Mr. Chairman

I too would like to congratulate you for presiding over this conference and to wish you and the bureau a successful outcome. The United Republic of Tanzania attaches great importance to the early conclusion of the proposed Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). My delegation welcomes your concept paper and proposals on the aspects of “Implementation and Final Provisions of the envisaged Treaty.” You have our support and cooperation.

Mr. Chairman

What we are calling for is a treaty to regulate the trade in arms. The envisaged ATT is not a tool for disarmament but rather an instrument for responsible transactions in arms and the regulation of movement of arms from sellers to buyers and end users. My delegation is looking for ways to control and prevent illegal arms transfers that could harm the economies as well as the security and welfare of weaker states and their people. Such a treaty is also in the interest of the supply states because illegal trade in arms could hurt their businesses once they are associated with non-state actors, as well as pirates and terrorist organizations that are bent on destabilizing states and various sub regions, killing people and destroying property.

The United Republic of Tanzania is located in a sub-region that for too long has suffered the consequences of illegal trade in arms, especially small arms and light weapons. People in the sub-region have suffered from wars and conflicts that are significantly fuelled by illegal arms. I denounce the merchants of war fuelling conflicts and crime on the African continent. It is immoral and unacceptable that natural resources such as gold, diamonds, oil, timber and others, which ideally should be exploited and used to build a better future for African children, are instead being used to buy weapons from richer countries and arms dealers with which to kill and maim those very children and their parents.

Mr. Chairman

There is a strong link between the vices of piracy, rebel wars and drug trafficking and illegal trade in arms. These weapons are not manufactured by the states that end up as
victims. It should however be remembered that it will not only be the economies of the victims which will be affected. Ultimately, the global economy will suffer, and the profits of supply states will decline. This is the reality of a globalised and interconnected world.

Mr. Chairman

It is also vital that the scope of the ATT extends to the entire range of weapons that are used to commit local and trans-border crime, fuel conflict and instability, as well as terrorism and piracy. In this regard, Small Arms and Light Weapons must also be regularized. These are the ones that cause havoc, much suffering, crime, and conflict in our neighbourhoods and regions. The international community must act now to regulate the trade in these arms in all their aspects.

Mr. Chairman

My delegation welcomes your proposal on international cooperation, so that each State Party should have the right to seek and receive assistance with due regard to its sovereignty and territorial integrity as enshrined in the UN Charter. We also support the provision on victim assistance, as this will go a long way in mitigating some of the negative socio-economic consequences of illegal and illicit circulation of weapons especially across borders and the perpetuation of crime. Member states need to cooperate bilaterally or multilaterally to deal with this menace.

We appreciate the assistance offered by the European Union and its members at the bilateral level, as well as the support of INTERPOL and NGOs like GTZ, and others to Eastern African States with regard to crime control and cross border joint activities. Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants in countries emerging from conflicts also augur well with the provision of Victims Assistance and should be further encouraged by incorporating them in the envisaged treaty.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that the envisaged ATT will contribute significantly to the stabilisation of societies and regions and the improvement of global security and economic well-being. My delegation therefore supports and urges for a timely conclusion of an Arms Trade Treaty that will be equally binding on all member states without any discrimination.

I thank You