Mr. Chairman,

Egypt abstained on draft decision A/C.1/67/L.11 entitled “The arms trade treaty”, as well as on operative paragraphs 2 and 3. I would like to hereby provide the following explanation of vote.

Egypt believes that the First Committee deliberations should have resulted in a procedural decision allowing for the continued negotiations of a balanced Arms Trade Treaty. However, the draft resolution went beyond the simple task that was intended. It set parameters which would affect the substantive work before us.

In particular, Operative Paragraph 3 of the draft resolution decides “that the draft text of the Arms Trade Treaty submitted by the President of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty on 26 July 2012 shall be the basis for future work on the Arms Trade Treaty”.

Egypt considers the draft ATT text submitted on July 26 as an attempt by the President of the Conference to consolidate the different papers that were discussed in the preceding weeks. However, it became evident almost immediately that major arms exporters could not, at the time, adhere to it. At the same time, the July 26 text also came short of including proposals by other participating states, including Egypt. We would have expected that the text address adequately our major concern of elaborating a genuinely multilateral legal instrument of international law and international humanitarian law, by subjecting the criteria and implementation of the proposed treaty to multilateral benchmarks including the Geneva Conventions and those related to foreign occupation, in addition to a dispute settlement mechanism and a recourse for appeals for denials of transfers.

The July 26 draft was more of a work in progress. Now that there is more time, it can be one of the bases over which the negotiations could have proceeded. The text, alongside the contributions from participating states in July provide ample material for substantive improvement. It is in this context and with that spirit that we decided to limit our position to abstaining on OP3, given the assurance of the right of delegations to put forward additional proposals on that text, and in light that the President-designate will undertake consultations on the basis of that text, the results of which are expected to be presented prior or at the March Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

The potential Treaty should be universal. The negotiations should be truly inclusive. We believe that the Conference would not be genuinely multilateral unless all states Members of the United Nations and/or the Specialized Agencies participate on equal footing and be heard with equal attention. The current draft of the resolution also fails go give this assurance.

Furthermore, as the objective is negotiate the treaty and adopt it by consensus. Egypt does not see the need to put any artificial deadline on the process of negotiations.
Egypt looks forward to capitalizing on the progress achieved so far, in order to reach a balanced outcome. Such an outcome would be an Arms Trade Treaty that would have a real impact on curtailing the illicit trade in arms. A treaty that would further the respect of the applicable international law in full and not in part, in a comprehensive manner and not through selectivity.