STATEMENT
BY

HONOURABLE NICKOLAS T.C. STEELE
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
OF GRENADA

AT

THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT
OF THE SPECIAL EVENT TO MARK
THE OPENING FOR SIGNATURE OF THE ARMS TRADE TREATY
UNITED NATIONS

03 June 2013
New York

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
Excellency Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary-General; Excellency Peter Woolcott, President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty; Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Colleague Ministers, Heads of Delegation, other specially invited Dignitaries and Guests.

I first take this opportunity to applaud the efforts of all those who have been instrumental in the various stages of the negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty before us today.

It is also fitting that I convey the gratitude of the Government of Grenada for all the assistance received from friendly governments. Special mention must be made of the Government of Australia's role in facilitating Grenada's, and other Small States', participation in the negotiation process.

Indeed, the turnout at today's Special Event is a testament not only to the importance of this Treaty, but also to the general spirit of collaboration in which it was negotiated over the last seven years.

I share the view of Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon who describes this Treaty as, and I quote: "a powerful new tool in our efforts to prevent grave human rights abuses or violations of international humanitarian law." End quote

In this vein, I urge States to ratify the treaty swiftly while realistically, patiently and optimistically awaiting the expected results. We must all stay the course and allow this treaty to instruct future negotiations on matters relating to global peace and development for all our peoples.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am confident that this Treaty embodies our collective will to preserve world peace, and to uncompromisingly reject violations of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

The Government of Grenada's insistence in participating in this Special Event is a testament of our commitment to the spirit and text of the Treaty.

Furthermore, I am pleased to announce that Grenada's legislative arm will promptly begin to give this Treaty FULL LEGAL EFFECT in the laws of Grenada.

It is my firm belief that this Treaty, under the theme, "robust standards for responsible transfers," marks a point of inflection in the way conflicts are resolved and their effects mitigated.

Today I am TRULY HONOURED to sign this Treaty which, once fully implemented by signatories, will save many of the innocent lives which, before today, have been lost as a result of the poorly regulated international arms trade.

I Thank you, Grenada thank you!