Mr. Chairman,

I take this opportunity to echo sentiments expressed by other delegates in commending your leadership through this important negotiation and consultation process for the Arms Trade Treaty. The inclusive nature of discussions and open-spirited discussions on thematic issues that you have generated have allowed us to prepare as best as we can to achieve a successful outcome at the Diplomatic Conference in July.

Mr Chairman

The Fiji delegation commends your current Chair’s Paper which covers key areas of a future Treaty and provides a solid basis for negotiations.

Fiji lends its support for a comprehensive, effective and a robust global ATT that will facilitate legitimate trade in conventional weapons, whilst providing the protections against illicit trade in arms used or are likely to be used for violations of international law, is a necessary tool for the international community. The ATT will become a tool in support of protecting the values of the UN, by curtailing trade in arms that breach the UN Charter and rules of customary law relating to the threat or use of force; gross violations of international human rights law; serious violations of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions and Protocols; and crimes against humanity and genocide.
Archipelagic states like Fiji that are perceived to have porous borders can become the target of those in illicit trade in arms and it is therefore imperative that the final negotiation of the Treaty text should factor in the contextual and diverse range of issues at play.

Mr. Chairman,

Fiji is of the view that such a Treaty should not undermine the State’s sovereign rights, the right to self defense and territorial integrity. The scope of the ATT should be very clear that it does not impinge on issues that will be taken care of by the State in its domestic legislation. The Treaty should therefore support the legitimate trade of conventional arms through the State’s commitment to international and regional peace, security and stability; the promotion of a transparent and accountable systems to strengthening import, export, controls and transfers of conventional arms; the creation of controls to prevent the diversion of conventional arms from legal markets and uses to illicit markets and unauthorised uses and users, including organised crime and terrorists.

Mr. Chairman,

The Fiji delegation would like to acknowledge the contribution of NGOs and welcome their continued engagement in a transparent consultation that would lead to a holistic Arms Trade Treaty in recognition of NGOs as a key partner in the implementation process.

Mr. Chairman,

I refer to the Rules of Procedure relating to the decision making process, which has been discussed here this morning, the question of voting on specific proposals or motions is listed as being on the basis of a request by a representative. It should be clear that in this case “representative” refers to a representative of a State. This may remove some of the ambiguity in Rule
33(2), although it also needs to be clarified what types of proposals or measures can be brought to a vote. Furthermore, Fiji supports the fundamental principle of reaching decisions through consensus, and supports Rule 33(3) as is.

Mr. Chairman

The Fiji delegation would like to conclude by highlighting Resolution 64/48 of the General Assembly in 2010 that the formulation of the Arms Trade Treaty adopt a step-by-step approach in an open and transparent manner to achieve, on the basis of consensus, a balance that will provide benefit to all with the principles of the United Nations Charter remaining at the centre of deliberations.

My delegation will make substantive statement on thematic issues at a later time.

I thank you Mr. Chairman