Mr Chairman,

At the outset I would like to congratulate you on the election to the post of the President of the Conference. Also, I would like to express appreciation on behalf of Lithuanian Government for your effective leadership during the Preparatory process. Let me assure you that Lithuanian delegation will continue to offer you every support and cooperation during this conference.

Mr Chairman,

Lithuania fully associates itself with the statement by the European Union. On a national capacity let me emphasize a few points that are most important for my delegation.

Firstly, I wish to underline that Lithuanian delegation is fully committed to negotiating a strong and robust Arms Trade Treaty – a universal legally binding treaty that would establish a highest common international standards for the transfers of conventional arms.

Secondly, Lithuania is in favour of a comprehensive scope of the treaty to include all international transfers of conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons, as well as munitions.

Thirdly, we believe that the Arms Trade Treaty should apply to all types of activities related to arms transfers – export, import, transit and trans-shipment, brokering and technical assistance related to conventional arms. Different control provisions should be foreseen for different types of transfers.
Fourthly, it is necessary to ensure, that the future treaty would not hinder States, in a position and wishing to do so, to operate more restrictive national policies in conventional arms transfers.

Mr Chairman,

Finally and most importantly, in order to address today’s challenges of undesirable proliferation of conventional arms, the Arms Trade Treaty should contain clear criteria that would allow national governments to assess each and every transfer of conventional arms.

There is no doubt that compliance by the end user with internationally agreed norms, such as international human rights and humanitarian law, should be among those criteria. Lithuania would also support norms that would prevent transfers, which are likely to be used to perpetrate acts of gender-based and sexual violence.

However, for the Arms Trade Treaty to be truly effective, it must go further and contain provisions that would allow to hinder transfers of conventional arms if they could provoke or prolong armed conflicts and aggravate existing tensions in the country of final destination.

Furthermore, in assessing arms transfers due attention should be given to regional stability concerns. Lithuania believes that the Arms Trade Treaty should enable to prevent transfers of conventional arms if there is a clear risk that the intended recipient would use them aggressively against another country or assert a territorial claim by force.

With that let me conclude by wishing us all a successful conference.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.