Mr Chairman,

Denmark fully associates itself with the cluster statement on conventional weapons made by France on behalf of the European Union. I would, however, like to add a few points to highlight the importance Denmark attaches to the efforts made towards the early adoption of an international Arms Trade Treaty.

Denmark has strongly supported the Arms Trade Treaty initiative from an early stage. The Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed his support for a legally binding treaty already at the General Assembly in 2005. We were, therefore, pleased to note the wide support obtained for Resolution A/61/89 in 2006 and strongly encourage all states to support this year's resolution "Towards an arms trade treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms". We also continue to appreciate the active involvement and substantive contributions of civil society in this important matter.

The absence of international standards for arms trade is contributing to the aggravation of armed violence, conflict, the displacement of people, crime and terrorism. A comprehensive international binding instrument to provide a regulatory framework for the transfers of conventional arms is therefore needed. Denmark thus strongly supports the adoption of an Arms Trade Treaty within the UN system that establishes legally binding common standards for the import, export and transfers of conventional arms, while respecting the right of UN Member States to acquire arms for legitimate self defence in accordance with article 51 in the UN Charter. The treaty should cover all conventional weapons in order to effectively support the UN's efforts towards international peace, security, stability and sustainable social and economic development. An Arms Trade Treaty must also include strong provisions regarding
respect for international law, including human rights law, humanitarian law and the UN Charter. We must prevent that weapons are transferred when there is a serious risk that they will contribute to violations of human rights and humanitarian law. For a more detailed account of the Danish position, allow me to refer to the Danish response to the Secretary-General’s request for views on the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms.

Denmark welcomes the work of the Group of Governmental Experts established in 2008 and its recommendations. Denmark strongly supports further efforts within the United Nations to address the need for common standards for the import, export and transfers of conventional arms, among these the establishment of an open-ended working group, and encourages all Member States to actively support the further work towards the adoption of an Arms Trade Treaty.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.