Introductory remarks

The Final Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2012 UN Conference on ATT
(New York, July 11-15, 2011)

Before making comments on the substance let me speak out several preliminary observations.

The Russian Federation attaches great importance to success of the ongoing session of the Preparatory Committee (the PrepCom). At the same time we act on the premise that in accordance with UNGA Resolution 64/48 our mandate is limited to agreeing on recommendations with regard to possible elements of a future international instrument and not on its textual drafting.

We refrained from raising objections to the proposed agenda, though see it necessary to note that the PrepCom is about to start discussions on issues related to implementation of a potential instrument with no clear and, more importantly, common vision on what precisely is to be implemented. Figuratively speaking, we are going to construct the roof of a house that has neither foundation nor walls.

At the first session we discussed goals and objectives of a possible document, at the second one – its scope and parameters. Formally the PrepCom seems to be proceeding as scheduled. But one has to admit that work has not been completed on any of those items. PrepCom did not only fail to agree, but even to identify any of possible potentially consensual recommendations that might be presented to the 2012 Conference.

In this regard we, on one hand, have each time to go back and deal again and again with all those issues that remain unsolved including those of critical
significance for key elements of a possible instrument, and, on the other hand, due to tight process timeframe, we have to go forward. In the end, the volume of "unfinished work" postponed "for better times" grows in size with each session.

In our view, a serious discussion on implementation can take place only after its foundation of commonly agreed goals and objectives has been laid, and on their basis concrete measures of their implementation have been developed.

As for the form of a future instrument and its status, they should be not prejudged but defined depending of its final contents elaborated by consensus of the 2012 Conference participants.

In regard to specific substantial aspects of implementation issues we’d like to reserve the right to comment on them later.