Statement by Counsellor Mr. Zhang Junan
of the Chinese Delegation
at the Thematic Debate on Conventional Weapons
at the First Committee of the 65th Session of the UNGA
(New York, 19 October 2010)

Mr. Chairman,

This year marks the 30th Anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). As an important international legal framework in the field of arms control dealing with humanitarian issues, the importance of CCW has been highlighted and its vitality has continuously increased during these 30 years. The implementation of the Amended Protocol II on landmines has achieved stable progress, and the number of signatory states of Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) is steadily increasing. The Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on cluster munitions has carried out 3 years’ hard work. The facts proved that CCW has played an indispensable role in addressing the humanitarian concerns caused by certain conventional weapons such as landmines.

The Chinese Government firmly supports and actively participates in
the international conventional arms control process, and attaches importance
to and supports the work of CCW. The Chinese Government maintains the
human-oriented concept and is dedicated to addressing the humanitarian
concerns caused by certain conventional weapons. China stands for the
continuous strengthening and improving of relevant mechanisms in the field
of conventional arms control on the basis of balanced addressing the
humanitarian concerns and the legitimate security needs, so as to enhance
international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

China ratified Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War in April 2010
and presented the Instrument of Ratification to the Secretary General of
the United Nations in June. Protocol V on ERW will officially come into
force to China since 10 December this year. So far, China has become the
high contracting party to the CCW and its all five protocols. China will
continuously and earnestly fulfill its obligations under CCW and its
protocols and be dedicated to enhancing the effectiveness and universality of
CCW.

Since 1998, the Chinese Government has provided demining assistance
to nearly 40 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America by providing
financial donations, demining equipment and personnel training and other
means. This year, China offered demining assistance to Sri Lanka, Sudan
and Afghanistan in different ways according to their actual needs. China also
provides “Mine-Victim Assistance” to Peru and Ethiopia, contributing,
within its own capabilities, to the reintegration of those mine-affected
persons. The Chinese Government will continuously make its endeavor to
achieve the common goal of the human kind to have “a mine-free world”.

China attaches great importance to the humanitarian concerns caused
by cluster munitions and supports the work of the CCW GGE to negotiate a
protocol that would address this issue, while striking a balance between
legitimate security needs and humanitarian consideration. The Chinese side
.commends the work of the GGE and appreciates the efforts by Philippine Chairmanship in pushing forward the negotiation. We believe, the latest version of GGE Chair’s text reflects the consensus achieved so far during the negotiation and tries to strike a good balance between the legitimate security needs and the humanitarian concerns. China supports the GGE continuing its negotiation on the basis of this text and calls upon all parties concerned to make joint efforts in a practical and cooperative manner to minimize differences and enlarge consensus, so as to reach an agreement as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

The illicit trade of small arms and light weapons (SALW) causes regional instability and fuels humanitarian crisis. China is fully aware of such concerns, has always attached great importance to combating the illicit trade of SALW, and has been supportive and actively participated in the related international efforts. China upholds that the comprehensive and effective implementation of existing international instruments such as the UN Programme of Action (PoA) on SALW and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (ITI) is of vital importance to promote the work of combating the illicit trade of SALW. China is ready to enhance coordination and cooperation with all parties to eliminate the illicit trade of SALW at an early time.

In last June we witnessed the success of the Fourth Biennial Meeting on the implementation of PoA (BMS4). The adoption by consensus of its outcome document shows that the international community has the common aspiration on important issues such as combating the illicit trade of SALW across borders and strengthening international cooperation and assistance. China upholds that poverty and social unrest is one of the primary reasons that illicit trade of SALW propagates. We maintain that a comprehensive approach should be taken to address both the symptoms and underlying causes. And the international community should take effective measures to
help countries concerned to achieve economic development, eliminate starvation, poverty and social injustice, and maintain peace and social stability, so as to create conditions for rooting out the causes of illicit trade of SALW.

Mr. Chairman,

China has always taken a prudent and responsible attitude towards arms export and has been exercising strict and effective control over arms exports in accordance with its international obligations and national laws and regulations. The Chinese Government has serious concern over regional instability and humanitarian crisis fuelled by illicit trafficking of SALW. It is necessary for the international community to take measures to regulate international arms trade and prevent arms diverting from legal channels to illegal markets. China participated constructively in the work of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the UN Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. China believes that the issues of arms trade are complex and sensitive in nature and the international community should stick to the principle of coordination and consensus, in a step by step manner, to conduct open and transparent discussions on this issue to satisfy the reasonable political, security and economic requests of all parties concerned. China is willing to continue to make joint efforts with all parties to properly address the issue of illegal arms trade.

Mr. Chairman,

China attaches importance to military transparency and has been committed to enhancing mutual trust in the military field with other countries. In 2007, China joined the UN Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures and returned to the UN Register of Conventional Arms. China supports and will actively participate in the work of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on the Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.