Madam President,

Please allow me to congratulate you on your appointment as President as well as thank you - and your team - for your tremendous efforts preparing for this Review Conference. I can assure you that you will find Sweden a constructive partner as you guide us through our important work.

Mindful of the detrimental effects illicit trade in small arms and light weapons have on peace and security and development, we fully recognize the great responsibility that lies with us all in reaching substantial, tangible results during this Review Conference.

Sweden aligns itself fully with the statement by the European Union and also wishes to take this opportunity to highlight some specific aspects we believe to be crucial for strengthening the implementation of the Programme of Action.

For one, we believe that our often-scarce PoA-related resources are best focused on a few selected areas at a time – areas where significant obstacles remain and substantial results are realistic and tangible. We fully agree with Japan and other colleagues in identifying - and wishing to formalize - stockpile management and security as one such area worthy of our focus during the coming meeting cycle.

Not only does poor stockpile security constitute a serious threat to peace and security due to the risk of diversion to illicit markets, recent examples of accidents involving
stockpiles of ammunition and weapons also serve as reminders of the immediate threat to physical security it poses.

Madame President,

One related area that we would very much like to see discussed in greater depth is how to best strengthen UN Peace Support Operations and their mandates when it comes to SALW and stockpile security in post-conflict and conflict areas. This being part of the support for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes envisaged in the PoA.

Once again returning to the need of making good use of often limited resources, we fully believe that a structure of meetings focused on working sessions with experts/technical experts addressing a few selected issues (such as stockpile management), exchanging best practices and engaging in benchmarking, would be the most effective use of our time.

As a substantial contributor of international assistance in the field of SALW, Sweden of course also supports the inclusion of international cooperation and assistance in the coming meeting cycle. Working towards increased coordination between donor and recipient countries as well as substantial mutual commitments is of course imperative.

As I come to the end of my statement, let me briefly also stress that Sweden joins others in recognizing the importance of integrating gender perspectives in our work.

Lastly Madam President,

Please allow me to once again assure you of Sweden’s support when guiding us towards an outcome document - a road map really - leading the way to our common goal of putting an end to the death and suffering caused by illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Again, we thank you.