Thank you Mr. Chairman,

The United States takes the floor to reassert our commitment to the letter and the spirit of the International Tracing Instrument. The ITI remains one of the most practical and useful outcomes of the Programme of Action since the POA was concluded in 2001. The ITI provides the framework for practical cooperation among law enforcement and other governmental officials to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. This cooperation rests on the hard but necessary work of identifying and tracing small arms and light weapons recovered at crime scenes, at border points, or seized from traffickers. Tracing relies on the markings placed on the weapons, including the markings required to be placed upon weapons at the time of importation. These import markings are in addition to the markings placed on small arms and light weapons by the manufacturer and are often critical to successfully tracing these weapons. Of course, markings are only useful in tracing if proper records are kept, and the United States highlights the important work many governments are making to establish recordkeeping systems.

The United States acknowledges the new developments in firearms design and manufacture that pose new challenges in conducting the hard work of combatting small arms and light weapons trafficking. We recognize the contributions made by civil society and industry to assist Member States in addressing its obligations to implement the ITI. These new challenges however should not obscure the more conventional work required to effectively maintain records, mark, and trace small arms and light weapons.
The United States enthusiastically welcomes the progress of many governments in implementing the ITI since its inception. Among the success stories are the wider utilization of the technological tools available to assist law enforcement to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons. One example in the United States is the expanded use of ATF’s eTrace web-based tool to submit and receive trace results. The United States is proud to count 44 nations as eTrace partners who submit trace requests numbering nearly 50,000 annually. This robust exchange of information is precisely the kind of cooperation necessary to not only timely and reliably trace illicit small arms and light weapons, but also to timely and reliably identify and prosecute the traffickers.

The United States stands ready as always to work with our partners to fully and effectively and implement the ITI and continues to offer our support to you Mr. Chairman in successfully concluding our work this week.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.