal.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to assure you of ASEAN’s full support and cooperation to ensure a successful outcome of the Conference.

I thank you, Mr. President.