Statement

by

Mr. Somkiat Boonchoo

Head of Thai Delegation


on Agenda 12: General Exchange of Views, High Level Segment.

New York, 5 July 2012

Check against delivery
Thailand’s Statement
Agenda 12: General Exchange of Views,
High-level Segment,
United Nations, New York

Thailand’s General Views on the ATT

Mr. President,

Let me first congratulate you on your election to preside over the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. Your election does not come as a surprise given my delegation’s first-hand experience of your outstanding endeavours during the Preparatory Committee. My delegation appreciates your leadership in steering the Preparatory Committee with a high degree of transparency, and the warm sense of flexibility and cooperation you bring to the meeting room.

The Thai delegation firmly believes that your efforts reflect our commitment to tackle human suffering, regional instability, and underdevelopment caused by the proliferation of illicit arms. Please count on the Thai delegation’s continued cooperation and support during the conference.

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,

Thailand would like to align itself with the ASEAN Joint Statement which will be delivered by Myanmar.

Thailand believes that the conference reflects the good spirit inscribed in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/48 on the Arms Trade Treaty, calling for concerted action to address the negative consequences of the illicit arms trade. Given the far-reaching implications involved with treaty elements, Thailand is optimistic that the multilateral mechanism will provide the best vehicle towards a legally-binding agreement. Attributes of effective negotiation machinery include transparency, inclusiveness, consensus, and most importantly, flexibility and compromise amongst diverging views.

Despite such diverging views that may arise, it is also Thailand’s firm belief that participants of the negotiation process must share similar goals and objectives to achieve the universality of the convention. Much like Thailand’s
previous calls during the Preparatory Committee, it is still our continued wish for the conference to be focused on the overarching goals in the deliberation process. Thailand remains open to a mechanism that allows participation in an open and transparent environment in which all States have an equal footing to voice their concerns and make positive contributions to the treaty process.

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,

Thailand continues to place strong importance on the role of international standards and practices to effectively prevent illicit trade in arms, and irresponsible arms use. Hence, we believe that the ATT should have the primary objective of addressing illicit transfers of weapons.

In this regard, I would like to share Thailand’s views on the treaty elements as follows:

- First on ‘Scope’, the Arms Trade Treaty should be cognizant of other pre-existing frameworks. A very relevant reporting practice through the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNRCA) and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) can provide a strong basis towards the Scope discussion. Moreover, the usage of commonly referred to Scope wordings and definitions from the seven categories of conventional weapons from the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and definitions of Small Arms and Light Weapons stated in the ITI can facilitate coordination and implementation across a broad group of States.

- Secondly on ‘Criteria’, Thailand would like to reiterate our emphasis on ensuring that States’ inherent rights to regulate their internal affairs, self-defense, political independence, and territorial integrity are protected. The right of each State to manufacture, import, export, transfer and retain arms for national self-defense in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and to meet its own national security needs, as well as to participate in the international peace support operations is also inalienable.

Hence, an effective implementation mechanism should prevent the ATT from being used as a disguise for political pressure and interference, for protectionist trade policies or for exploiting other States.
Thirdly, the treaty should recognize the need to attract and retain adequate international cooperation and technical assistance, especially for countries in need and wishing to receive such assistance in implementation of the treaty.

Lastly, Thailand is supportive of a mechanism which would facilitate dispute settlement, transfer denial, and monitoring of compliance. A properly functioning mechanism can provide further effectiveness to the treaty in preventing illicit arms trade.

My delegation will make further comments on specific details of the treaty during the deliberation of the conference.

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,

On this note, I wish to pledge my delegation's support to the global deliberations on the Arms Trade Treaty. I have no doubt that, with our determination and flexibility, this meeting will achieve the success that we all seek.

Thank you.

***