Statement by Ambassador, Mr. Kari Kahiluoto in the UNGA 60 First Committee thematic debate on the conventional weapons, 13 October 2006

Mr. Chairman,

Speaking for Finland the first time in this session of the I Committee please, Mr Chairman, accept our congratulations and expression of our full support for you and your bureau in guiding this Committee to successful outcome.

In addition to the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union that we fully support, allow me to highlight Finnish national views to four issues relevant to this thematic discussion.

First. On the issue of Brokering of SALW. My delegation would have wished to see a more robust outcome than foreseen presently in the draft resolution. We share the opinion advocated by several humanitarian actors that illegal brokering of SALW is a well known and well defined phenomenon. National and regional legislative and regulative measures have already been taken to address the issue and in our opinion the international community should have in its hands the conceptual tools needed to act more resolutely in tackling this problem as a priority issue. We expect the GGE on brokering to be established in 2006 to begin its work immediately after the Review Conference with a mandate that includes elaboration on a draft legal instrument on brokering.

Second. Concerning the assistance in capacity building and implementation of the UN Programme of Action we took good note of the discussions in the Second Biennial Meeting of States in July. On this base we believe that more a focussed debate on assistance and capacity building - taking into account both supply and demand perspectives - would be fostered by an independent study on needs and available resources. Ideally this study should be made available as a part of the preparations to the 2006 Review Conference.
Third. As we are embarking to the review of the UN PoA we should actively seek to involve civil society to the process maximally. Our review stands to benefit significantly from the commitment and expertise of NGO's, many of whom have a direct and relevant experience from the field. The PoA clearly recognizes this partnership and we should strengthen it. We think it would be highly beneficial if we could endorse the participation of NGO's to the broadest possible extent in the review process, including the thematic debates and the preparatory committee meetings.

Fourth. Allow me to put on record the decision of the Finnish Parliament last December, on approval of a governmental White Paper on defence and security policy, to set a definite timetable to accede in the year 2012 to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.